

## WARFARIN and TRAMADOL

### Potentially fatal drug interaction

#### **Situation:**

Co-prescription of WARFARIN and TRAMADOL can result in significant increases in INR and bleeding risk.

#### **Background:**

Following the death of a patient, the coroner has issued a warning about this potentially fatal interaction between warfarin and tramadol.

#### **Assessment:**

Warfarin is not currently listed among the interactions for tramadol in the British National Formulary (BNF). However, the Summary of Product Characteristics for tramadol advises caution during co-prescribing with coumarin derivatives (e.g. warfarin) due to reports of increased INR with major bleeding in some patients.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Be aware that co-prescription of warfarin and tramadol can result in increased INR and risk of major bleeding.
- Where possible, do not start or increase existing doses of tramadol in people taking warfarin unless adequate INR monitoring is in place.
- If warfarin and tramadol are co-prescribed, regular INR testing must be performed, especially if doses are increased or decreased.
- Consider reducing and stopping tramadol for people who require warfarin treatment.
  - Tramadol can be reduced by 50mg per day every 1-2 weeks.
  - Patients must be monitored for withdrawal effects.
  - If opioid analgesia is indicated, consider switching to an alternative.

For further information see the [prevention of future deaths report](#) for this case.