

Updated February 2022

PSNC Briefing 011/21: Serious Shortage Protocols (SSPs) updated endorsing guidance

Introduction

For products supplied in accordance with a Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP), correct endorsements, as set out in Part II Clause 9E of the [Drug Tariff](#), are required to claim the relevant remuneration and reimbursement. On 1 June 2021, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) approved the use of a new endorsement to claim for any supplies made in accordance with an SSP. **The new endorsement uses the code 'SSP' followed by the three-digit reference number applicable to the SSP for example, SSP007 for Fluoxetine 30mg capsules would be endorsed as 'SSP 007'.**

Details of the new SSP endorsement and transitional arrangements are outlined in the [Drug Tariff](#) (Part II Clause 9E). When supplying in accordance with these SSPs, contractors should refer to the updated endorsement guidance for each SSP available on [NHS Business Services Authority's \(NHSBSA\) SSP page](#).

Why has a new endorsement for SSPs been introduced?

When SSPs were first introduced in 2019, the use of the 'NCSO' endorsement was agreed as a temporary workaround to claim for supplies made in accordance with an SSP. Since then, work has been underway by the NHSBSA and NHS Digital to introduce the new SSP endorsement functionality into dispensing systems.

DHSC has confirmed that from February 2022, only the 'SSP' endorsement will be accepted on electronic prescriptions and paper FP10 prescription forms to claim for any supplies made in accordance with a valid SSP. **The NHSBSA will NO longer accept the 'NCSO' endorsement and/or use of the EPS tokens by contractors to claim for any supplies made in accordance with a valid SSP from February 2022.**

What endorsements will be accepted to indicate supply against an SSP from February 2022?

Endorsements to apply will depend on the type of SSP granted. There are two types of SSPs that may be granted:

- **Single Dispensed Product SSP** – where a prescribed item is replaced by one replacement item
- **Multiple Dispensed Product SSP** – where a prescribed item is replaced by two or more items (for example, SSP007 for Fluoxetine 30mg capsules allows for the 10mg and 20mg capsules to be supplied instead of the prescribed Fluoxetine 30mg capsules), some dispensing systems may accommodate the new SSP endorsements for both replacement items whereas other systems may only accommodate endorsement of one replacement item. Where only one of the replacement products can be endorsed, the NHSBSA will add and reimburse the other replacement items (see example below).

The required endorsements may be applied:

- For an electronic prescription - to the Electronic Reimbursement Endorsement Message (EREM);
- For a paper prescription - to the paper prescription itself

Note: In addition to the new 'SSP' endorsement (for example, 'SSP 007'), the other specific endorsement requirements may vary for each SSP, and contractors are strongly advised to follow the relevant supporting endorsement guidance issued with each SSP. Pharmacy contractors should also ensure the correct prescription

charge or exemption declaration is completed on the EREM or paper prescription before submitting an SSP claim to the NHSBSA.

Endorsements for a Single Dispensed Product SSP – where a prescribed item is replaced by one replacement item

Using the example of SSP05 for Fluoxetine 10mg tablets, which allows for the equivalent capsule formulation to be supplied instead of Fluoxetine 10mg tablets specified on the prescription, the following table outlines how to apply SSP endorsements for supplies made in accordance with this Single Dispensed Product SSP using:

Note that for endorsement purposes, SSP05 should be endorsed as SSP 005

1. Electronic prescription issued for Fluoxetine 10mg tablets x 30 tablets, the EREM should be endorsed as follows if the alternative Fluoxetine 10mg capsules are supplied against SSP05:

SSP endorsement available on systems

- SSP 005
- Fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30 capsules

2. Paper prescription forms - pharmacy teams must endorse the prescription form with the following information:

- **SSP and the three-digit reference number of the specific SSP** (in this example that would be “SSP 005”)
Details of replacement product supplied in accordance with the SSP (drug name, strength, formulation)
- **Quantity of replacement product supplied**

Using the example of SSP05, paper prescription forms issued for Fluoxetine 10mg tablets x 30 tablets, should be endorsed as follows if the alternative Fluoxetine 10mg capsules are supplied against SSP05:

SSP endorsement

- SSP 005
- Fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30 capsules



Endorsements for Multiple Dispensed Product SSPs – where a prescribed item is replaced by two or more items

Using the example of SSP007 for Fluoxetine 30mg capsules which allows for the 10mg and 20mg capsules to be supplied instead of Fluoxetine 30mg capsules specified on the prescription, the following table outlines how to apply SSP endorsements for supplies made in accordance with this Multiple Dispensed Product SSP using:

1. **Electronic prescription forms** issued for Fluoxetine 30mg capsules x 30 capsules, the EREM should be endorsed as follows if the alternatives Fluoxetine 10mg capsules and Fluoxetine 20mg capsules are supplied against SSP007:

SSP endorsement functionality available and system CAN accommodate SSP endorsements for multiple products supplied for a single prescribed item	SSP endorsement functionality available but system CANNOT accommodate SSP endorsements for multiple products supplied for a single prescribed item i.e. only one replacement product can be endorsed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSP 007 • Fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30 capsules • SSP 007 • Fluoxetine 20mg capsules x 30 capsules 	<p>Endorse ONE of the replacement items supplied in accordance with a Multiple Dispensed Product SSP. NHSBSA will reimburse for the remaining product not endorsed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSP 007 • Fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30 capsules <p>The other replacement item, Fluoxetine 20mg capsules x 30, would be added and reimbursed by the NHSBSA.</p> <p><i>Alternatively, Fluoxetine 20mg capsules can be endorsed with SSP and the three-digit reference number. Fluoxetine 10mg capsules would be added and reimbursed by the NHSBSA.</i></p>

2. **Paper prescription forms** - pharmacy teams must endorse the prescription form with the following information:

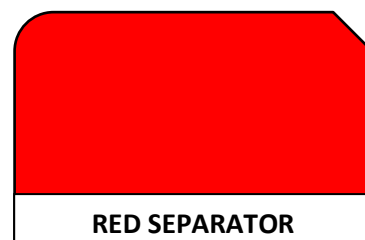
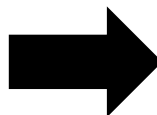
- **SSP and the three-digit reference number of the specific SSP** (in this example that would be “SSP 007”);
- **Details of replacement products supplied in accordance with the SSP** (drug name, strength, formulation); and
- **Quantity supplied for each replacement product**

Using the example of SSP007, paper prescription forms issued for Fluoxetine 30mg capsules x 30 capsules, contractors should be endorsed as follows if the alternatives Fluoxetine 10mg capsules and Fluoxetine 20mg capsules are supplied against SSP007:

SSP endorsement

- SSP 007
- Fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30 capsules
- Fluoxetine 20mg capsules x 30 capsules

SSP007 Fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30/ Fluoxetine 20mg capsules x 30	Fluoxetine 30mg capsules 30 capsules One capsule daily
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Note: SSP007, also allows pharmacists to supply 3 x Fluoxetine 10mg capsules for every prescribed Fluoxetine 30mg capsule prescribed.

Replacement SSP products not listed in Part VIII of the Drug Tariff

a. Non-Part VIII product(s) supplied against a Single Dispensed Product SSP

If the replacement SSP product is not listed in Part VIII of the Drug Tariff, contractors are reminded to endorse the prescription with the following:

- **SSP and the three-digit reference number of the specific SSP;**
- the quantity dispensed (if different to the quantity prescribed);
- the pack size used;
- the brand name or name of the manufacturer or wholesaler from whom the supply was purchased (if the order is in the 'generic' or pharmacopeial form); and
- Invoice price (if no list price is displayed on the NHS Dictionary of Medicines and Devices (dm+d))

b. Non-Part VIII product(s) supplied against a Multiple Dispensed Product SSP

- i) If a non-Part VIII product is one of the replacement SSP products supplied in accordance with a Multiple Dispensed Product SSP, the non-Part VIII product must be the one endorsed (as above) in preference to any replacement SSP products listed in Part VIII of the Drug Tariff.
- ii) If two or more replacement SSP products supplied in accordance with a Multiple Dispensed Product SSP are non-Part VIII products, at least one must be endorsed (as above) in accordance with the SSP. If the dispensing system only allows endorsement of one non-Part VIII product, the other replacement non-Part VIII product(s) would be added and reimbursed by the NHSBSA based on a price pre-determined by DHSC following consultation with PSNC.

Further support and guidance

PSNC aim to support contractors in the implementation of SSPs and further guidance may be published in due course for each SSP issued by HM Government.

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information, please contact as follows depending on the nature of your query:

- **Reimbursement and endorsement issues** – Suraj Shah, Drug Tariff and Reimbursement Manager (Suraj.Shah@psnc.org.uk) and/or PSNC's Dispensing and Supply Team (info@psnc.org.uk)
- **EPS and IT issues** – Daniel Ah-Thion, Community Pharmacy IT Lead including PMR supplier queries (Daniel.Ah-Thion@psnc.org.uk)
- **Legislation and regulatory issues** – Gordon Hockey, Director of Operations and Support (Gordon.Hockey@psnc.org.uk) or Layla Rahman, Regulations Officer (Layla.Rahman@psnc.org.uk)
- **Media enquiries** – PSNC's Communications Team (commsteam@psnc.org.uk)