



7 August 2023

## **Medicine Supply Alert Notice**

### **Edronax<sup>®</sup> (reboxetine) 4mg tablets**

**Priority: Level 2\***

**Valid until: end of October 2023**

#### **Issue**

1. Edronax<sup>®</sup> (reboxetine) 4mg tablets are out of stock from mid-August until the end of October 2023.
2. Unlicensed imported stock is available (see details below)
3. If local stock holding, imported stock and mutual aid cannot meet anticipated demand until the resupply date, alternative antidepressants with noradrenergic properties should be considered.

#### **Advice and Actions**

4. Healthcare professionals in primary and secondary care:
  - Should not initiate new patients on Edronax<sup>®</sup> (reboxetine) 4mg tablets until the shortage has resolved.
  - Use unlicensed imports (see details below) where available until the resupply date.
5. Where an import is not readily available:
  - In secondary care, where there are insufficient stocks, request mutual aid from other Health Boards.
  - In primary care, if stock is unavailable, consider referring the patient back to the initiating hospital specialist where stock may still be available. This should be checked before a referral is made.
  - If there are insufficient supplies, prescribers in primary and secondary care should consider switching to an alternative antidepressant (with noradrenergic properties) such as lofepramine or venlafaxine, if not contra-indicated or previously tried.
  - If stopping or switching to alternative treatment, national guidance on tapering (see additional information) should be followed, involving the patient so that a shared decision can be reached on the preferred treatment option.

## **Additional Information**

6. Reboxetine, a noradrenaline reuptake inhibitor, is licensed for the acute treatment of depressive illness/major depression and for maintaining clinical improvement in patients initially responding to treatment.

### Stopping medication

7. If it is considered appropriate to stop antidepressants, the Royal College of Psychiatrists have issued [guidance](#) on stopping antidepressants.

### Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

8. The following specialist importer has confirmed they can source unlicensed reboxetine 4mg tablets (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):
  - Target Healthcare
9. Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and NHS Board or local governance procedures. Please see the links below for further information:
  - [The supply of unlicensed medicinal products](#), Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
  - [Professional Guidance for the Procurement and Supply of Specials](#), Royal Pharmaceutical Society
  - [Prescribing unlicensed medicines](#), General Medical Council (GMC).

### Please see the following links for further information:

- [BNF: Reboxetine](#)
- [SmPC: Edronax 4mg Tablets](#)
- [NICE \(NG15\): Medicines associated with dependence or withdrawal symptoms: safe prescribing and withdrawal management for adults](#)

## **Specialist Pharmacy Service (SPS) website**

10. The UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in conjunction with SPS have launched an online Medicines Supply Tool, which provides up to date information about medicine supply issues.
11. To access the online Medicines Supply Tool you need to register with the [SPS website](#). Registration for access to the website is available to UK healthcare professionals and organisations providing NHS healthcare. The tool is located under the Tools tab and then click on the Medicines Supply option.
12. We encourage prescribers, pharmacy professionals, and pharmacy procurement leads in Scotland to register with the SPS website and use its Medicine Supply Tool in order to stay up to date concerning medicines supply disruptions.
13. Please be aware that while medicines supply issues will appear on the SPS website, some of the recommended actions may not always be appropriate / relevant within the Scottish context.

**Enquiries**

14. Enquiries from Health Boards or healthcare professionals should be directed in the first instance to [PharmacyTeam@gov.scot](mailto:PharmacyTeam@gov.scot) (primary care) or [NSS.NHSSMedicineShortages@nhs.scot](mailto:NSS.NHSSMedicineShortages@nhs.scot) (secondary care).