

Universal Credit – a reminder

Our Dispensing and Supply Team explains which Universal Credit recipients qualify for free NHS prescriptions and the process for claiming their exemption from the prescription charge.



With more community pharmacy teams encountering patients in receipt of Universal Credit (UC), PSNC is receiving a larger number of queries on this subject.

UC does not automatically entitle patients to help with their health costs and there can be confusion over who qualifies for free NHS prescriptions. In addition, at present, there is no exemption category for UC available on the reverse of the prescription form/token for patients to mark as a declaration of their exemption.

To assist you, we have created this quick guide to help ensure community pharmacy teams understand what recipients of UC are entitled to, how they can claim it and how they should complete their declaration of exemption.

Eligibility criteria

An individual qualifies for free NHS prescriptions if, on the date they claim help with health costs:

- they receive UC and either had no earnings or had net earnings of £435 or less in their last UC assessment period; **OR**
- they receive UC, which includes an element for a child, or they (or their partner) had limited capability for work and work-related activity, and they either had no earnings or net earnings of £935 or

less in their last UC assessment period.

Note: If someone is part of a couple then the net earning threshold applies to their combined net earnings.

Claiming exemption

At the point at which the patient is asked to declare their exemption on the back of the prescription form, pharmacy staff must:

- Check that the patient has a valid UC award letter notice bearing their name (either as the recipient or because they are a partner or child of the recipient) as evidence of valid entitlement.
- Where patients do not have evidence or where there is doubt over whether the evidence provided is appropriate, mark the "Evidence not Seen" box on the back of the prescription with an X. **Pharmacy staff need not refuse to dispense items on the basis that the patient does not provide evidence of their entitlement to free prescriptions.**
- Ask the patient to tick the appropriate exemption box and sign the declaration. **In the absence of a UC box ask the patient to tick the "income-based Jobseeker's Allowance" exemption, until the prescription forms are updated.**
- Remind the patient they should make sure they are still eligible each month, i.e. in case their circumstances change or check if their earnings are still within the

threshold limits during their most recent monthly assessment period.

- Inform the patient that it is their responsibility to determine the accuracy of the declaration they make. NHS Protect have a responsibility to check for prescription charge exemption fraud and patients found to have wrongly claimed for free prescriptions, could face a penalty charge, the prescription charge required and in some cases prosecution.

If a patient is unsure whether they are entitled to free prescriptions, pharmacy staff should advise the patient to pay for their prescription and provide them with an FP57 form with information on how to claim a refund at a later date.

Useful links

PSNC's webpage on exemptions from the prescription charge: psnc.org.uk/chargeexemptions

The NHS Business Service Authority's guide to UC: tinyurl.com/universalcredithelp

For further information about the Universal Credit please visit the Gov. uk website or NHS Choices.

The Pharmacy Earlier Payment Scheme (PEPS) update

PEPS, a privately financed scheme allowing pharmacies to have early access to their monthly NHS payments, has been awarded to a new provider, Taulia, effective from 1st July 2018 (i.e. for prescriptions dispensed in June 2018).

Community pharmacy contractors already opted into the Scheme should have received communication from the NHS Business Services Authority (NHS BSA) informing them of the change with an opportunity to opt in before the 31st May to continue receiving earlier payments in July.

For contractors currently **NOT** opted in to the Scheme:

- Unless you choose to join the Scheme, NHS BSA will continue

to pay you according to the usual timetable (see tinyurl.com/ybblkows).

- Taulia will accept new contractors who want to opt into the Scheme from 11th May 2018 onwards, with first early payments commencing on 9th July 2018.
- If you are interested in joining the Scheme, please contact the NHS BSA by emailing nhsbsa.pepscontractorpayments@nhs.net for further information.
- Opting into the scheme requires a 30-day notice period.

More information, such as key submission and payment dates, is available at: psnc.org.uk/PEPS

Ask PSNC

The team at PSNC provide pharmacy teams with support and advice on a range of topics related to dispensing and IT. Questions asked in recent weeks have included:

Q. How can I have the SCR role added to my Smartcard?

A. Community pharmacists and pharmacy technicians needing access to the Summary Care Record (SCR) will need to have SCR roles added onto their Smartcard. This can be done using the NHS Digital application form at: tinyurl.com/y7y7c897. The changes can be made remotely.

However, you must first have completed the SCR CPPE e-assessment and then ticked the box under the 'SCR assessment registration process' heading in your profile on the My CPPE section of the CPPE website (find more information at: psnc.org.uk/SCRtraining). Completing this process will allow the Registration Authority (RA) and NHS Digital to see that you have passed the assessment and then provide access to the SCR using your Smartcard.

Q. I have a Smartcard with the FFFFF locum code, how can I have the SCR role added to my Smartcard?

A. Locum pharmacists and pharmacy technicians with the FFFFF Smartcard code should follow NHS Digital guidance, which states:

"If locums with the FFFFF Smartcard code work in regular sites, they may have the site added to their card to reduce the need to use the generic code each time. The RA may check this when SCR access is requested.

If there is no longer the business need for the FFFFF, this may be removed. If the FFFFF code is not present but may be needed, this could be raised with the RA (in situations where many pharmacies are worked at, at short notice). Locums which may work at multiple sites at short notice can apply for SCR locum access using the NHS Digital application form [see tinyurl.com/y7y7c897]."

Q. The manufacturer of a Part IXA appliance says they do not supply the product without charging for postage and packaging, what do I do now?

A. In order to list a product in the Drug Tariff, manufacturers must declare that their product "will be readily available to dispensing contractors either through the normal wholesale network or on equivalent terms" so if a product is unavailable without additional charges from either wholesalers or the manufacturer, the manufacturer may not be meeting the requirements for their product to remain listed in the Drug Tariff.

Please report any products that are unavailable without additional charges to the PSNC Dispensing and Supply Team using our online form at psnc.org.uk/feedback or by calling 0203 1220 810. We will then investigate and, where necessary, escalate the problem to NHS Prescription Services.

As it can take time to reach a resolution with appliance manufacturers, PSNC recommends considering the following points prior to contacting us to report the problem:

- To meet patient need, discuss the problem with the prescriber who may consider issuing a new prescription for an equivalent product which is available without additional charges.
- As a last resort, pharmacies are not contractually obliged to supply appliances that would not normally be supplied in the course of their business. Therefore, if a contractor is faced with making a financial loss through dispensing an appliance, they may choose not to dispense it.

Q. What should I do if I cannot obtain a Part IXA appliance without extra charges?

A. As community pharmacy contractors will not be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses (OOP or XP claims) incurred when items in Part IXA of the Drug Tariff are dispensed, manufacturers must ensure that their products are available to pharmacies without extra charges.

Where a Part IXA appliance is not available from wholesalers without additional charges, we recommend contacting the manufacturer directly to find out how you can obtain the product at the stated Drug Tariff price without additional charges.

Look out for more frequently asked questions next month...

If you would like more information on any of the topics covered, the team at PSNC will be happy to help (0203 1220 810 or e-mail info@psnc.org.uk).

Drug Tariff Watch

A quick summary of the changes due to take place from **1st July 2018**.

Part VIII A additions

Category A:

- Cisplatin 100mg/100ml solution for infusion vials **SC** (1)
- Fentanyl 100micrograms/2ml solution for injection ampoules (10)
- Phenylbutazone 100mg tablets (84)
- Quinagolide 50microgram tablets and Quinagolide 25microgram tablets **SC** (6)
- *Water for injections 100ml vials (25)

Category C:

- Alitretinoin 30mg capsules (30) – *Toctino*
- Alverine 60mg / Simecicone 300mg capsules (90) – *SimAlvia*
- Cefaclor 125mg/5ml oral suspension **R** (100ml) – *Distaclor*
- Cefaclor 250mg/5ml oral suspension **R** (100ml) – *Distaclor*
- Chlorhexidine gluconate 0.05% solution 100ml sachets (10) – *Sterets Unisept*
- Chlorhexidine gluconate 0.05% solution 25ml sachets (25) – *Sterets Unisept*
- Chlorhexidine gluconate 0.06% / Sodium fluoride 0.05% mouthwash sugar free (500ml) – *Corsodyl Daily*
- Darbepoetin alfa 100micrograms/0.5ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 10micrograms/0.4ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 130micrograms/0.65ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 150micrograms/0.3ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 20micrograms/0.5ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 300micrograms/0.6ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes **SC** (1) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 30micrograms/0.3ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 40micrograms/0.4ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 500micrograms/1ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes **SC** (1) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 50micrograms/0.5ml

- solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 60micrograms/0.3ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Darbepoetin alfa 80micrograms/0.4ml solution for injection pre-filled syringes (4) – *Aranesp*
- Diazepam 2.5mg/1.25ml rectal solution tube (5) – *Diazepam RecTubes*
- Fentanyl 1.6mg lozenges (3) – *Actiq*
- Fentanyl 1.6mg lozenges (30) – *Actiq*
- Glyceryl trinitrate 10mg/24hours transdermal patches (28) – *Deponit 10*
- Glyceryl trinitrate 15mg/24hours transdermal patches (30) – *Minitran 15*
- Glyceryl trinitrate 5mg/24hours transdermal patches (28) – *Deponit 5*
- Memantine 10mg soluble tablets sugar free (28) – *Alzhok*
- Memantine 20mg soluble tablets sugar free (28) – *Alzhok*
- Memantine 5mg/10mg/15mg/20mg tablets treatment initiation pack **SC** (28) – *Ebixa*
- Mycophenolic acid 180mg gastro-resistant tablets (120) – *Myfortic*
- Mycophenolic acid 360mg gastro-resistant tablets (120) – *Myfortic*
- Nicotine 14mg/24hours transdermal patches (7) – *Nicotinell TTS 20*
- Nicotine 7mg/24hours transdermal patches (7) – *Nicotinell TTS 10*
- Phenytoin 50mg chewable tablets (200) – *Epanutin Infatabs*
- Piracetam 333.3mg/ml oral solution sugar free (300ml) – *Nootropil 33%*
- Rotigotine 1mg/24hours transdermal patches (28) – *Neupro*
- Rotigotine 3mg/24hours transdermal patches (28) – *Neupro*
- Silver nitrate 40% caustic pencils **SC** (1) – *Avoca*
- Sodium lauryl ether sulfo-succinate 6% / Sodium lauryl ether sulfate 2.7% shampoo **SC** (125ml) – *Dentinox Cradle Cap*
- Somatropin (rbe) 12mg powder and solvent for solution for injection pre-filled disposable devices **SC** (1) – *Genotropin GoQuick*
- Soya oil 82.95% / Lauromacrogols 15% bath oil **SC** (500ml) – *Balneum Plus*
- Tafluprost 15micrograms/ml / Timolol 5mg/ml eye drops 0.3ml unit dose

preservative free (30 (3 x **SC**10)) – *Taptiqom*

- Tetracaine 4% gel **SC** (1.5g) – *Ametop*
- Tramadol 400mg modified-release tablets (28) – *Zamadol 24hr*
- Tramadol 50mg orodispersible tablets sugar free (60) – *Zamadol Melt*

Part VIII A deletions

- Pergolide 50microgram tablets (100) - Category A
- *Water for injections 100ml vials (1) - Category A

Important Part IX deletions

EYE PRODUCTS

Eye drops – Polyvinyl Alcohol

- *PVA 1.4% Tubilux – 15ml*

NASAL PRODUCTS

Nasal drops – Sodium Chloride 0.9%

- *Sandoz 10ml*
- *Tubilux Pharma (Tubilux Brand) 10ml*

Appliances can only be prescribed on NHS prescriptions if the product is listed in Part IX (the Appliances section) of the Drug Tariff. As these items will no longer listed in the Drug Tariff prescriptions prescribed by or endorsed with (for generically written prescriptions) the above brand names would be disallowed.

For generically written prescriptions:

Other brands that meet the same generic description are listed in the Drug Tariff. Please endorse a Drug Tariff listed product.

For prescriptions written by brand:

As these items are no longer listed in the Drug Tariff prescriptions for these items would be disallowed. If you receive a prescription for any of the brands above it should be referred back to the prescriber for an alternative.

For further changes, including amendments to Part VIII A and a full list of Part IX deletions, please visit: ow.ly/peyK30ktE5Q