

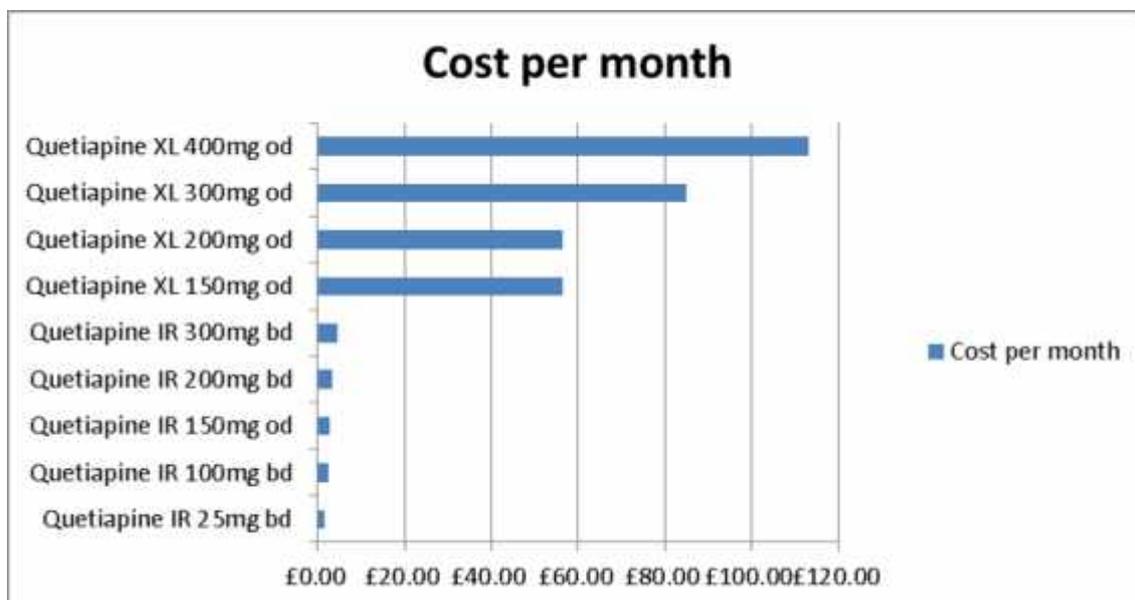
COST EFFECTIVE USE OF QUETIAPINE

Background

- Quetiapine is available in immediate release (IR) and modified release (XL) formulations, which have similar bioavailability
- Quetiapine XL is licensed to be given once daily and IR is licensed to be given twice daily, and once daily for the treatment of bipolar depression
- Quetiapine XL is significantly more expensive than IR, and switching from XL to IR will maximise the cost benefits
- Quetiapine IR may be associated with a slightly higher risk of sedation and postural hypotension following the switch. If these effects are a concern, clinicians may consider giving a smaller dose in the morning and a larger dose in the evening

Cost benefits

- Quetiapine IR tablets given twice a day are about 95% cheaper than prescribing quetiapine XL in the same daily dose once daily
- Potential savings to the health economy are over £500k



Proposed action

- Switch patients stabilised on quetiapine XL to quetiapine IR – see algorithm over page
- Any potential switch to be discussed with patient and carer and monitor for side effects
- If patient has concordance and/or tolerability issues, switching may not be appropriate. The continued use of quetiapine XL must be documented and explained in correspondence with GP
- If quetiapine XL required, consider prescribing a branded generic, such as Zaluron XL, which is around half the Drug Tariff price of quetiapine XL.

GUIDANCE FOR USE OF QUETIAPINE

