

Date: 21 August, 2026
Our Ref: Drug Tariff/PCS
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Scottish Drug Tariff (Part 7) Medicines Procurement and Price Reporter

Dear community pharmacy contractors,

This letter clarifies NHS Grampian expectations regarding the procurement of medicines listed in Part 7 of the Scottish Drug Tariff (SDT) and the reporting of medicine shortages.

Contractors are reminded that:

- A medicine available at a higher acquisition cost is not a medicine shortage and should not be reported as such.
- Acquisition costs should not be a barrier to supplying prescribed medicines. Contractors are expected to meet their contractual obligations to ensure timely supply of medicines to patients.
- Issues relating to medicine availability, including discrepancies between wholesaler acquisition costs and SDT reimbursement, should be reported via the [CPS Members Area | Scottish Drug Tariff Price Reporter](#).
- Pharmacy purchasing controls or system rules (for example automatic removal of order lines above SDT price) must not compromise patient care or delay the timely supply of medicines.
- All wholesalers should be checked before a medicine should be considered unavailable.
- Prescriptions for known medicine shortages should be communicated to the patient's GP practice without delay.

NHS Grampian has received feedback from multiple Primary Care contractors regarding instances where practices have been incorrectly advised that medicines are unavailable. This has generated unnecessary workload across the system and on several occasions resulted in a formal complaint.

Please ensure all staff involved in the ordering and management of medicines in aware of this guidance and that appropriate systems in place to ensure timely medicine supply.

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring patients receive promptly access to prescribed medicines.

Yours faithfully,

The Pharmaceutical Care Services Team and Medicines Management Team.