

Understanding the EPS payment schedule

This guide has been produced to help pharmacy contractors understand the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) payment schedule.

General advice for pharmacy contractors on making claims for EPS items:

- Pharmacy contractors can claim at any time after the final dispense notification has been sent, but this must be before the 180th day (around six months).
- Some pharmacy systems have developed reports and facilities to identify those prescriptions marked dispensed but still to be claimed; please speak to your system supplier about how you can be made aware of such prescriptions.
- Claim on time, by sending claims throughout the month.
- Claim as soon as practical where there are owings.
- Check you know how to filter and display prescriptions so you can see if there are any prescriptions that need dispense notifications or claims to be sent.
- Learn how to identify messages which have not been submitted using the new prescription tracker hscic.gov.uk/eps/tracker. Where needed, the new version of the

tracker allows users to enter a prescription ID and find out where your patient's prescription is in the process. It is now also possible to search by NHS number and date range. The tracker will confirm if the prescription has left the prescribing site, if it has reached the Spine or if it has been delivered to an alternative dispensing site.

When should you claim?

Claims should be sent to the Pricing Authority no later than the 5th day in the month following the month supply was made (Drug Tariff Part I, Clause 5A). EPS claims can only be submitted after all items in the EPS Release 2 prescription message have been fully dispensed (or not dispensed), so occasionally a pharmacy may not be able to submit the claim due to an owing item.

Further information on this is provided in the Pricing Authority's Hints and Tips publication [tinyurl.com/nhsbsadc18], which is reproduced below:

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is claiming possible at any point during the month?

Yes. See opposite. However, please leave two minutes between sending the final dispense notification and the reimbursement endorsement claim message, as the dispense notification MUST reach the Spine before the claim, or the claim will be rejected.

2. Is claiming impossible when any particular programme/update is running?

Pharmacy staff would need to check with system suppliers whether system updates etc. may affect the ability to claim. Staff should be aware that if a message is unsuccessful, they will receive a rejection message, so they will know that it has been unsuccessful.

3. Can payment be claimed from the Pricing Authority more than 180 days after an item has been dispensed?

No. All electronic claim messages must be sent within 180 days of the dispense notification message being sent (the 'claim reconciliation period'). At this point, the Pricing Authority receives a no-claim message, which means it has been removed from the Spine and can no longer be priced by the Pricing Authority.

4. What if not all of the medicine on a prescription has been dispensed?

All items must either be marked as fully dispensed or not dispensed before you can claim. Where you have dispensed one item but only part of a second item, and the patient has confirmed that they do not wish the remainder to be dispensed, you may choose to mark this item as fully dispensed with the actual quantity supplied. If none of the second item has been dispensed then this should be marked as not dispensed. Remember not to let the prescription reach its expiry.

Further information is available at:

tinyurl.com/hscicepsdispensing
tinyurl.com/hscicepsreimbursement
tinyurl.com/hsciceptracker
psnc.org.uk/epssubmission

Understand the payment schedule for EPS to ensure you get paid in the right month

When a dispense notification has been sent in a given month the electronic claim message must be received by NHS Prescription Services before midnight on the 5th of the following month to secure payment with that month's submission. Remember you can send the claim message just after you have sent your dispense notification, at the end of each day, in batches or weekly; you do not need to wait until the end of the month. See example payment schedule below:

August				September						= August Payment
28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Dispense notification sent on 29th August				Electronic claim message received before midnight on 5th September						
August				September						= September Payment
28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Dispense notification sent on 29th August				Electronic claim message received after midnight on 5th September						
August				September						= September Payment
28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Dispense notification sent on 1st September				Electronic claim message received before midnight on 5th September						