NHS Circular:
PCA (P)(2023) 32

Chief Medical Officer Directorate
Pharmacy and Medicines Division

Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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7 September 2023

Addresses

For action
Chief Executives, NHS Boards
Director Practitioner Services, NHS NSS

For information
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Dear Colleague

EXTENSION ON THE SERIOUS SHORTAGE PROTOCOL ISSUED FOR UTROGESTAN® (MICRONISED PROGESTERONE) 100MG CAPSULES

Purpose

1. This Circular advises NHS Boards and community pharmacy contractors that the UK-wide active Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) for Utrogestan® (micronised progesterone) 100mg capsules, a hormone replacement therapy (HRT) product, due to expire on 1 September 2023, has now been extended until Friday 29 September 2023.

2. The extension is applicable to SSP056, which allows community pharmacists to limit the maximum amount given to patients to two months' supply per prescription.

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.

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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