dm+d and Prescribing Systems
EPS factsheet for prescribers

dm+d and Prescribing Systems

The NHS Dictionary of Medicines and Devices (dm+d) is the standard for transferring medicine and medical device information between clinical systems. It is also required for all EPS Release 2 prescribing. This factsheet covers some common issues when using EPS Release 2.

Re-authorising items

This is the most common reason for an item not being able to be transmitted via EPS Release 2 – where a prescriber is re-authorising a non-dm+d item that has previously been prescribed.

You should delete the old template and re-prescribe using the dm+d item.

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Missing items

Sometimes a medicine or medical device might not be available for prescribing. The main reason for this is the item is in the dm+d, but has not been added to the system.

Occasionally, the product you want to prescribe may not be in the dm+d. In this situation, check whether the item is actually in the dm+d by using the dm+d browser: http://www.ppa.org.uk/systems/pcddbrowserv2_3new/browser.jsp

If you can find the item in the browser, but not in the system, please contact the system supplier to ask why it isn't available. It is a GPSoC requirement (GP- 07.1-02), that the prescribing system database must include all dm+d items.

If an item you wish to prescribe is not in the dm+d, then please contact your system supplier and ask them to raise this with the dm+d team at nhsbsa.dmdenquiries@nhs.net.

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Unavailable or discontinued items

Items in the dm+d will be flagged as unavailable once they are no longer on the market. They will be flagged as soon as the dm+d team are made aware that they are no longer being manufactured. This can lead to a situation where an item has been flagged as unavailable in dm+d, but stock of the item is still available for dispensing. The item can continue to be dispensed until the stock is exhausted or expired.

Where an item has been flagged as unavailable, it is recommended that:

- Patients should not be started on the item long term;
- For patients already on the item, alternatives should be considered;
- If there is a clinical need to start or continue a patient on the unavailable item, it is recommended that the patient is made aware of issues regarding the availability of the item.


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Invalid items

It is recommended that items flagged as 'invalid' in the dm+d shouldn't be prescribed. For new prescriptions this isn't normally a problem, as the system should prevent this from happening. Where it can cause a problem is when:

- The item forms part of a repeat prescribing template;
- The item forms part of a repeat dispensing prescription.

Items in the dm+d are only made invalid where either a mistake has been made or where the dm+d Editorial Policy has been changed. It follows that prescribing an invalid item from dm+d may not be clinically safe.

Re-authorising a prescription that contains an invalid item is not recommended. The best thing to do is to re-prescribe the invalid item by finding the replacement item in the system.

Not Generic Prescribing
Where a product is prescribed that has a supplier in the description, then this is not generic prescribing even if it has a 'generic' name e.g.:

- Simvastatin 10mg tablets (Teva UK Ltd)

Only this product can be dispensed and reimbursed.

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Assorted flavours

For food supplement / food replacement products, it is possible to ask the pharmacy to dispense assorted flavours, without the need to specify which flavours and how many of each. By doing this you can give the patient the flexibility to choose which flavour(s) they want each time.
To do this, you need to:

1. Prescribe a flavour not specified food product at brand/AMP (Actual Medicinal Product) level – these all have the description of 'Flavour Not Specified', e.g.:

- Ensure Plus milkshake style liquid (Flavour Not Specified)
- Fortisip Bottle (Flavour Not Specified)

2. Apply the 'assorted flavours' electronic endorsement. This is usually a tick box in the prescribing system marked AF.

- Don't write 'assorted flavours' or 'multiple flavours' in the dosage instructions or instructions to dispenser as only the electronic endorsement is acceptable.

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Pack prescribing e.g. pump dispensers

There are occasions when a prescriber may wish to prescribe a pump dispenser, rather than tubes of cream. Dermol cream (Dermal Laboratories Ltd) is a product which is available in a 100gram tube and a 500gram pump dispenser. When a prescriber prescribes:

- Dermol cream (Dermal Laboratories Ltd) x 500gram

The dispenser can either dispense 1 x 500gram pump or 5 x 100gram tubes. If the prescriber wants the patient to have the pump dispenser, then they could add a 'note to the dispenser' to request this.

Paracetamol 'caplets'

Some patients who are prescribed paracetamol, prefer to receive a 'capsule shaped tablet' or 'caplet' rather than a round tablet. It is not possible to have a generic / VMP (Virtual Medicinal Product) of paracetamol 500mg caplets in the dm+d, as 'caplet' is not a recognised formulation by either the British Pharmacopoeia or European Pharmacopoeia. If you want your patient to have 'caplets' then you can:

- Prescribe Paracetamol 500mg tablets and add a note to the dispenser or contact the dispenser and ask if they would supply caplets;
- Prescribe a specific brand / AMP, but this would not be generic prescribing. If a supplier has called their product "caplet" this is reflected in the brand / AMP description in dm+d.

Further examples can be found at: hscic.gov.uk/eps/library/dmanddfact2.pdf