

February 2017

PSNC Briefing 013/17: Quality Payments – what pharmacy contractors need to do

On 20th October 2016, the Government imposed a two-year funding package on community pharmacy; this included a Quality Payments (QP) Scheme. On 23rd December 2016, NHS England published its guidance on the gateway criteria for the QP Scheme and on 27th February 2017 they published guidance on the quality criteria.

PSNC Briefing 067/16, published in November 2016, explained how the scheme would work and it detailed guidance and resources for community pharmacy contractors. At that time, some details relating to the gateway and quality criteria for the QP scheme still needed to be clarified by NHS England, so as further information became available, PSNC included this on the QP pages of the PSNC website (psnc.org.uk/quality). Now that most of the outstanding matters have been clarified, following publication of the NHS England guidance documents, this PSNC Briefing provides revised guidance to contractors on engaging with the QP Scheme.

Background and PSNC's view of the scheme

The Department of Health (DH) introduced a QP Scheme as part of the changes to the Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework (CPCF) in 2017/18, which commenced in December 2016.

The scheme is voluntary – contractors do not need to engage with it – but PSNC recommends that all contractors should seek to meet as many of the quality criteria as possible. Contractors that successfully meet the requirements will receive QP which will be funded from a £75 million budget that is part of the overall community pharmacy funding budget of £2.592 billion.

During discussions with DH and NHS England in 2016, PSNC proposed the introduction of a QP Scheme, as part of a wider package with appropriate funding being made available to contractors. PSNC therefore supports, in principle, the move to recognise and reward quality within the CPCF; however, the Committee is concerned that the way the scheme is being implemented, as part of the imposition of funding reductions on contractors, means that it will put additional demands on contractors without additional funding being made available.

That said, PSNC would expect most contractors to want to maximise their achievement of the QP requirements and the available funding. Contractors will, however, want to consider carefully which elements of the scheme they engage with and the costs that they will incur in comparison to the funding available for each element.

No decisions have been made by DH and NHS England on the future of the QP Scheme beyond 2017/18.

The gateway criteria

To qualify for payments related to successfully meeting the QP Scheme quality criteria, contractors must also meet **four gateway criteria**; passing the gateway criteria will not itself earn any payment for the contractor:

- 1) the contractor must be offering at the pharmacy Medicines Use Reviews (MUR) or the New Medicine Service (NMS) or must be registered to provide the NHS Urgent Medicine Supply Advanced Service (NUMSAS);

- 2) the NHS Choices entry for the pharmacy must be up to date;
- 3) pharmacy staff at the pharmacy must be able to send and receive NHS mail; and
- 4) the contractor must be able to demonstrate ongoing utilisation of the Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) at the pharmacy premises.

The quality criteria

Meeting the gateway criteria and achievement of some or all of the quality criteria set for the scheme, described below, will mean a contractor is eligible for payments under the scheme. The assessment of whether a criterion has been met will need to be made in relation to two **review points** – **28th April 2017** and **24th November 2017**. The payment to the contractor will depend on how many of the quality criteria they meet:

Domain	Criteria	Number of review points at which it can be claimed	Points at any one review point	Total points over the two reviews points
Patient safety	Written safety report at premises level available for inspection at review point, covering analysis of incidents and incident patterns (taken from an ongoing log), evidence of sharing learning locally and nationally, and actions taken in response to national patient safety alerts.	One	20	20
Patient safety	On the day of the review 80% of registered pharmacy professionals working at the pharmacy have achieved level 2 safeguarding status for children and vulnerable adults in the last two years.	Two	5	10
Patient experience	On the day of the review, the results of the Community Pharmacy Patient Questionnaire from the last 12 months is publicly available on the pharmacy's NHS Choices page or for distance selling pharmacies it is displayed on their website and the NHS Choices service desk has been notified as per the NHS England guidance document, "Pharmacy Quality Payments – Quality Criteria Guidance".	One	5	5
Public health	On the day of the review, the pharmacy is a Healthy Living Pharmacy level 1 (self-assessment).	One	20	20
Digital	On the day of the first review, the pharmacy can demonstrate a total increase in access to Summary Care Records (from Monday 27 June 2016 to Sunday 27 November 2016 compared to Monday 28 November 2016 to Sunday 30 April 2017); and on the day of the second review, the pharmacy can demonstrate a total increase in access to Summary Care Records (from Monday 3 October 2016 to Sunday 30 April 2017 compared to Monday 1 May 2017 to Sunday 26 November 2017).	Two	5	10
Digital	On the day of the review, the pharmacy's NHS 111 Directory of Services entry is up to date.	Two	2.5	5
Clinical effectiveness	On the day of the review, the pharmacy can show evidence of asthma patients, for whom more than 6 short acting	Two	10	20

	bronchodilator inhalers were dispensed without any corticosteroid inhaler within a 6 month period, are referred to an appropriate health care professional for an asthma review.			
Workforce	On the day of the review, 80% of all pharmacy staff working in patient facing roles are trained 'Dementia Friends'.	Two	5	10
Total number of points				100

Payments

Each criterion has been designated a number of points, which total 100. Three of the quality criteria, which account for 45 points between them, only need to be met once in the year and therefore can only be claimed for once at one of the two review points.

At each review point, to receive payment where the gateway criteria and some or all quality criteria have been met, contractors will need to make a declaration to the NHS Business Services Authority (NHS BSA) on a web-based form.

The web-based form will open for declarations:

- For review Point One (28th April 2017) from **Monday 10th April 2017 at 09:00** and will close on **Friday 12th May 2017 at 23:59**; and
- For review Point Two (24th November 2017) from **Monday 13th November 2017 at 09:00** and will close on **Friday 8th December 2017 at 23:59**

Payments due from each review point will be paid as part of the full value of services for that month (end of June 2017 for April's review point and at the start of February 2018 for November's review point).

The value of each point has been set at £64. This is set at a level that would deliver £75 million assuming 100% of pharmacies achieved all 100 points. However, it is unlikely that all pharmacies will achieve all the quality criteria across the two review points. Therefore, after the two review points, there will be a reconciliation process, at which the remaining funding will be divided between qualifying contractors based on the number of points they have achieved over the two review points. This reconciliation payment will not have to be claimed and will be paid with the full value of services payment for March 2018 (i.e. end of May 2018).

To ensure the overall amount earned by one contractor for the QP Scheme remains proportionate, a cap of £128 per point will be allowed in totality including the reconciliation payment. To reach the cap would require less than 50% of pharmacies achieving less than 50% of the quality criteria. Any funding remaining after the reconciliation payment will be paid through other fees and allowances to contractors.

PhAS and the QP Scheme

All pharmacies on the pharmaceutical list in England (i.e. excluding Local Pharmaceutical Services (LPS) contracts) are eligible to take part in the QP Scheme, including pharmacies that are part of the [Pharmacy Access Scheme \(PhAS\)](#) and distance selling pharmacies. When the 'top-up funding' that PhAS pharmacies receive is calculated, it is assumed that the contractor will achieve 100 points within the QP Scheme and the value of those points is deducted before the final PhAS payment is set. This is described in the following diagram:



As with all other pharmacies, PhAS pharmacies should therefore seek to meet as many quality criteria as possible and should claim the appropriate funding in the same way as all other pharmacies.

How to get going with meeting the requirements

Once a contractor has made the decision to take part in the QP Scheme, we recommend that they start to work towards achieving the points as quickly as possible:

1) Decide which quality criteria you plan to meet and by which review point

Consider the costs you are likely to incur to achieve each criterion; some will take more time and staff resource to achieve (e.g. Healthy Living Pharmacy (HLP) level 1), and some are much more complex than others.

2) Develop a timed plan for achieving the gateway and quality criteria

Developing a timed plan will help contractors and their teams to ensure they have plenty of time to achieve all the criteria that they intend to meet. When assessing the order in which to tackle the criteria, contractors will want to ensure they meet the requirements of the gateway criteria and they should also consider which quality criteria can be claimed at both review points – these should probably be their early priorities.

Our suggested plan for contractors

Contractors and their teams will need to decide how to approach achieving the gateway and quality criteria in a way that works for them. There will be no ‘one size fits all approach’, but in this section, we suggest one approach to prioritising activity to meet all the criteria, which contractors may want to consider adopting.

The starting point for contractors should be to read both the NHS England guidance documents:

[Pharmacy Quality Payments – Gateway Criteria Guidance](#)

[Pharmacy Quality Payments – Quality Criteria Guidance](#)

Our suggested plan covers all the gateway and quality criteria; we have prioritised the order of the various criteria so that criteria that can be achieved at both review points are generally first, as it is important that an early start is made on achieving them.



This suggested plan is a revised version of the plan PSNC published in November 2016, now most of the details related to the scheme, which were outstanding in later 2016, have been clarified by NHS England in their two guidance documents.

A worksheet containing the suggested plan, on which you can keep track of your achievement of the gateway and quality criteria can be downloaded from the [PSNC website](#). PSNC has also worked with Pinnacle Health Partnership LLP to make an electronic version of this worksheet available to all contractors on [PharmOutcomes](#).

The suggested plan contains links to the individual section of the PSNC website, where guidance and support materials are available to help contractors to achieve each criterion. The italicised and shaded text is the Drug Tariff wording for the criteria.

1	<p>Use of the NHS Summary Care Record (SCR)</p> <p><i>On the day of the first review, the pharmacy can demonstrate a total increase in access to Summary Care Records (from Monday 27 June 2016 to Sunday 27 November 2016 compared to Monday 28 November 2016 to Sunday 30 April 2017); and on the day of the second review, the pharmacy can demonstrate a total increase in access to Summary Care Records (from Monday 3 October 2016 to Sunday 30 April 2017 compared to Monday 1 May 2017 to Sunday 26 November 2017. (Note – the wording of this requirement was amended in the March 2017 Drug Tariff.)</i></p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Can claim at both review points</p> <p>Total of 10 points (£640)</p>
2	<p>Ongoing utilisation of the EPS</p> <p><i>On the day of the review, the pharmacy contractor must be able to demonstrate ongoing utilisation of the Electronic Prescription Service at the pharmacy premises.</i></p> <p>This is a gateway criterion and it must therefore be complied with before any payment can be achieved.</p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Gateway criterion – <u>must</u> be completed</p>
3	<p>Provision of one specified Advanced Service</p> <p><i>On the day of the review, the contractor must be offering at the pharmacy Medicines Use Review (MUR) or New Medicine Service (NMS); or must be registered for NHS Urgent Medicine Supply Advanced Service Pilot.</i></p> <p>This is a gateway criterion and it must therefore be complied with before any payment can be achieved.</p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Gateway criterion – <u>must</u> be completed</p>
4	<p>NHSmail</p> <p><i>On the day of the review, Pharmacy staff at the pharmacy must be able to send and receive NHS mail (Note: For the April 2017 Review, evidence of application for an NHS Mail account by 1 February 2017 will be acceptable).</i></p> <p>This is a gateway criterion and it must therefore be complied with before any payment can be achieved.</p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Gateway criterion – <u>must</u> be completed</p>
5	<p>NHS Choices entry</p> <p><i>On the day of the review, the NHS Choices entry for the pharmacy must be up to date.</i></p> <p>This is a gateway criterion and it must therefore be complied with before any payment can be achieved.</p>	<p>Gateway criterion – <u>must</u> be completed</p>

	PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion	
6	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p><i>On the day of the review 80% of registered pharmacy professionals working at the pharmacy have achieved level 2 safeguarding status for children and vulnerable adults in the last two years</i></p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Can claim at both review points</p> <p>Total of 10 points (£640)</p>
7	<p>Dementia Friends</p> <p><i>On the day of the review, 80% of all pharmacy staff working in patient facing roles are trained 'Dementia Friends'</i></p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Can claim at both review points</p> <p>Total of 10 points (£640)</p>
8	<p>Clinical effectiveness – over use of asthma treatments</p> <p><i>On the day of the review, the pharmacy can show evidence of asthma patients, for whom more than 6 short acting bronchodilator inhalers were dispensed without any corticosteroid inhaler within a 6 month period, are referred to an appropriate health care professional for an asthma review.</i></p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Can claim at both review points</p> <p>Total of 20 points (£1,280)</p>
9	<p>NHS 111 Directory of Services</p> <p><i>On the day of the review, the pharmacy's NHS 111 Directory of Services entry is up to date.</i></p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Can claim at both review points</p> <p>Total of 5 points (£320)</p>
10	<p>Healthy Living Pharmacy (HLP) self-assessment</p> <p><i>On the day of the review, the pharmacy is a Healthy Living Pharmacy level 1 (self-assessment).</i></p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Can claim at <u>ONE</u> review point</p> <p>Total of 20 points (£1,280)</p>
11	<p>Community Pharmacy Patient Questionnaire (CPPQ) results</p> <p><i>On the day of the review, the results of the Community Pharmacy Patient Questionnaire from the last 12 months is publicly available on the pharmacy's NHS Choices page or for distance selling pharmacies it is displayed on their website and the NHS Choices service desk has been notified as per the NHS England guidance document, "Pharmacy Quality Payments – Quality Criteria Guidance". (Note – the wording of this requirement was amended in the March 2017 Drug Tariff.)</i></p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Can claim at <u>ONE</u> review point</p> <p>Total of 5 points (£320)</p>
12	<p>Patient safety report</p> <p><i>Written safety report at premises level available for inspection at review point, covering analysis of incidents and incident patterns (taken from an ongoing log), evidence of sharing learning locally and nationally, and actions taken in response to national patient safety alerts.</i></p> <p>PSNC guidance and resources to support contractors to meet this criterion</p>	<p>Can claim at <u>ONE</u> review point</p> <p>Total of 20 points (£1,280)</p>

Collating your evidence and NHS England monitoring of the scheme

Contractors can use the resources available on the PSNC website (links above) to collate their evidence of compliance with the various gateway and quality criteria, which can then be stored in a file within the pharmacy. Contractors' declarations of compliance with the gateway and quality criteria will be subject to spot checks by NHS England as part of their usual monitoring process for the CPCF.

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information please contact [Zainab Al-Kharsan, Service Development Pharmacist](#).