

Discontinuation of supply: Suboxone® and Subutex® sublingual tablets

This information has been produced in collaboration with the Specialist Pharmacy team in the Drug and Alcohol service. They can be contacted if necessary for further advice via gram.smspharmacists@nhs.scot

Discontinuation Information

Branded Suboxone® (buprenorphine) and Subutex® (buprenorphine & naloxone) sublingual tablets are being discontinued from the UK market on the 5th and 12th January 2026 respectively.

Primary Care Prescribing in NHS Grampian

102 patients have been identified as having been prescribed Suboxone® or Subutex® since September 2025.

Please note that this data is derived from ePrescribing data which is only attributed to prescriptions electronically generated via GP prescribing.

Stock information & availability

No indication has been given as to when stocks will be exhausted from wholesalers. While some residual stock will remain within community pharmacy networks, this is likely to be very limited. As such, all patients currently prescribed branded products should be switched to generic prescribing without delay (see actions overleaf).

Formulary status

- Buprenorphine sublingual tablets are included in the [Grampian Area Formulary](#) as a first line choice for opioid substitution therapy.
- Subutex® sublingual tablets are not included in the Grampian Area Formulary.

Clinical Information

- **Subutex® (buprenorphine) sublingual tablets**
Subutex® is a branded version of buprenorphine sublingual tablets. Patients will now require to be prescribed generic buprenorphine sublingual tablets.
- **Suboxone® (buprenorphine and naloxone) sublingual tablets**
Suboxone® sublingual tablets contain both buprenorphine and naloxone. The naloxone element has no clinical effect when the medication is taken sublingually and therefore oral combination products are not recommended for prescribing within NHS Grampian.

There are no generic equivalents available for Suboxone®, therefore patients will require to be switched to generic buprenorphine sublingual tablets.

Licensed indications, bioavailability and dosing are the same for the buprenorphine element of Suboxone® and generic buprenorphine sublingual tablets.

- **Do not switch to buprenorphine oral lyophilisates (Espranor[®])**

Patients should not be switched to buprenorphine oral lyophilisates (Espranor[®]) unless this is advised by specialist Substance Use Services.

Espranor[®] is a different formulation of buprenorphine (oral lyophilisates) which has different bioavailability and dosage requirements from buprenorphine in its sublingual formulation.

Actions for primary care

Specialist Drug and Alcohol teams are switching all patients managed within their services.

Patients who are solely under the care of their GP practice and receiving medications via a GP10 prescription will need to be actioned by Primary Care teams.

For patients identified as being prescribed Suboxone[®]/Subutex[®] via GP10 that are solely managed by their GP:

1. Please communicate with the patient's community pharmacy to ensure existing stocks of Suboxone[®] /Subutex[®] are utilised before supplying a prescription for generic buprenorphine sublingual tablets.
2. Patients should be made aware of the change to their prescribed medicine.
3. For patients switching from Suboxone[®] (combination product) to buprenorphine sublingual tablets the change from combination product to single medicine should be highlighted including the potential for change in taste/texture between old and new medicine.

For patients identified as being prescribed Suboxone[®]/Subutex[®] via GP10 that are managed by specialist services via the GP practice:

1. Liaise with patient's keyworker from their specialist service to ensure that above action is being undertaken.

Actions for community pharmacy

Community pharmacies should be alert to changes in prescribing of buprenorphine sublingual products

1. Ensure engagement with patients GP practice, to utilise any stocks of branded products before switching to generic prescribing.
2. Where patients prescribing has been changed, ensure this is highlighted to patients.
3. For patients switching from Suboxone[®] (combination product) to buprenorphine sublingual tablets the change from combination product to single medicine should be highlighted including the potential for change in taste/texture between old and new medicine.

Further Information

[Guidance For The Use Of Oral Buprenorphine Products For The Treatment Of Opioid Dependence In Grampian](#)

Data information

Data provided is ePrescribed (September 2025 – 24th December 2025)

The data provides prescribing information. It does not confirm that the prescription has been dispensed by community pharmacy or collected by the patient. The data only captures electronic prescribing information – any handwritten prescriptions will not be included.