Drug of the Month–Antispasmodics Review
Wirral prescribing is 24% higher than the NW average and is nearly double the national average. Prescribers are advised to review patients who are taking dicycloverine and hyoscine to discuss adverse effects and the option of ceasing or switching to mebeverine or alverine citrate. Significant savings will be achieved if patients are no longer prescribed dicycloverine. The cost is currently £18.20 per item. Over £22K was spent on dicycloverine over the last 12 months. When treating new patients, prescribers are advised to stress the importance of lifestyle and diet modification. Antispasmodics should be taken when required and not long term. All patients on long term antispasmodics should be reviewed with a view to prescribing smaller quantities on an as required basis.

Melatonin Update
A second meeting took place with WUTH clinicians in April to discuss the transition to licensed Circadin. The previous agreement that GPs will only be asked to prescribe Circadin was confirmed and a new agreement was reached that unlicensed melatonin will only be prescribed for some tube-fed patients whose feeding tube is so narrow that it becomes blocked by crushed Circadin tablets. The new shared care protocol should be ratified at D&T on May 16th.

If you receive any requests to prescribe unlicensed melatonin for any patients who do not fall into this category, please contact the clinician directly to ask that they either switch the patient to Circadin or take back prescribing responsibility for the patient. The Medicines Management Team will continue to monitor the frequency of requests for unlicensed melatonin so please send us a Hospital Reporting Form on each occasion.

Strontium Ranelate – new contraindications
The EMA has completed a review of strontium ranelate:
- It should not be prescribed for patients with current or history of VTE as well as patients who are temporarily or permanently immobilised.
- Treatment to be reviewed at the next routine appointment.
- Patients should be warned about serious skin reactions. SJS and TEN usually occur in the first weeks of treatment while DRESS more usually occurs between 3 and 6 weeks.
- If severe allergic reactions arise (including skin reactions) then treatment should be ceased immediately and treatment should never be recommenced.

Sustanon Injection – Supply Problems
Sustanon is currently unavailable. The manufacturers (MSD) have very limited stock which they can supply on direct orders only. MSD telephone number is 01992467272.