



## Electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD)

### Introduction

The 2019/20 GMS Contract states that from April 2019, **practices are expected to use Electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD) for all patients for whom it is clinically appropriate**, and practices are encouraged to promote the use of eRD to their registered patients.

### What is Electronic Repeat Dispensing?

Electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD) (also known as 'batch prescribing') allows the prescriber to authorise and issue a batch of repeatable prescriptions for up to 12 months with just one digital signature. All issues of the eRD prescriptions are stored securely on the NHS spine and are automatically downloaded to the patient's nominated community pharmacy at intervals set by the prescriber. Patients are required to give their consent for RD, this can be verbal and formal written consent is not required. It is possible to cancel eRD prescriptions at item level or whole prescription level, which will cancel all subsequent issues on the spine.

### Things to consider

Whilst there are potential benefits for Practices, Community Pharmacies and patients with the use of eRD, there are also a significant number of factors to consider before putting a patient onto eRD, especially when a GP Practice is commencing this service. These considerations include:

- Starting with a very simple selection of patients until all parties involved have a good understanding of how the system works
- Patient selection: In the infancy of implementing eRD, it is recommended that Practices start with a small, non-complex list of patients. We would advise the following criteria for appropriate/non-appropriate patients/medicines (not exhaustive):

Appropriate patients/medicines	Not appropriate patients/medicines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable list of medicines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant changes in the last 6 months</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to date with medication review (completed within previous 6 months prior to first eRD prescription)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes anticipated for the duration of the batch</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to date with any disease monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent unplanned hospital admission (in the past 6 months)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 or less medicines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New conditions diagnosed in the past 6 months</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controlled drugs</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benzodiazepines</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypnotics</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drugs which require close and careful monitoring, e.g., Methotrexate</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unlicensed medicines</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "When required" medication</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unstable</li> </ul>

#### Disclaimer

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### The following also needs to be considered by Practices:

- Items must be synchronised prior to prescribing a batch
- If an item prescribed by eRD needs to be amended then the item would need to be cancelled and an appropriate number of new prescriptions prescribed to sync with the existing batch. The Community Pharmacy would need to be notified that there has been a replacement made so that they can ensure the new item(s) is/are dispensed with the existing prescription
- Medication changes that could result from hospital admissions or PMMT switches are therefore often complex to carry out
- If a GP leaves a Practice, all outstanding eRD batches would need to be cancelled and restarted by another Prescriber within the Practice. If this does not happen, the prescribing costs will follow the GP to their new Practice

If you are considering starting to put patient's onto eRD, please speak to your Prescribing Advisor or Arti Chauhan ([arti.chauhan@nhs.net](mailto:arti.chauhan@nhs.net)) within the CCGs' Prescribing and Medicines Management Team in the first instance who will be able to provide further information and support.

### Other Resources

NHSBSA have resources that they are able to share with GP practices providing information on eRD and a list of potentially appropriate patients, however this is not a definitive list and patients would need to be assessed on an individual basis for their eRD suitability. NHSBSA has also produced a video giving an overview of eRD which can be accessed via:

<https://youtu.be/zzaNeAaeIAo>

### References:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/19-20-gms-contract-guidance-audit-requirements-v2.pdf>

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