

**From the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer
Mrs Cathy Harrison**



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

FOR ACTION

Chief Executive, Strategic Planning and Performance Group (*for onward transmission to relevant staff*)

Chief Executive, Business Services Organisation (*for onward transmission to relevant staff*)

Assistant Director of Integrated Care, Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, SPPG (*for onward distribution to Community Pharmacies*).

Head of General Medical Services, SPPG (*for onward distribution to GP Practices*)

GP Medical Advisers, Strategic Planning and Performance Group.

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Our Ref HE1/22/352349

Date: 28 July 2022

Dear Colleagues,

UPDATED SERIOUS SHORTAGE PROTOCOLS – HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (HRT) MEDICATION

You will recall that I previously wrote to you on 4 May 2022 and again on the 24 May 2022 to advise on the development and introduction of thirteen Serious Shortage Protocols (SSP019 – SSP032) covering a number of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) medicines in light of growing concerns around the availability and supply of certain HRT products.

I am now writing to confirm that in response to continued concerns across the UK regarding the availability of these HRT products, the Department of Health has decided to extend the expiry date for all but one of its current HRT SSPs until 29 October 2022 in order to help mitigate against the continued shortages and supply issues that are being experienced with these products. I can confirm however that **SSP021** will expire on 29 July 2022 as originally planned as supplies of the HRT product associated with that protocol, namely Premique® Low Dose 0.3mg/1.5mg modified-release tablets), have now stabilised.

A decision has been taken by the Minister for Health to authorise the issue of these twelve updated SSPs thus extending their expiry date until 29 October 2022.

These updated SSP's are attached separately as separate documents to this letter and will also be available on the Business Services Organisation (BSO) dedicated page on its website at www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/3063.htm

Action Required

All relevant staff should be made aware of these updated SSPs. I would therefore ask SPPG to bring this information to the attention of GP Practices and Community Pharmacists directly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cathy Harrison', written in a cursive style.

Cathy Harrison
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer