

## NICE GUIDANCE PH48 TOOLKIT

### DOCUMENT 9: VARENICLINE INFORMATION

#### MODE OF ACTION

- Varenicline is a nicotinic receptor agonist and antagonist
- It causes dopamine release via its agonist action and alleviates cravings for nicotine and also prevents dopamine release from nicotine in cigarette smoke through its antagonist action
- It is a highly effective treatment for tobacco addiction through both relief of cravings and preventing positive impact from smoking that reinforces the addiction

#### EFFECTIVENESS & EVIDENCE BASE

- Varenicline is a highly effective tobacco addiction treatment with smokers
- It has been proven to be more effective than NRT and bupropion
- In the EAGLES study<sup>1</sup> (randomised controlled trial) Varenicline was the most effective treatment when compared to NRT and Bupropion at 9-12 weeks

#### NICE TA123<sup>2</sup>

- Recommends Varenicline should be prescribed in combination with specialist and behavioural support
- If such support is refused or is not available, this should not preclude treatment with Varenicline

#### INCLUSION CRITERIA

- Current Smokers, consenting to treatment with Varenicline to Quit Tobacco who are over the age of 18 years

#### EXCLUSION CRITERIA

- Non-smokers
- Smokers who have had previous serious reaction to Varenicline or any ingredients contained in the products
- Smokers aged under 18 years
- Pregnant women
- Patients with end stage renal failure
- Breastfeeding women



## CAUTIONED

- Use in patients with a history of seizures or other conditions that potentially lower the seizure threshold.

**If serious neuropsychiatric symptoms occur whilst on varenicline treatment, patients should discontinue varenicline immediately**

The following linked documents give access to the Eagle Study, and resources developed by CURE as an example approach to Varenicline treatment.

[The Lancet - Neuropsychiatric safety and efficacy of varenicline, bupropion, and nicotine patch in smokers with and without psychiatric disorders \(EAGLES\)](#)

[CURE Training](#)

## REFERENCES

1. [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(16\)30272-0/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)30272-0/fulltext)
2. <https://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/TA123>

