



# Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2024/021

Salbutamol 2.5mg/2.5ml and 5mg/2.5ml nebuliser liquid unit dose vials

Tier 3 – high impact\*

Date of issue: 021/02/2024

Link: [Medicines Supply Tool](#)

## Summary

- Salbutamol 2.5mg/2.5ml and 5mg/2.5ml nebuliser liquid is in very limited supply with a resolution date to be confirmed.
- Unlicensed supplies of salbutamol 2.5mg/2.5ml and 5mg/2.5ml nebuliser liquid have been sourced, lead times vary.
- Alternative beta<sub>2</sub>-agonists for nebulisation remain available, however, they cannot support an increase in demand.
- Additional guidance will be issued shortly.

## Actions Required

Primary and secondary care should:

- place **urgent** orders now for unlicensed imports of salbutamol 2.5mg/2.5ml and 5mg/2.5ml nebuliser liquid (see supporting information below). Due to lead times, do not wait for licensed supplies to be exhausted before placing orders for imports. Prescribers should work with local pharmacy teams to ensure orders are placed within appropriate time frames as lead times may vary; and
- note that additional guidance will be issued shortly.

## Supporting information

### Clinical information

Salbutamol is a selective beta<sub>2</sub>-agonist providing short-acting (4-6 hour) bronchodilation with a fast onset (within 5 minutes) in reversible airways obstruction. The nebuliser liquids are licensed for use in the management of chronic bronchospasm unresponsive to conventional therapy, and in the treatment of acute severe asthma.

[BTS/SIGN guidance](#) recommends that in patients with mild to moderate asthma attacks, beta<sub>2</sub>-agonists can be administered by repeated activations of a pressurised metered dose inhaler via an appropriate large volume spacer. In acute-severe or life-threatening asthma, beta<sub>2</sub>-agonists should be administered by nebulisation.

\*Classification of Tiers can be found at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/a-guide-to-managing-medicines-supply-and-shortages/>

[Links to further information](#)

[SmPC: salbutamol nebuliser liquid](#)  
[BNF: salbutamol](#)  
[BNFC: salbutamol](#)

[BTS/SIGN guidance on the management of asthma](#)  
[BTS guidelines on the Management of Asthma](#)

[Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports](#)

The following specialist importer(s) have confirmed they can source unlicensed supplies of salbutamol 2.5mg/2.5ml and 5mg/2.5ml nebuliser liquid (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):

Importer	Salbutamol	MHRA letter of no objection	Lead time (once letter of no objection received)	Pack size	Ordering Instructions
Alium Medical	2.5mg/2.5ml	Applied for	1-2 weeks	30	All enquiries on pricing/account opening/orders should be sent to: <a href="mailto:enquiries@aliummedical.com">enquiries@aliummedical.com</a>
	5mg/2.5ml		2-3 weeks	5	
Genetech Pharma	2.5mg/2.5ml	Applied for	7-10 days	60	Send a purchase order directly to our order processing department at: <a href="mailto:orders@genetechpharma.co.uk">orders@genetechpharma.co.uk</a> . For pricing and availability inquiries, hospitals or pharmacies are encouraged to contact: <a href="mailto:sales@genetechpharma.co.uk">sales@genetechpharma.co.uk</a>
	5mg/2.5ml				
Mawdsley's	2.5mg/2.5ml	Applied for	3 weeks	25	Orders can be emailed to: <a href="mailto:unlicensed@mawdsleys.co.uk">unlicensed@mawdsleys.co.uk</a> or via EDI*
	5mg/2.5ml		4 weeks	30	
QMED Pharma	2.5mg/2.5ml	Applied for	3-4 weeks	60	To order products, Trusts should send PDF purchase orders to: <a href="mailto:orders@qmedpharma.co.uk">orders@qmedpharma.co.uk</a> and <a href="mailto:unlicensed@qmedpharma.co.uk">unlicensed@qmedpharma.co.uk</a>
	5mg/2.5ml		4-5 weeks	60	
Smartway Pharma	2.5mg/2.5ml	Received	2-3 weeks	20	Orders can be sent via email or GHX^ to our email address: <a href="mailto:ulm@smartwaypharma.co.uk">ulm@smartwaypharma.co.uk</a>
	5mg/2.5ml		1 week	20	
Tanner Pharma	2.5mg/2.5ml	Applied for	5-7 days	20	All orders can be placed via email to: <a href="mailto:fbrett@tannerpharma.com">fbrett@tannerpharma.com</a>
	5mg/2.5ml		5-7 days	20	
Target Healthcare	2.5mg/2.5ml	Applied for	1-2 weeks	20	Orders via email to <a href="mailto:Hospitals@target-healthcare.co.uk">Hospitals@target-healthcare.co.uk</a> for Secondary Care and <a href="mailto:specials@target-healthcare.co.uk">specials@target-healthcare.co.uk</a> for Primary care

\*Electronic Data Interchange    ^GHX = Order management system

Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine must consider the relevant guidance and NHS Trust or local governance procedures. Please see the links below for further information:

- [The supply of unlicensed medicinal products](#), Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)
- [Professional Guidance for the Procurement and Supply of Specials](#), Royal Pharmaceutical Society
- [Prescribing unlicensed medicines](#), General Medical Council (GMC),

When prescribing a product that is not licensed in the UK due to a supply issue with the licensed alternative prescribers must indicate on the FP10 prescription that an unlicensed product is required. This can be done in one of the following two ways:

Electronic prescriptions – if the required unlicensed product is shown on electronic prescribing systems, GPs should select:

- salbutamol 2.5mg/2.5ml and 5mg/2.5ml nebuliser liquid (imported)

Paper prescriptions – where the unlicensed product is not shown on electronic prescribing systems, GPs should use a paper prescription and annotate with the following wording: “**special order**”.

## Enquiries

Enquiries from NHS Trusts in England should in the first instance be directed to your Regional Pharmacy Procurement Specialist (RPPS) or Associate RPPS, who will escalate to national teams if required.

REGION	Lead RPPS	Email	Associate RPPS	Email
Midlands	Andi Swain	<a href="mailto:andi.swain@nhs.net">andi.swain@nhs.net</a>	Diptyka Hart	<a href="mailto:Diptyka.Hart@uhb.nhs.uk">Diptyka.Hart@uhb.nhs.uk</a>
East of England	James Kent	<a href="mailto:james.kent@nhs.net">james.kent@nhs.net</a>	Tracy McMillan	<a href="mailto:tracy.mcmillan2@nhs.net">tracy.mcmillan2@nhs.net</a>
London	Jackie Eastwood	<a href="mailto:jacqueline.eastwood@gstt.nhs.uk">jacqueline.eastwood@gstt.nhs.uk</a>	Daniel Johnson	<a href="mailto:Daniel.Johnson@gstt.nhs.uk">Daniel.Johnson@gstt.nhs.uk</a>
North East and Yorkshire	David Allwood	<a href="mailto:davidallwood@nhs.net">davidallwood@nhs.net</a>	Penny Daynes	<a href="mailto:penny.daynes@nhs.net">penny.daynes@nhs.net</a>
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South West	Danny Palmer	<a href="mailto:danny.palmer@uhbw.nhs.uk">danny.palmer@uhbw.nhs.uk</a>	Natalie Bryson	<a href="mailto:Natalie.Bryson@uhbw.nhs.uk">Natalie.Bryson@uhbw.nhs.uk</a>

### Scotland

[nss.nhssmedicineshortages@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.nhssmedicineshortages@nhs.scot)

### Wales

[MedicinesShortages@gov.wales](mailto:MedicinesShortages@gov.wales)

### Northern Ireland

[RPHPS.Admin@northerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:RPHPS.Admin@northerntrust.hscni.net)

All other organisations should send enquiries about this notice to the DHSC Medicine Supply Team quoting reference number MSN/2024/021

Email: [DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk).