

Dispensing Factsheet: Single Activity Fee (SAF)

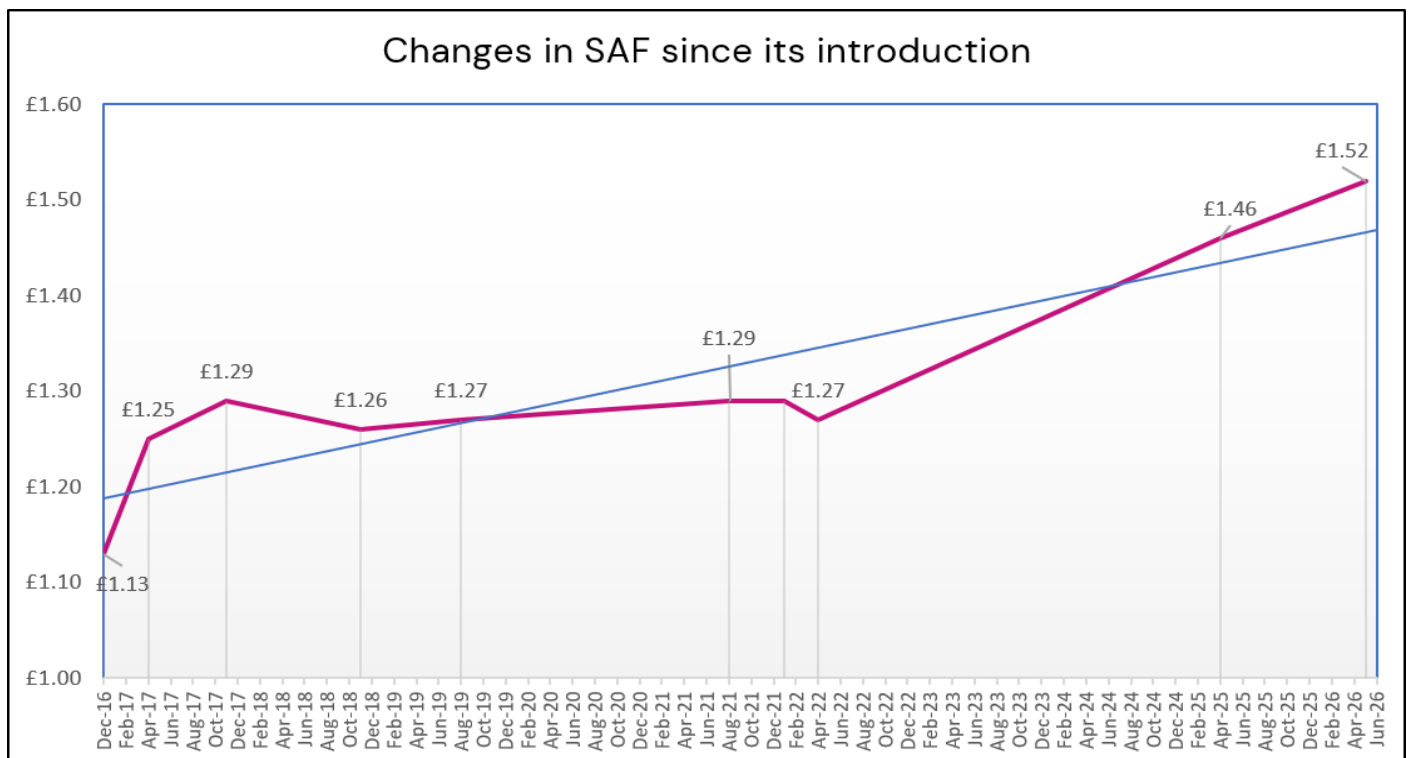
This factsheet explains what the Single Activity Fee (SAF) is with examples of items that attract multiple SAFs as well as those that attract no SAF.

What is the Single Activity Fee (SAF)?

In December 2016, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) introduced the SAF which consolidated a range of payments into a single fee (see image below).



The current SAF value is **£1.52 per item** updated in May 2026 as part of the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) funding settlement for 2026/27. The table below shows how the SAF value has changed since its introduction in December 2016.





Why and when does the SAF change?

The SAF is reviewed and adjusted based on forecasts of total dispensed item volumes to ensure that fee delivery remains within the agreed funding envelope each year. Prior to April 2025, the SAF rate only had minor adjustments in response to overall funding and item volume changes. Following the announcement of the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) funding settlement, the SAF value was increased in April 2025 by 19p from £1.27 to £1.46 per item. **As part of the CPCF 2026/27 funding settlement for 2026/27, DHSC has announced that, from 1 May 2026, the SAF will be uplifted again to £1.52 per item – a 6p increase from £1.46.**

Do all items receive a SAF?

In most cases, each dispensed item attracts one SAF. However, there are certain items which attract multiple SAFs and also items where no SAF is payable. Example where a single SAF is payable.

Item prescribed on form	Number of SAFs payable and reason
Ramipril 2.5mg capsules	1 (one SAF per item)

Multiple SAFs are payable for:

Combination packs – a SAF is paid for each item in a pack – this can be for different strengths of the same drug in one pack, different drugs in one pack or different flavours of a product in one pack. For example, Memantine 5mg/10mg/15mg/20mg tablets treatment initiation pack attracts 4 SAFs as each pack contains 4 different strengths of Memantine tablets.

- **Different strengths of the same drug and formulation ordered on the same form** – for example, a prescription for Levothyroxine 25microgram tablets and Levothyroxine 50microgram tablets on the same form would attract two SAFs.
- **Different formulations or presentations of the same drug or preparation ordered on the same form** – for example, a prescription for both Prednisolone 1mg tablets and Prednisolone 2.5mg gastro-resistant tablets on the same form would attract two SAFs.

- **Treatment packs including a drug in powder form together with a solvent in the same pack** – for example, a prescription ordering Varivax® vaccine powder and solvent for suspension for injection 0.5ml vials would attract two SAFs.
- **'Assorted', 'mixed' or 'various' flavours ordered on the same prescription form** – a separate SAF is paid for each distinct flavour supplied and endorsed on prescriptions which clearly specify 'assorted', 'mixed' or 'various' flavours of the same product. For Electronic Prescription Service (EPS), the prescriber must apply the 'AF' endorsement to the prescriber endorsement field to ensure a separate SAF is paid for each flavour dispensed and endorsed. For further information see our [Multiple flavours factsheet](#).
- **More than one piece of elastic hosiery (anklet, legging, knee-cap, below-knee, above knee or thigh stocking) ordered on the same form** – for example, one pair of elastic compression hosiery ordered on an NHS prescription form attracts two SAFs. Patients who pay for their prescriptions would pay two charges.
- **Different types or sizes appliances ordered on the same form** – for example, a prescription with both Mesorb® 10cm x 10cm and Mesorb® 10cm x 15cm on the same form would attract two SAFs.

Examples of items where multiple SAFs are payable:

Item prescribed	Number of SAFs payable and reason
Canesten Thrush Duo 150mg Oral capsules and External 2% cream x 1 pack	2 SAFs (two different items in one pack – combination pack)
Amlodipine 2.5mg tablets x 28 tablets Amlodipine 5mg tablets x 28 tablets	2 SAFs (two different strengths of the same drug ordered on one prescription)
Prednisolone 1mg tablets x 56 tablets Prednisolone 2.5 mg gastro-resistant tablets x 28 tablets	2 SAFs (two different formulations or presentations of the same drug or preparation)
GlucaGen Hypokit® 1mg powder and solvent for solution for injection x 1 vial	2 SAFs (treatment packs including a drug in powder form together with a solvent in the same pack)

Item prescribed	Number of SAFs payable and reason
Ensure Plus Juice Starter Pack liquid x 1320ml	6 SAFs (six different flavours in one pack – combination pack)
Compression hosiery class 1 below knee stocking circular knit standard stock size x 2 stocking Compression hosiery class 1 thigh length stocking circular knit standard stock size x 2 stocking	2 SAFs (two pieces of elastic hosiery)
Allevyn Gentle Border dressing 10cm x 10cm x 10 dressings Allevyn Gentle Border dressing 15cm x 15cm x 10 dressings	2 SAFs (two different types or sizes appliances)

No SAFs payable

Items such as lymphoedema base garments can be ordered with 'additional options or optional extras' which do not attract additional prescription charges or SAFs. These additional options are classed as no-charge and no-fee items because they are regarded as optional modifications to the base garment. Please note although lymphoedema base garments attract one SAF per pair any 'additional options' ordered on the same form or on their own do not attract any SAFs i.e. no additional fees are payable other than those applicable to the base garment.

Item prescribed	Number of SAFs payable
ActiLymph MTM Ease Thigh Length (<i>Base Garment</i>) with Silicone Band (<i>Additional Option</i>) and T Heel Ankle Seam (<i>Additional Option</i>) x 1 device	1 SAF payable for the base garment but no SAFs payable for the Additional Options
Haddenham Custom Pertex Class 2 thigh high (<i>Base Garment</i>) with Velcro fastening (<i>Additional Option</i>) and Partial Lining (<i>Additional Option</i>) x 1 device	1 SAF payable for the base garment but no SAFs payable for the Additional Options

On blue FP10MDA instalment dispensing forms, payment is based on each occasion the pharmacist provides an instalment to the patient; i.e. each time the patient collects their drug from the pharmacy. For each dispensing episode or "pick-up" of items prescribed on an FP10MDA form,

pharmacy owners will receive a Single Activity Fee (SAF) along with any the other applicable fees for e.g. Controlled Drug fee (for Schedule 2 and 3 CDs) or Packaged dose (PD) fee.

Why is it important to accurately record the number of SAFs an item attracts?

An understanding of how many SAFs an item attracts is important for the correct declaration of monthly item totals on your FP34C submission form submitted via the Manage Your Service (MYS) portal. It is important your FP34C submission is completed accurately with the total number of SAFs declared in your total item's figures section. Currently, the declared item totals (for EPS and paper prescriptions) are used to calculate your pharmacy's Advance payment.

- **For EPS prescriptions** – Some PMR systems can generate reports showing the monthly total number of EPS forms and items to declare as part of the end of month submission.
- **For FP10 prescriptions** – to make counting of the total number of paper items easier for the FP34C declaration each month, pharmacy teams are encouraged to enter a value of the total number of SAFs in the 'For dispenser No. of Prescriptions on form' box in the bottom lefthand corner of the front of the FP10 paper prescription. At the end of each month, pharmacy staff involved in the end of month submission process can add up the SAFs populated in this box to calculate the total number of paper prescription items for the FP34C declaration. Please note any figures contained in the '*For dispenser No. of Prescriptions on form*' box at the front of the FP10 form is not used by the NHSBSA for pricing. NHSBSA rely on the item figures included in the FP34C declaration to calculate the advance payment.

Inaccurate or understated item totals could have an adverse impact on the pharmacy cashflow as the Advance payment may be lower than expected.

Additional Information

Use the NHS medicines database (dm+d) to view information on the number of dispensing fees (SAFs) payable for each item. See our page for [guidance on using dm+d](#).