

National ADHD Medication Shortages: Information for Education settings and Social Care

Dear Colleagues

There has been a [national clinical alert](#) issued by the Department of Health and Social Care (NHS England) to highlight the current shortages in Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) medications across the UK. The shortages are the result of increased demand and manufacturing issues. As a result, the supply of ADHD medication is intermittent. This is likely to remain the case for the remainder of 2023. These medications are used to manage symptoms/ behaviours related to ADHD.

ADHD medication can help children in different ways. For some, it may help them move less in class, for others, it will help improve their attention/concentration, so that they are able to listen and engage with learning. For other children, it may help them be less impulsive, e.g. not running out of class, unable to wait their turn etc.

Several ADHD medications have been affected: Equasym XL®, Xaggitin XL®, Concerta XL®, Xenidate XL®, Elvanse®, Elvanse Adult®, Atomoxetine and Guanfacine.

The advice to parents and carers is:

- To continue their child on the current medication.
- To continue ordering repeat ADHD medication as usual, but to re-order when there are between 7-14 days of medication left to allow time to source the medication.
- To try to contact other pharmacies in the areas to check they have supplies.
- To contact the GP/specialist service if they have tried but are unable to find the ADHD medication for their child.
- To let the child's education setting know there is an issue with the supply of ADHD medication.
- To agree a plan with the school's SEN team about how to support their child to remain at school if their child is attending without having ADHD medication.

As part of the response to the national alert we would ask education settings:

- To identify any child/ young person who is on ADHD medication and might potentially be affected by the ADHD medication shortages.
- For children who have EP/EHCP/health care plans, to ensure a contingency plan is put in place to help manage ADHD and related behaviours if they are off ADHD medication for more than ONE week.
- For schools who administer ADHD medication. The advice would be to share the medication supply parents have at home and have a system in place to take and handover the medication at the end of the school day. Due to the current shortages, it may not be possible to provide a separate supply for school and another supply for home.
- If there are any concerns or if education settings require support, please contact the child's specialist team e.g. CAMHS or the child development centre. Parents will have clinical letters which will have the details of the service.