



## Patient information leaflet for the use of Intravenous Diuretics

This leaflet aims to explain the treatment being offered to you. Your doctor or nurse has suggested that giving you diuretics by injection at home is an option.

### What is a diuretic?

Diuretics are used to reduce the fluid overload that occurs when your heart is not pumping properly (heart failure). The fluid can build up in two places:

- Your lungs, which makes you breathless (pulmonary oedema)
- In the soft tissues, which makes your ankles, legs and sometimes genitals and abdomen swell (peripheral oedema)

Diuretics make you pass more urine **than** usual to get rid of the extra fluid, and are sometimes known as “water tablets”. The most common diuretics are furosemide, bumetanide, metolazone and bendroflumethiazide.

### How can diuretics be given?

The most common way to give diuretics is in tablet form. You will already be taking furosemide or another diuretic such as bumetanide in tablet form. Sometimes, the tablets do not work sufficiently and fluid can build up. In some people this can be sudden, in others it happens gradually over time. If you are monitoring your weight, this **might** increase. When the tablets stop working, giving the medicine by injection can be more effective.

The diuretic can be given **intravenously** - this is when a cannula is inserted into a vein and the diuretic is given either by infusion over 24 hours, or by injection over a few minutes. This is usually done in hospital, and usually you would be closely monitored. However, when such close monitoring is required, it is also possible to do this at home.

### What are the advantages of Intravenous diuretics?

The main advantage is that you can stay at home rather than being admitted to hospital. Intravenous diuretics are also proven to be very effective and can be given over a short period of time.

### What are the side effects?

The most common problems are:

- 1) Dizziness on standing due to a drop in blood pressure (postural hypotension). This may require the dose of diuretic to be reduced if troublesome. Because there is an increased risk of falling if your blood pressure is low, it is important that you have someone in the house to help you when the treatment is being given.
- 2) Passing increased volumes of urine. When the medicine works, you will need to go to the toilet more frequently than usual. You will therefore need to have easy access to a toilet/ commode. If you are confined to bed or find it difficult to get up, it may be necessary to use a catheter (a tube into the bladder).

- 3) Changes in the levels of chemicals (electrolytes) in your blood. Sodium and potassium can become low, and so your doctor/nurse may want to do regular blood tests. If you decide you do not wish to have regular blood tests then this will be documented clearly in your care plan.

**What if the treatment does not work?**

The action taken will depend on your wishes and will be tailored to your individual needs. You may need to be admitted to hospital for more treatment, or it may be possible to alter some other medication following an outpatient appointment with your cardiologist/physician (heart specialist). If the heart failure is very advanced, further hospital treatment may not be helpful and you may prefer to stay at home, or possibly transfer to a hospice. In this case, the priority would be to use medicines to keep you comfortable and relieve any symptoms such as breathlessness or pain. These options will be discussed with you when making your care plan.

**Who provides the service?**

Your cardiologist/physician or specialist heart failure nurse will create your individual care plan. The numbers to call if you have any problems during the treatment will be written on your care plan.

## **EVALUATION OF IV DIURETICS PILOT SCHEME – INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM**

This service is part of the national pilot scheme funded by the British Heart Foundation to understand the benefits and disadvantages of providing IV diuretic treatment at home rather than in hospital. This will be done by a team of researchers from a company called Brightpurpose Consulting.

The evaluation is important, as it will provide evidence to help inform the NHS to make decisions about future services using this model of care.

There are two ways we would like you to be involved in the evaluation:

### **1. Anonymous use of information about your treatment plan and background**

With your consent, we will provide information about your treatment to the research team. We will also provide information about your background (eg age, gender, carer arrangements). All your information will be anonymous: your name will be replaced by a code number, and the researchers will not have access to any information that would identify you as an individual. The researchers will use the information from all patients involved in the pilot to analyse the effectiveness of IV diuretic treatment.

### **2. Participation in a survey and/or short discussion with the researchers about your experience of receiving IV diuretic treatment at home**

As part of the evaluation, the researchers would like to find out patients' views of having IV diuretic treatment at home. This would involve a short questionnaire and/or a short discussion either on the phone or face to face.

The consent form at the end of this leaflet gives you the option to consent to be involved in none, one or both of these types of research. Before you sign the consent form, here is some information about how your information will be protected.

### **Data protection**

Brightpurpose is registered as a 'data controller' under the Data Protection Act 1998, which means they must look after your information securely and not share it with anyone without your consent. They must also destroy any information they hold about you once their research has ended. They take their responsibility for your personal information very seriously. Any personal information given to the research team will not be passed on to anyone else. Your information will be analysed along with everyone else's so you will not be identified in any research reports.

## **Consent form**

### **1. Anonymous use of information about your treatment plan and background**

If you have no objection to anonymous information about your treatment plan and background being provided to the researchers, please sign the statement below:

I have no objection to you providing the researchers with anonymous information about my treatment plan and background.

Signed

Name

Date

### **2. Participation in a survey and/or short discussion with the researchers about your experience of receiving IV diuretic treatment at home**

If you would be willing to participate in a survey and/or short discussion please sign the statement below:

I would be willing to participate in a survey and/or short discussion with the researchers for the evaluation of the IV diuretics pilot.

Signed

Name

Date