

HRT Serious Shortage Protocols – May 2022

On 23rd May 2022 the Scottish Government released ten [Serious Shortage Protocols \(SSP's\)](#) relating to four HRT products:

- Estradiol/Oestrogel[®] 0.06% gel
- Estriol/Ovestin[®] 0.1% cream
- Estradiol/Lenzetto[®] 1.5mg/dose transdermal spray
- Estradiol/Sandrena[®] 0.5mg and 1mg gel sachets.

These SSP's will remain in place until 19th August 2022 and allow community pharmacies to, where clinically appropriate to do so, undertake one of three actions:

- Restrict the quantity of medication supplied,
- Substitute with a **specific** alternative product or,
- Substitute with a **specific** alternative product and restrict the quantity of medication supplied

Full details relating to these SSP's, including [specified alternative products](#) (Table 1) and [endorsing requirements](#) can be found via the CPS website. Actions included in the SSP's are limited to the medications listed above and should not be utilised for any other shortage.

Actions for Community Pharmacy & Dispensing Doctors

In addition to following requirements included in the appropriate SSP:

- Ensure appropriate electronic endorsement of all prescriptions including SSP, three-digit SSP code, dispensed product description and dispensed product quantity.
- Ensure patients are aware that quantity restrictions/substitutions are only for the duration of the shortage, and that they should order their regular medication as normal when required.
- Where a substitution and or quantity restriction has been made use NHS email to **inform the patient's GP practice within 24 hours**. This is to ensure a robust audit trail of patient's medication. Information to be included:
 - Details of original prescription – drug, strength, quantity
 - Details of quantity limitation or substitution (drug, strength, quantity, directions).

Actions for GP practice

In addition to having awareness of the above noted SSP's:

- Ensure any communication regarding quantity restrictions or substitutions are clearly documented within the patient notes to ensure timely re-issue of prescriptions when required.

Table 1 – Substitute medicines

Brand name	Generic name	Substitute medicine
Oestrogel® Pump-Pack 0.06% gel	Estradiol 0.06% gel (750microgram per actuation)	Estradiol patch Once weekly patch (Progynova TS®, Femseven®) or Twice weekly patch (Evorel®, Estraderm MX®) Strength of estradiol patch to be determined according to the patient's current dosing regime of Oestrogel® – refer to Annex A of SSP
Ovestin® 1mg cream	Estriol 0.1% cream	Estriol 0.01% cream For every 15g pack of Ovestin® 1mg cream or Estriol 0.1% cream, pharmacists must supply 2 x Estriol 0.01% cream (80g pack). >Total quantity to supply should be equivalent of the number of days originally ordered on the prescription.
Lenzetto® 1.53mg/dose transdermal spray	Estradiol 1.53mg/dose transdermal spray	Estradiol patch Once weekly patch (Progynova TS®, Femseven®) or Twice weekly patch (Evorel®, Estraderm MX®) Strength of estradiol patch to be determined according to the patient's current dosing regime of Lenzetto® – refer to Annex A of SSP
Sandrena® 0.5mg and 1mg gel sachets	Estradiol 0.5mg and 1mg gel sachets	Estradiol patch Once weekly patch (Progynova TS®, Femseven®) or Twice weekly patch (Evorel®, Estraderm MX®) Strength of estradiol patch to be determined according to the patient's current dosing regime of Sandrena gel® – refer to Annex A of SSP