



SERIOUS SHORTAGE PROTOCOL (SSP)

Reference Number: SSP054

Version Number: 1.0

This SSP applies to the following medicine

Name of medicine (including strength and formulation)	Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension
Legal category	POM

1. Details of medication to be supplied under this SSP

Name of medicine (including formulation and strength) to be supplied	Clarithromycin 250mg tablets
Quantity of this formulation	Total quantity supplied in accordance with this protocol is to be equivalent to the number of days prescribed on the original prescription. For every 5ml of Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension prescribed, the following quantity must be supplied in accordance with this protocol: 1 x Clarithromycin 250mg tablet
Substitution results in a change to whether the use is licenced	No. However, if tablets must be manipulated in some way by patients to be ingested (e.g. crushed) then yes. Please refer to the guidance on using solid oral dosage form antibiotics in children included in the addendum at the end of this form.

Scope for which this Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) applies

The SSP applies to the following parts of the UK	UK-wide
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Clinical situation to which this Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) applies

Scope of SSP	<p>All NHS and private prescriptions.</p> <p>This protocol does <u>not</u> allow for the quantity supplied to be less than the number of days prescribed on the original prescription.</p>
Criteria for inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The patient presents with a valid prescription (meeting the requirements of the Human Medicines Regulations 2012) for Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension. • The patient/carer consents to receiving the medicine supplied in accordance with this SSP.
Criteria for exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the pharmacist, using their professional judgement, determines that the patient is not suitable to receive the alternative medicine in accordance with this SSP. • The patient presents with a prescription for a medicine other than Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension. • The patient presents a prescription which is not valid. • The patient/carer does not consent to receiving the medicine(s) supplied in accordance with this SSP. • Known previous hypersensitivity or severe adverse reaction to Clarithromycin tablets or their excipients. • If the prescribed dose of Clarithromycin 250mg/5ml oral suspension is not a multiple of 5ml. • The patient requires administration of medicines via an enteral tube.
Cautions including any relevant action to be taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In supplying the tablet form the pharmacist should ensure that patients (particularly children) can swallow tablets. <p>Where patients are unable to swallow whole tablets, pharmacists should counsel patients/carers on alternative methods e.g. crushing tablets to give solid oral dosage forms which is included in the addendum at the end of this protocol. Please note</p>

	<p>that use in this way may be outside the product licence and is thus “off-label”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that patients considered unsuitable for inclusion are promptly referred to their prescriber for further advice.
Special considerations for specific populations of patients	Where the pharmacist, using their professional judgement, determines that the patient is not suitable to receive the alternative medicine in accordance with this SSP.
Action to be taken if the patient is excluded	If a patient does not meet the criteria within this SSP then they should be referred back to their prescriber promptly.
Action to be taken if the patient or carer declines the supply	If a patient/carer declines to receive medicine in accordance with this SSP, then they should be referred back to their prescriber promptly.

Valid from:	06/04/2023
Expiry date:	28/04/2023
Reference number:	SSP054
Version number:	1.0

Any queries regarding the content of this SSP which was issued by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, should be addressed to NHS Prescription Services.

You can get in contact by:

Email: nhsbsa.prescriptionservices@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0300 330 1349

Textphone: 18001 0300 330 1349

You can also write to us at:

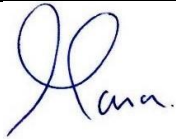
Newcastle	Middlebrook	Wakefield
NHS Prescription Services Bridge House 152 Pilgrim Street Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 6SN	NHS Prescription Services Ridgway House Northgate Close Middlebrook Horwich Bolton BL6 6PQ	NHS Prescription Services 4th Floor Wakefield House Borough Road Wakefield WF1 3UB

Change history

Version number	Change details	Date

2. Conditions under which this Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) will operate

- The decision to supply any medicine in accordance with this protocol rests with the individual registered pharmacist who must abide by the protocol.
- Whilst pharmacy staff may support the dispensing process of the protocol, this must be carried out under the supervision of the registered pharmacist.
- Pharmacists using this SSP must ensure that it is only used within its authorised dates and within the criteria set out within the SSP. Pharmacists must check that they are using the current version of the SSP, particularly when referring to a hard copy version. Amendments may become necessary prior to the published expiry date. Current versions of SSP templates can be found at <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/serious-shortage-protocols-ssps>.
- Users must not alter, amend or add to the content of this document; such action will invalidate the SSP.

Ministerial ratification by:			
Name	Position	Signature	Date
Maria Caulfield	Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health and Women's Health Strategy		6 April 2023

ADDENDUM

Supporting information on notifying other healthcare professionals

- Any items supplied in accordance with an SSP in response to an NHS prescription also needs to be supplied in accordance with NHS Pharmaceutical and Local Pharmaceutical Services Regulations.
- Those Regulations provide that where a therapeutic equivalent is supplied, a pharmacist will need to inform a patient's GP practice. This would generally be expected within the next working day, but further guidance would be given in any case where this applied.
- Where a different quantity, an alternative pharmaceutical form, an alternative strength or a generic equivalent is provided, it may not always be necessary that the patient's prescriber is informed, as the existence of the SSP may be enough for the prescriber to be aware that these changes in dispensing may take place, unless national arrangements agreed with the relevant representative bodies state otherwise. However, guidance may be issued on particular SSPs to indicate that prescribers should be informed of any patients that receive supply under it.
- In the absence of any preferred local alternate communication channels, all feedback to prescribers should be sent by NHSmail. The NHS Service Finder is a way for pharmacies to look up the email address of the patient's GP.

Switching from liquid to solid Clarithromycin

- When the pharmacist deems it appropriate to substitute to the tablet form in accordance with this SSP and further guidance is required on off-label administration to aid swallowing, pharmacists should counsel patients/carers in line with the guidance provided by the Specialist Pharmacy Service: [Using solid oral dosage form antibiotics in children](#)