



# Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2020/048

Pethidine 50mg tablets

Tier 2 – medium impact\*

Date of issue: 07/08/2020

## Summary

- Martindale are out of stock of pethidine 50mg tablets.
- Supplies are currently available from Teva although they will be out of stock by the end of August. There are no alternative suppliers.
- Neither company are currently able to advise a resupply date as the issue is due to a problem at the active pharmaceutical ingredient manufacturing site.
- Unlicensed supplies of pethidine 50mg tablets have been sourced.

## Actions Required

Patients with insufficient supplies of pethidine 50mg tablets should be:

- reviewed by a clinician to assess ongoing need and advice obtained from their local pain team and/or substance misuse team on choice of alternative agent or advice on weaning;
- prescribed unlicensed pethidine 50mg tablets if ongoing treatment is required. Prescribers should work with local pharmacy teams to ensure orders for unlicensed product are placed within appropriate time frames as lead times may vary (see supporting information below).

## Supporting Information

- The following specialist importer companies have sourced unlicensed pethidine 50mg tablets from abroad (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):
  - Alium Medical
  - Mawdsleys Unlicensed
- 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.
  - [Prescribing unlicensed medicines](#), General Medical Council (GMC),
  - [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 (RPS)
- 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 by annotating the prescription with the following wording: “**special order**”.

## Enquiries

If you have any queries, please contact: [DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk)

\*Classification of Tiers can be found at the following link: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/a-guide-to-managing-medicines-supply-and-shortages/>