

Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) for fluoxetine 10mg tablets – corresponding guidance on endorsement, prescription charges, remuneration and reimbursement plus Q&A.

SSP for fluoxetine 10mg tablets

1) Endorsement

The contractor must endorse the prescription form, EPS token 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.

Example	Endorsement
	Option
<p>Prescription for fluoxetine 10mg tablets x 30</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor supplies fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor selects in system pack of fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30</p>	SSP 005

Where SSP endorsement functionality is not available on the dispensing system but the contractor is able to use the NCSO functionality for SSPs then endorse NCSO.

Example	Endorsement
	Option
<p>Prescription for fluoxetine 10mg tablets x 30</p> <p>Pharmacy contractor supplies fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30</p>	NCSO

If SSP and NCSO endorsement functionality is unavailable on the dispensing system indicate on the EREM either “ND” or “Not dispensed” and then proceed with the endorsement on the EPS token as detailed for a non-electronic prescription form.

Non-electronic prescription form:

Example	Endorsement
	Option
Prescription for fluoxetine 10mg tablets x 30 Pharmacy contractor supplies fluoxetine 10mg capsules x 30	SSP 005

In the event that a Contractor inadvertently endorses the previous allowed endorsement of NCSO then in accordance with the Drug Tariff the Pricing Authority will accept this until October 2021.

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 the SSP 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 will be reimbursed as if it was dispensed against a prescription, i.e. in this instance contractors will be reimbursed the Part VIIIA reimbursement price for the fluoxetine 10mg capsules. The reimbursement price will account for VAT payment.

Q&A

Will the SSPs apply to cross-border prescriptions?

Yes. Patients from Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland who present their prescriptions for fluoxetine 10mg tablets 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 SSPs apply to private prescriptions?

Yes. The scope of an SSP 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 an SSP?

Yes, patients who are not exempt from prescription charges would continue to pay this for 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 fluoxetine 10mg tablets 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 fluoxetine 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 fluoxetine 10mg tablets. However, if pharmacists think that an alternative product not listed in 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.