

Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) for Paracetamol 120mg suppositories – corresponding guidance on endorsement, prescription charges, remuneration and reimbursement plus Q&A.

SSP 033 for Paracetamol 120mg suppositories

1) Endorsement

The contractor must endorse the prescription form or Electronic Reimbursement Endorsement Message (EREM) as per Clause 9, Part II of the Drug Tariff.

Electronic prescription:

Where SSP endorsement functionality is available on the dispensing system the contractor must select SSP and input the three-digit reference number, leaving a space between SSP and the reference number, as shown below. The contractor must also select in the system the SSP item that has been supplied.

Example	Endorsement
	Option
<p>Prescription for Paracetamol 120mg suppositories x 10</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor supplies Paracetamol 125mg suppositories x 10</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor selects in system Paracetamol 125mg suppositories x 10</p>	<p>SSP 033</p>

Non-electronic prescription form:

Example	Endorsement
	Option
<p>Prescription for Paracetamol 120mg suppositories x 10</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor supplies Paracetamol 125mg suppositories x 10</p>	<p>SSP 033</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor endorses Paracetamol 125mg suppositories x 10</p>

2) Prescription charges

Pharmacy contractors must take one prescription levy. Only one prescription charge will be applicable for patients who are not exempt from prescription charges.

3) Remuneration

Supply in accordance with this SSP 033 will result in the following fees being paid to the contractor:

- One Single Activity Fee (£1.27)
- One SSP fee (£5.35)

4) Reimbursement

The supplied product in accordance with this SSP 033 will be reimbursed as if it was dispensed against a prescription. In this instance, contractors will be reimbursed the Part VIIIA reimbursement price for the quantity supplied for paracetamol 125mg suppositories.

The reimbursement price will account for VAT payment.

Q&A

Will the SSP apply to cross-border prescriptions?

Yes. Patients from England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland who present their prescriptions for Paracetamol 120mg suppositories in England are eligible to receive an alternative supply under the terms of the SSP (only where pharmacists consider it appropriate to do so using their professional judgement).

Does the SSP apply to private prescriptions?

Yes. The scope of this SSP 033 applies to valid prescriptions that meets the requirements of the Human Medicine Regulations 2012, so it would cover both NHS and private prescriptions, unless where it stated otherwise on the SSP itself.

Will prescription charges apply under the SSP?

Yes, patients who are not exempt from prescription charges would continue to pay for this as usual. The only circumstance in which patients would not have to pay for a prescription charge is where an SSP recommends a lower quantity to be supplied.

Please note that the SSP for Paracetamol 120mg suppositories does not recommend a lower quantity to be supplied, so patients will continue to pay prescription charges (unless they are already exempt). For more information, please see the above guidance.

Can pharmacists use their professional judgement to supply an alternative product to patients that is not listed in the SSP (e.g. dispersible tablets/ unlicensed/ special products)?

Pharmacists are not able to deviate from the recommendations on what to supply to patients as outlined in the SSP for Paracetamol 120mg suppositories. However, if pharmacists think that an alternative product not listed in this SSP would be suitable for the patient, they should either contact the prescriber to discuss this (with the patient's consent) or direct the patient back to the prescriber.