

Dear Colleague

EXTENSION ON THE SERIOUS SHORTAGE PROTOCOLS ISSUED FOR SANDRENA® 500 MICROGRAM AND 1MG GEL SACHETS

Purpose

1. This Circular advises NHS Boards and community pharmacy contractors that three UK-wide active Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) for Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) products due to expire on 27 January 2023, have been extended.
2. The extensions are applicable to the following HRT products: Sandrena® 500 microgram and 1mg gel sachets. This relates to SSPs 029-031 which will now expire on **Tuesday 28 February 2023**. Please refer to Annex A for a detailed list of all three extended SSPs.

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.

10 February 2023

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards
Director Practitioner Services,
NHS NSS

For information

Directors of Pharmacy
NHS Medical Directors

Enquiries to:

Pharmacy Team
1st Floor East Rear
St Andrew's House
EDINBURGH
EH1 3DG

Email:

PharmacyTeam@gov.scot

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.

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 28 February 2023

SSP Number	PCA(P) Number	Product	Advice for community pharmacists on SSP	Switch if applicable	Status
029	PCA(P)(2022)20	Estradiol (Sandrena®) 500microgram and 1mg gel sachets	Restrict to 3 months' supply		Active, extended until 28/02/2023
030	PCA(P)(2022)21	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 28/02/2023
031	PCA(P)(2022)22	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 28/02/2023