

NCL JFC Position Statement

September 2024

Choice of Direct Oral Anticoagulant (DOAC)

This NCL JFC position statement on choice of DOAC supersedes both the following NCL JFC documents:

1. Choice of Direct Oral Anticoagulant (DOAC) for the treatment of venous thromboembolism (VTE) and secondary prevention of VTE recurrence
2. Choice of Direct Oral Anticoagulant (DOAC) for prevention of stroke & systemic embolism in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation (NVAf)

Before reading this position statement, please consider the following:

DOACs should be used with caution in patients at higher risk of bleeding, e.g. the elderly or in patients with low body weight or renal impairment.

This position statement is not intended to replace local Trust or NCL guidance, which should be referred to for further information.

A DOAC Prescribing Support document is available to outline referral pathways and support prescribing decisions.

1. Patients to be newly initiated on a DOAC

DOACs are recommended as treatment options by NICE ⁽¹⁻¹¹⁾ for venous thromboembolic disease and the prevention of stroke or thrombotic embolism in non-valvular atrial fibrillation.

Generic apixaban and generic rivaroxaban should be considered as the first line treatment option across NCL where clinically appropriate for the patient as these are considered the best value DOACs.

Treatment choice should be based on patient characteristics and the indication for DOAC treatment.

2. Patients established on DOACs

There is currently no mandate within NCL to actively switch patients to apixaban or rivaroxaban.

Patients who are currently taking edoxaban or dabigatran may continue on their existing treatment. However, clinicians may wish to review existing DOAC patients to ensure they are on the most clinically appropriate DOAC in view of their co-morbidities and risk factors.

Ensure all patients prescribed DOACs have had a review of treatment and dose within the past 12 months (earlier if clinically indicated).

Where consideration is being given to changing between DOACs, take into account the specific risks of moving from a once-a-day treatment to a twice-a-day treatment (or vice-versa) and implement appropriate safeguards to ensure patients take the alternative drug correctly.

If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of any anticoagulation regimen, please discuss with the patient's GP in the first instance. Local haematology teams can be contacted for advice/support.

References

1. NICE NG196. Atrial fibrillation: diagnosis and management (April 2021, last updated June 2021) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng196/chapter/Recommendations>
2. NICE TA275. Apixaban for preventing stroke and systemic embolism in people with non-valvular atrial fibrillation (February 2013, last updated July 2021) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta275>
3. NICE TA256. Rivaroxaban for preventing stroke and systemic embolism in people with atrial fibrillation (May 2012, last updated July 2021) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta256>
4. NICE TA355. Edoxaban for preventing stroke and systemic embolism in people with non-valvular atrial fibrillation (September 2015, last updated July 2021) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta355>
5. NICE TA249. Dabigatran for preventing stroke and systemic embolism in atrial fibrillation (March 2012, last updated July 2021) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta249>
6. NICE NG158. Venous thromboembolic diseases: diagnosis, management and thrombophilia testing (March 2020, last updated August 2023) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng158>
7. NICE TA261: Rivaroxaban for the treatment of deep vein thrombosis and prevention of recurrent deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism; www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta261
8. NICE TA287: Rivaroxaban for treating pulmonary embolism and preventing recurrent venous thromboembolism; www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta287
9. NICE TA341: Apixaban for the treatment and secondary prevention of deep vein thrombosis and/or pulmonary embolism; www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta341
10. NICE TA354: Edoxaban for treating and preventing deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism (August 2015); www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta354
11. NICE TA327: Dabigatran etexilate for the treatment and secondary prevention of deep vein thrombosis and/or pulmonary embolism; www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta327
12. NHSE. Operational note: Commissioning recommendations for national procurement for Direct-acting Oral Anticoagulant(s) (DOACs), January 2024, updated September 2024 <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/commissioning-recommendations-for-national-procurement-for-doacs/>

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