



Medicine Supply Notification

MSN/2021/017

Pioglitazone 15mg/metformin 850mg (Competact®) tablets
Tier 2 – medium impact*
Date of issue: 25/3/2021

Summary

- Pioglitazone 15mg/metformin 850mg tablets (Competact®) is out of stock until early May 2021.
- Generic pioglitazone 15mg/metformin 850mg tablets are out of stock with no resupply date.
- Pioglitazone 15mg tablets and metformin 850mg tablets remain available and can support the uplift in demand.
- A Serious Shortage Protocol (SSP) was issued on 24/3/2021.
- Unlicensed supplies of pioglitazone 15mg/metformin 850mg tablets can be sourced.

Actions Required

- For patients with insufficient supplies of Competact® 15mg/850mg tablets, community pharmacists may supply pioglitazone 15mg tablets and metformin 850mg tablets (as separate constituents) in accordance with the SSP for eligible patients (See Supporting Information below).
- Clinicians may also consider prescribing pioglitazone 15mg tablets and metformin 850mg tablets as separate constituents.
- If the above options are not deemed appropriate to meet the individual patient clinical needs, prescribers should consider reviewing patients to determine if ongoing treatment with pioglitazone and metformin is still required, and if so either:
 - prescribe unlicensed imports of pioglitazone 15mg/metformin 850mg tablets, or
 - switch patients to alternative glucose-lowering therapies.
- N.B. Prescribers should work with local pharmacy teams if unlicensed imports are prescribed to ensure orders are placed within appropriate time frames as lead times may vary (see Supporting Information below).

Supporting information

- Please see the link below for further information on the pioglitazone 15mg/metformin 850mg tablet SSP: <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/serious-shortage-protocols-ssps>
- See links below for further information
[SPC for Competact® 15mg/850mg tablet](#)
[SPCs for pioglitazone 15mg tablet](#)
[SPCs for metformin 850mg tablet](#)

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

Guidance on ordering and prescribing unlicensed imports

- The following specialist importers have confirmed they can source unlicensed pioglitazone 15mg/metformin 850mg tablets (please note there may be other companies that can also source supplies):
 - Alium Medical
- Any decision to prescribe an unlicensed medicine should be based on the lack of licensed available alternatives that could meet the individual patient clinical needs. This must consider the relevant guidance and NHS Trust or local governance procedures. Good practice would determine a record to be made for use of unlicensed medicine, citing the rationale for its use. 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 (RPS),
 - [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:
 - Pioglitazone 15mg/metformin 850mg tablets (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

If you have any queries, please contact DHSCmedicinesupplyteam@dhsc.gov.uk.