



Dear Colleague

## EXTENSION ON THE SERIOUS SHORTAGE PROTOCOLS ISSUED FOR SANDRENA® GEL SACHETS AND ESTRADERM MX® PATCHES

### Purpose

1. This Circular advises NHS Boards and community pharmacy contractors that five of the UK-wide active Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) for hormone replacement therapy (HRT) products due to expire on 13 January 2023, have now been extended.
2. The extensions are applicable to the following HRT products: Sandrena® 500 microgram and 1mg gel sachets and Estraderm MX® 100 and 75 microgram patches that will be extended until **Friday 27 January 2023**. The SSPs for Lenzeto® spray have not been extended and will expire on Friday 13 January 2023. Please refer to Annex A for a detailed list of all five SSPs which have been extended.

### Background

3. To assist in alleviating the current issues with HRT availability, various UK-wide SSPs have been issued by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), in consultation with the Scottish Government. An SSP is an additional tool to manage and mitigate medication shortages for prescribing clinicians, community pharmacies and importantly patients.
4. Each SSP is individually developed and authorised clinically, to enable community pharmacists and dispensing doctors to dispense a different strength or formulation or alternative medicine or appliances in accordance with the protocol, rather than having to refer prescribing decisions back to the original prescriber. These protocols are time limited.
5. The DHSC frequently reviews which HRT products should be under an SSP and for how long they need to be in place.

13 January 2023

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### Addresses

#### For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards  
Director Practitioner Services,  
NHS NSS

#### For information

Directors of Pharmacy  
NHS Medical Directors

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### Enquiries to:

Pharmacy Team  
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Email:

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[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)



6. The addition of new SSPs and any amendments or extensions to existing SSPs are documented on the NHS Business Services Authority website using the following link: [Serious shortage protocols \(SSPs\) | NHSBSA](#).

### **Enquiries**

7. For any queries on the details of this circular, please contact the Scottish Government Pharmacy Team at [PharmacyTeam@gov.scot](mailto:PharmacyTeam@gov.scot).

### **Action**

8. **Health Boards are asked to note the contents of this Circular and to bring it to the attention of community pharmacy contractors on their Pharmaceutical Lists and Area Pharmaceutical Committees. This Circular should also be brought to the attention of General Practices.**

Yours sincerely



**Alison Strath**  
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

**List of Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) for HRT products extended until 27 January 2023**

SSP Number	PCA(P) Number	Product	Advice for community pharmacists on SSP	Switch if applicable	Status
029	<a href="#">PCA(P)(2022)20</a>	Estradiol (Sandrena®) 500microgram and 1mg gel sachets	Restrict to 3 months' supply		Active, extended until 27/01/2023
030	<a href="#">PCA(P)(2022)21</a>	Estradiol (Sandrena®) 500microgram and 1mg gel sachets	Rx < 3 months' supply- unrestricted switch (same length of supply dispensed of alternative product)	Estradiol patches – depending on equivalent dose	Active, extended until 27/01/2023
031	<a href="#">PCA(P)(2022)22</a>	Estradiol (Sandrena®) 500microgram and 1mg gel sachets	Rx > months' supply – restricted switch (max 3 months' supply of alternative product)	Estradiol patches – depending on equivalent dose	Active, extended until 27/01/2023
036	<a href="#">PCA(P)(2022)29</a>	Estraderm MX® 100 microgram patches	Same quantity of alternative product	Evorel® 100 microgram patches	Active, extended until 27/01/2023
038	<a href="#">PCA(P)(2022)33</a>	Estraderm MX® 75 microgram patches	Same quantity of alternative product	Evorel® 75 microgram patches	Active, extended until 27/01/2023