

Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) for Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension – corresponding guidance on endorsement, prescription charges, remuneration and reimbursement plus Q&A.

SSP 054 for Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension

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. The contractor must also select in the system the SSP item that has been supplied.

Example	Endorsement
<p>Prescription for Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension x 70ml</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor supplies Clarithromycin 250mg tablet x QUANTITY IN LINE WITH SSP*</p>	<p>SSP 054</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor selects in system Clarithromycin 250mg tablet x QUANTITY IN LINE WITH SSP*</p>

Non-electronic prescription form:

Example	Endorsement
<p>Prescription for Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension x 70ml</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor supplies Clarithromycin 250mg tablet x QUANTITY IN LINE WITH SSP*</p>	<p>SSP 054</p> <p>Clarithromycin 250mg tablet x QUANTITY IN LINE WITH SSP*</p>

**** Total quantity supplied in accordance with this SSP is to be equivalent to the number of days treatment prescribed on the original prescription.***

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 043 will result in the following fees being paid to the contactor:

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

4) Reimbursement

The supplied product in accordance with this SSP 054 will be reimbursed as if it was dispensed against a prescription. In this instance, contractors will be reimbursed the Part VIII A reimbursement price for the quantity supplied and endorsed for the specified product and strength listed below:

- Clarithromycin 250mg tablets

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 Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension are eligible to receive a substituted product under the terms of this SSP 054.

Does the SSP apply to private prescriptions?

Yes. The scope of this SSP 054 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 Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension 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.

How would the pharmacists determine whether the tablets should be supplied in accordance with this SSP?

The pharmacist will need to discuss with the patient/carer **and** use their professional judgment when determining whether tablets should be supplied in accordance with this SSP. Where the pharmacist considers that the patient is unable to accommodate the switch from liquid to tablet (i.e. the patient is unable to swallow tablets), they should either contact the prescriber to discuss this (with the patient's consent) or direct the patient back to the prescriber.

Can pharmacists use their professional judgement to supply an alternative product to patients?

If the pharmacist thinks that an alternative product, other than those listed within the 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.

Does the SSP apply to other antibiotics?

No, this SSP 054 only applies to prescriptions for Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension.