**HERTFORDSHIRE MEDICINES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**DESOGESTREL PROGESTOGEN-ONLY PILL (POP) - RECOMMENDED**

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<td>Desogestrel</td>
<td>Progestogen-only contraceptive pill (POP)</td>
<td>January 2013</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>NICE - No guidance SMC – recommended for restricted use</td>
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**HMMC Recommendation:**

The desogestrel-only contraceptive pill prescribed as the brand Cerelle® is recommended as a contraceptive option for women when a POP is indicated. Consideration should be given to alternative options:

- standard POPs as these will be an appropriate option for many women.
- long-acting reversible contraceptives.

**EFFICACY**

- Limited evidence comparing desogestrel POP with a standard POP suggests contraceptive efficacy not different.
- Desogestrel POP inhibits ovulation in a manner similar to COCs. No data available on if this translates into reduced pregnancy rates.

**SAFETY**

- No advantage demonstrated between desogestrel POP and a standard POP in terms of adverse effects.

**COST**

- Desogestrel POP now available as generic products at lower costs.
- Cost of desogestrel POP is still higher than standard POPs and long-acting reversible contraceptives.
- Cerelle® (Consilient) is currently the lowest cost brand of desogestrel POP and would ensure consistency of brand supplied.

**PATIENT FACTORS**

- Advantage of desogestrel POP over standard POPs is that the missed pill window is extended to 12 hours from 3 hours.

**Assessment against Ethical Framework**

Evidence of Clinical Effectiveness

- The limited evidence comparing desogestrel with levonorgestrel containing POP suggests contraceptive efficacy not significantly different.
- Unlike other POPs, desogestrel also inhibits ovulation in a manner similar to that of combined oral contraceptives (COCs). No data available on if this translates into reduced pregnancy rates compared to standard POPs.
- No comparative data with other POPs or COCs.
- No advantage demonstrated between desogestrel and levonorgestrel containing POP in terms of adverse effects.
- Advantage of desogestrel POP over standard POPs is that the missed pill window is extended to 12 hours from 3 hours.

Cost of treatment and Cost Effectiveness

- Generic desogestrel POP products are now available at lower costs than the branded product Cerazette®.
- Cost of desogestrel POP is higher than standard POPs and long-acting reversible contraceptives.
- Cost of 1 year’s treatment: £19 for Cerelle® (desogestrel), up to £38 for other desogestrel POP brands; £9 for Micronor®/Noriday® (norethisterone); £14 for Femulen® (etynodiol).

The Needs of the population

- The needs of the population appear to be low as a POP is indicated as an option for a number of women and there are a number of alternatives available. However, the desogestrel POP has the advantage of the extended missed pill window.

The Needs of the community

- At current drug costs if desogestrel POP replaced all standard POPs then this would potentially create a cost pressure. However, the extended missed pill window has the potential to reduce costs associated with unplanned pregnancies.

Equity

- No impact anticipated.

Policy Drivers

- Guidelines from NICE and the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare. The Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare does not recommend any specific POP over another.
- Currently the lowest cost brand desogestrel POP is the Consilient brand product Cerelle®, A previous Primary Care Medicines Management Group (PCMMG) recommendation was made to prescribe, where possible, COCs as Consilient brand products to ensure consistency of brand supplied (to avoid confusion) & reduce costs. The use of Cerelle® would be consistent with this policy.

Implementability

- No issues identified.

**References**

- Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare New product review (April 2003), Desogestrel-only pill; Progestogen-only Pills (June 2009) [http://www.fsrh.org/pages/clinical_guidance.asp](http://www.fsrh.org/pages/clinical_guidance.asp)
- Scottish Medicines Consortium – Desogestrel advice (Sep 2003) [http://www.scottishmedicines.org.uk/General/Homepage_Search_Results/?q=cerazette&Submit=Search](http://www.scottishmedicines.org.uk/General/Homepage_Search_Results/?q=cerazette&Submit=Search)