



Public Health

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Guidance on Zyban for Hertfordshire Public Health Commissioned Stop Smoking Services as of 9th December 2022:

Following the Medicine Supply Notification (MSN/2022/100) issued on 1st December, 2022 that bupropion (Zyban) will be out of stock until further notice. Please see the following guidance on managing clients who wish to use this medication, or are currently using this medication, to stop smoking.

As recommended by OHID regional team:

ALL PROVIDERS TO ACTION (Specialist Service, Community Pharmacies and GP's)

Summary:

- Bupropion (Zyban) 150mg modified-release tablets will be out of stock until further notice
- Various nicotine replacement therapies are available
- NICE guidance highlights a range of other types of interventions to aid smoking cessation
- Specialist advice is required on alternative products where bupropion is used off-label

As recommended on the NCSCT website for guidance (do not share information with clients, instead focus on their new treatment pathway.)

1. **If a new client requests Zyban** = *Please advise that at this time Zyban is experiencing manufacturing issues and we don't know currently when it will be available again. As stated on the Recommend another course of NRT, specifically combination NRT, and nicotine-containing vapes (e-cigarettes) for the client, or dual NRT from January 2023.*

2. **If a current client requests Zyban = NRT** *is a good alternative that can offer almost immediate relief of withdrawal symptoms and urges to smoke. NRT treatment may be with a single product or in the form of a patch in combination with a faster-acting product such as the nicotine lozenge, nasal spray or mouth spray. This switch can be done immediately without any safety issues, in fact Zyban and NRT can be taken together in the short term. This is important because Zyban can take a few days to be eliminated (clear) from the body; clients should start NRT immediately upon stopping Zyban, or shortly before their supply runs out so as to familiarise themselves with their NRT. Clients should be encouraged to use enough NRT to maintain abstinence from smoking. They should be reassured that NRT is an evidence-based stop smoking medication and that the change of treatment plan should in no way disadvantage them in their attempt to quit smoking. In fact, combination NRT is more effective as a stop smoking medication than Zyban*

Some clients may choose to try vaping (either alone or in combination with NRT) as an alternative to Zyban and if this is the case, they should be encouraged to see this as supportive of their attempt to maintain abstinence. Nicotine-containing vapes are more effective as a stop smoking aid than Zyban.

As recommended by OHID regional team:

Actions required by those staff members who work with Providers:

All healthcare professionals in primary, secondary or specialist healthcare services including local stop smoking services, should work with clinicians and pharmacists to ensure the following actions are undertaken where relevant:

- Do not initiate patients on bupropion 150mg modified-release tablets;
- For patients taking bupropion as a smoking cessation aid, consider (re)prescribing nicotine replacement therapy (see supporting information)
- Identify patients currently prescribed bupropion 150mg modified-release tablets off-label (e.g. in the treatment of resistant depression); and
 - Make contact with patients/carers as soon as possible
 - Refer back to initiating specialists for individual review and consideration of alternative management options. This may include the possibility of de-prescribing, switching to another agent, and augmentation strategies;

Assess the need to taper off bupropion to reduce the risk of discontinuation effects, if patients have sufficient supply to do so

If you have any queries please contact the Hertfordshire Health Improvement Service on the above number or Health Improvement Specialists for Primary Care: Helen Cleary (01438 845926) helen.cleary@hertfordshire.gov.uk (East & North Hertfordshire); Farzana Khan (01442 453572) Farzana.khan@hertfordshire.gov.uk (West Hertfordshire)