

Quetiapine position statement

Reviewed February 2017

Drug and Therapeutics Committee approval: 2nd March 2017

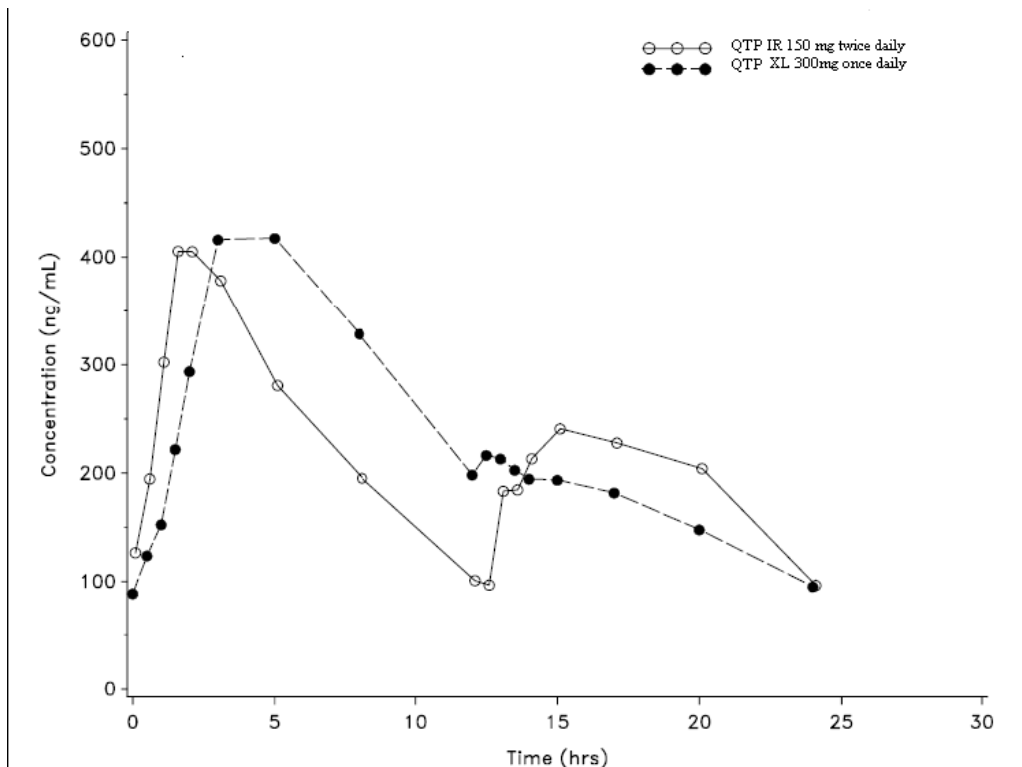
1. Background

Quetiapine XL is significantly more expensive when prescribed on an FP10 (owing to prices in the Drug Tariff), when compared to the immediate release formulation. In view of the similarities in pharmacokinetic profiles (of BD IR dosing and XL OD dosing), the CCGs have opted for a 'red' formulary status for quetiapine XL. This means that prescribing can only occur within secondary care. GPs will not prescribe this.

Because quetiapine XL can be initiated more quickly, quetiapine XL is on the Berkshire Healthcare Formulary, with the proviso that patients must be switched to immediate release quetiapine prior to discharge or handover to GP care.

2. Clinical Information

There is clinically little difference between plasma levels over time, between once daily XL dosing and twice daily IR dosing. Quetiapine XL is on the Berkshire Healthcare formulary because it can be titrated up much more quickly to a therapeutic dose at initiation and also for particularly complex cases where a once daily dose would aid concordance (for example, to support carers who are administering). However, in such cases the use of the XL formulation should be reviewed frequently and the patient changed to the IR as soon as is appropriate for the patient.



For patients who are stable on the XL formulation, the attached guidance (Tables 2 and 3) can be used to transfer patients safely to the IR form. The IR form does have the advantage that the total daily dose can be divided asymmetrically to give a larger proportion of the dose at night which can aid sleep.

See Appendix 1 for dosing information and relative costs.

3. Guidance for Berkshire Healthcare Clinicians

3.1 Patients initiated on quetiapine XL within Berkshire Healthcare should be switched to IR when initial titration is complete before discharge or handing over to the GP.

3.2 If a Berkshire Healthcare Clinician is prescribing quetiapine XL in the community on FP10 for patients where there is a clear rationale for maintaining treatment with quetiapine XL, they are required to retain prescribing responsibility. Quetiapine XL must only be prescribed by generic name only on FP10.

3.4 CPE and CRHTT must only initiate quetiapine XL if the patient will be referred to Community Mental Health Teams for ongoing prescribing and management. GPs will not continue prescribing XL.

4. Switching from XL to IR quetiapine

Conversion from XL to IR can be made by prescribing the patient the IR formulation at half the numerical dose twice a day. For example a patient currently on 600mg XL at night can be converted to 300mg IR bd. This will result in the same concentrations in the blood, and therefore the same level of side effects (quetiapine XL has never been shown to improve the side effect profile compared to the IR formulation).

Alternatively if a patient is having trouble sleeping then the total daily dose could be biased towards the night time dose. For example a patient currently on 600mg XL at night can be converted to 250mg IR each morning and 350mg IR each night.

The exceptions to this are where quetiapine is being used to treat either depressive episodes associated with bipolar disorder or major depressive episodes in major depressive disease. In these cases lower doses (of up to 300mg daily of the XL formulation are used) and the same dose of IR given just once a day at night at night is recommended as the alternative. For example 300mg XL daily can be converted to 300mg IR at night.

The first dose of the IR formulation should be given approximately 24 hours after the last dose of the XL formulation.

5. Cost Implications

Drug Tariff Feb 2017	Cost for Immediate Release/28 days	Cost for Modified Release (XL) /28 days
Quetiapine 200mg/day	£1.51	£52.78
Quetiapine 400mg/day	£2.19	£105.56
Quetiapine 700mg/day	£4.38	£184.89

If further advice is needed on converting patients please call the Berkshire Healthcare Medicines Information service on 0118 960 5075 Monday to Friday 9-5 or alternatively you can email medicines.information@berkshire.nhs.uk