

Minimising the risk from errors in the printed versions of BNF 70 and BNFC 2015-2016

As you may be aware, the BNF have been working with NHS England (Patient Safety) and stakeholders including NICE and UKMI, to manage the response to the new format launched in BNF70 and BNF *for Children* (BNFC), in particular the identification of a small number of errors, some of which have been identified as potentially clinically serious.

We are aware of 4 clinically relevant dose errors in the BNF and 9 in BNFC; of these, 3 are common to both publications. These errors have been corrected in the digital versions.

Following discussions between UKMi, the BNF, and NPPG last year a list of those issues was circulated. We are aware that a number of Trusts have converted this information into a sticker for the front cover of the publications and this is considered a pragmatic approach to balancing the risk of the errors in the current editions and the latent risk of using out of date versions of the BNF Publications.

In line with these known risks, a move to global use of the electronic products should be encouraged as this remains the most readily updated and capable methods of ensuring the latest information is available for clinical decisions. Online versions are available at MedicinesComplete (www.medicinescomplete.com) and NHS Evidence (www.evidence.nhs.uk) and the BNF App is downloadable from the Google Play Store and Apple App Store.

Nevertheless, we are aware that some users are still dependant on the print formats and therefore this communication includes standard stickers for attachment to the relevant publication (BNF70 or BNFC 2015-2016) to increase awareness of the errors as users adapt to the new format publications. We would encourage the use of this standard sticker for all BNF70 or BNFC 2015-2016 paper-based publications.

We would like to re-iterate that while there are processes for scrutinising editions prior to release, these necessarily involve human interventions and are consequently subject to human error. Errors are accordingly collected, acknowledged and communicated on-line at www.bnf.org, a process which has been in place for over a decade and which will continue, with an enhanced communications cascade, for future editions.

We would also like to draw your attention to a programme developed with the College of Pharmacy Practice and Education (CPPE) intended to familiarise all users with the new BNF formats. This is freely available to anyone who wishes to use it, following registration on the CPPE website (www.cppe.ac.uk).



Dr David Gerrett
Senior Pharmacist
Patient Safety - Domain 5
NHS England



Karen Baxter
BNF Director