

Hints & Tips

Dispensing Contractors

Issue 15

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If any dispensing contractor would like to receive Hints & Tips by email, please let us know and we'll add you to the distribution list.

Please email:

nhsbsa.communicationsteam@nhs.net

and put 'Subscribe to Hints & Tips – Dispensing Contractors' in your subject line.

Include the following:

- Name
- What type of contractor you are e.g. pharmacy, appliance, dispensing doctor or GP who dispenses personally administered items (PADM)
- Trading name

If you've got a hint or tip that you would like us to write about in a future edition, please email it to nhsbsa.communicationsteam@nhs.net.

Customer satisfaction surveys

During January and February this year, the NHS Business Services Authority carried out customer satisfaction surveys about NHS Prescription Services and our Information Services.

We've had a really good response and heard from over 450 Information Services users, 275 GP practices and over 300 pharmacies and appliance contractors. We value customer feedback and will use your comments to help us to help us improve our services, so thank you to everyone who took part.

The results are currently being collated and we will be able to share an overview of them in the next editions of Hints and Tips.

EPS R2 declarations on the submission document

EPS R2 contractors should remember to include totals for their electronic messages in the total number of prescriptions and items declared on their monthly submission document.

The total number of prescriptions and items should therefore include both paper and electronic prescriptions and items. Failing to include both could affect your advance payment.

Amending endorsements

If an incorrect computer endorsement is made and a handwritten endorsement is needed to override it, please cross out the whole computerised endorsement. The new handwritten endorsement must include all of the relevant information, such as manufacturer name, list price and pack size.

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Prescription parcels

We've recently noticed an increase in the number of batches that are sent to us in polythene packages, and many of these contain loose prescriptions when they arrive at our office.



Whilst couriers (including UK Mail and Parcel Force) encourage contractors to pack their batches in these bags, please note that contractors are also required to submit their prescriptions securely. This means ensuring that the enclosed prescriptions cannot move around and become mixed up within the package.

These photographs show the condition in which batches packed in polythene bags often reach us. Prescriptions that have become mixed up in transit cause severe processing problems, which could lead to a delay in payment to contractors – particularly those signed up to the Pharmacy Earlier Payment

Scheme (PEPS). You can help to prevent this by making sure your prescriptions are packaged securely **within** the polythene bags, either inside appropriately sized boxes or smaller polythene packets.

Don't forget the following when preparing your batch:

- Please sort your prescriptions into exempt and chargeable, and secure these two separate groups with strong elastic bands or string.
- It's very important that you sort prescription forms alphabetically by doctor name within each group, but there's no need to separate individual doctors with elastic or paper bands.
- Secure forms in the red separators with an elastic band and leave MDA forms unfolded.
- If you pack your batches into boxes, please make sure the boxes are the correct size to ensure that the enclosed prescription forms are secure.



Items to be included in red separators – pharmacy contractors only

The red separators are sent to pharmacy contractors to use when prescriptions contain certain items that need extra attention from our processing staff. Using them helps us to identify these items and ensures they'll be subject to an additional check before final payment is confirmed.

Prescriptions for specials and imported unlicensed medicines should be included in the red separators, but we still find that they are often included in the main body of the batch.

Please include prescription items meeting the following criteria in your red separators:

- items with broken bulk claims
- items with a net ingredient cost of £100 or more
- items where prescribers have included supplementary product information
- specials (unlicensed medicines manufactured in response to a prescription for an individual patient where a licensed product is not available)
- items where prescribers have made a handwritten amendment to the printed text (**note: handwritten prescription forms must not be included unless one of the other criteria are met**)
- prescription forms where the prescriber's signature encroaches on the text of the last item on the prescription form
- items where out of pocket expenses have been claimed.



Please note that including prescriptions that do not meet the above criteria within the red separators could lead to a delay in payment.

Patient exemptions and endorsements in EPS R2

EPS R2 prescribing and dispensing tokens capture the patient's declaration of prescription charge paid or exemption status.

These tokens are stored by NHS Prescription Services, along with a contractor's batch, for use by NHS England and NHS Protect. They are not scanned, so exemption or endorsement information about an EPS R2 prescription cannot be read from them. The exemption or chargeable status of an EPS R2 prescription comes directly from the electronic claim message, along with any dispenser endorsements, i.e. BB, MF, NCSO, XP, IP, SP, ED.

Any tokens submitted as part of a contractor's batch will be returned as a disallowed prescription with the code DA20 – 'As it is a nominated EPS token submitted for processing and reimbursement.'

In EPS R2, contractors should use the actual medicinal product pack (AMPP) when endorsing a brand name, manufacturer or wholesaler. If the product being dispensed cannot be found in EPS R2, then the contractor should use the prescribed name along with an IP endorsement specifying price, pack size and supplier.

Submission of EPS Release 2 tokens

Please remember when submitting Electronic Prescription Service Release 2 (EPS R2) tokens to NHS Prescription Services that these should be secured separately from FP10 prescriptions. This is because FP10 prescriptions are scanned in preparation for processing, whereas EPS R2 tokens are retained for information purposes only and are not scanned.

Please secure your EPS R2 tokens into separate bundles and place these bundles at the top of the relevant groups of FP10 prescriptions (i.e. exempt or chargeable) when you submit these for reimbursement. Although EPS R2 tokens need to be kept together and separate from the main submission, you don't need to sort them into prescriber order. They also do not need to be included in the red separator.

Centrally supplied vaccines

Please remember that where vaccines and other items are obtained and dispensed on a centrally supplied basis by GP practices providing dispensing services (i.e. dispensing doctors and personally administered account types), reimbursement cannot be made by NHS Prescription Services for these items.

The General Medical Services Statement of Financial Entitlements (paragraphs 23.6 and 23.7) states that no payments will be made within dispensing doctor and personally administered account types in respect of:

- products centrally supplied as part of the Childhood Immunisation Programme
- the Shingles vaccine centrally supplied as part of the Shingles Immunisation Programme
- any other product which may be centrally supplied by the Department of Health.

Prescribed orders for these items which have been obtained by dispensing practices on a centrally supplied basis must not therefore be submitted to NHS Prescription Services for reimbursement.



Remote Delivery – dispensing doctors only

Sometimes dispensing doctors deliver dispensed items to patients outside the surgery or for collection at specified locations, such as local shops. Every reasonable effort should be made to obtain a signed declaration from the patient that they have either paid the relevant prescription charge or are exempt.

Where such deliveries are made and the patient is exempt from charges but it is not practical for them to sign the form, dispensing doctors or a responsible member of the practice team may mark the reverse of the prescription forms as 'remote delivery' and sign the forms. This is outlined in Drug Tariff Part XVI Paragraph 3.

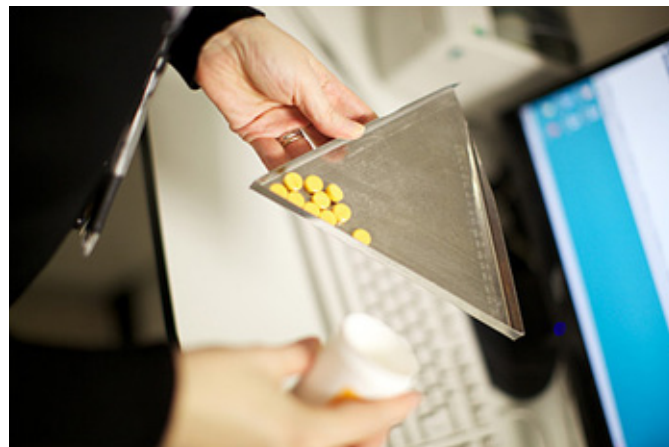
Please remember that this provision applies only where the words 'remote delivery' are marked exactly on the reverse of the prescription form. Alternative or shortened forms of phrasing, e.g. 'RD' or 'Rural Delivery', cannot be used to indicate remote delivery as they are not listed in the Drug Tariff.

Increase to the NHS prescription charge

Remember that the NHS prescription charge in England has increased from 1 April 2014. The charge payable has increased by 20p from £7.85 to £8.05 for each quantity of a drug or appliance.

A charge is payable for each drug or appliance supplied, including each piece of elastic hosiery, unless:

- the prescribed item has been personally administered by the prescriber, or
- the patient is considered age exempt (ref. Drug Tariff Part XVI, Paragraph 5), or
- the patient has completed a declaration of entitlement to exemption or remission on the prescription form.



Please submit and declare separately any prescriptions dispensed at the old rate on your FP34C submission document under "Patient charge paid at old rate" in part 1.

We've produced this quick-reference table so you can see at a glance how the change will affect your patients where multiple charges are payable:

Number of charges	Prescription charge payable
1	£8.05
2	£16.10
3	£24.15
4	£32.20
5	£40.25
6	£48.30
7	£56.35
8	£64.40
9	£72.45

The table can also help you identify where your customers could save money by buying a prescription prepayment certificate (PPC). The cost of a three month PPC will remain at £29.10 and the cost of an annual PPC will remain at £104. [Pharmacies can register to sell the PPC here.](#)

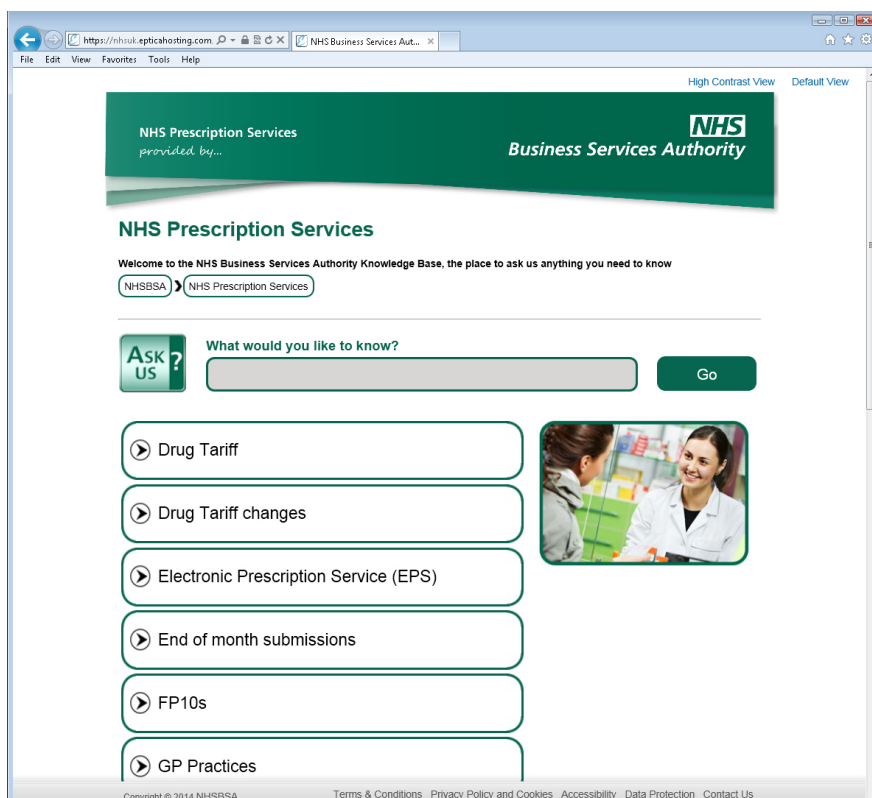
Got a question? Ask Us!

The NHSBSA has launched a new online service for customers.

'Ask Us' gives you the chance to get answers to your questions about Prescription Services. Just go to the NHS Prescription Services website homepage, click on the 'Ask Us' button and then just type in your question.

Ask Us can be used to get an answer to your query 24 hours a day, seven days a week without having to call our helpdesk.

So what are you waiting for? Ask Us today!



Useful links on our website

NHS England and Wales Drug Tariff
www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/prescriptions/drugtariff

NCSO products
<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/PrescriptionServices/935.aspx>

Information about sending in your reimbursement and remuneration claims
<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/2473.aspx>

NHS Prescription Services open days
www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/prescriptions/opendays

For further information please contact the NHS Prescription Services helpdesk on: 0300 330 1349 or email: nhsbsa.prescriptionservices@nhs.net