

Payment Factsheet 3: Prescription Returns

1. How to avoid returns: some common issues PSNC has identified

Approximately 0.25-0.3% of prescriptions are returned to pharmacies each month for clarification. The majority of these are returned because of insufficient or unclear endorsements. To try and help reduce the number of returned items, we have compiled a list of common issues for pharmacy staff to be aware of: *(please note this list is not exhaustive)*

Issue	Examples of the problem	How to avoid it
A branded product is marketed by multiple suppliers	Dianette tablets are manufactured by Bayer Plc but are supplied to Mylan under third party livery. When a prescriber issues a branded prescription for Dianette tablets, a pharmacist can dispense either the Bayer or Mylan product.	Endorse the name of the supplier as per the packaging. Please visit the PSNC website (psnc.org.uk/returns) for a list of products known to be affected by this issue. Please note: If the prescription is resubmitted without the required endorsement, reimbursement will be made based on the branded product with the lowest price (as per Part II Clause 7C of the Drug Tariff).
Generic prescription for inhalers which include a trademarked name e.g. Accuhaler or Easibreathe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fluticasone propionate 100micrograms/dose dry powder Accuhaler ● Beclometasone 100micrograms/dose breath actuated Easi-Breathe inhaler 	The pharmacy should dispense the proprietary product which meets this description and endorse the prescription accordingly.
No pharmaceutical form listed on the prescription	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paracetamol 120mg/5ml sugar-free – this could be requesting either oral solution or suspension ● Metronidazole 200mg PO - this could be requesting either tablets or suspension 	Speak to the prescriber to confirm the form to be supplied and endorse the prescription accordingly using the “PC” endorsement. Please note: If a Schedule 2 or 3 Controlled Drug prescription item has no form, this must be returned to the prescriber for amendment.
Total quantity not stated but clear from dosage instructions	A prescription which states ‘ <i>Take 1 tablet TDS for one week</i> ’ but does not include a total quantity.	Endorse the total quantity dispensed. Please note: If a Schedule 2 or 3 Controlled Drug prescription item has no total quantity stated, this must be returned to the prescriber for amendment.
Endorsement of non-Part VIIIA generic products	A prescription calls for Diltiazem 120mg modified-release capsules and Adizem was dispensed against this; the endorsement will need to specify whether Adizem- SR or Adizem- XL capsules are being dispensed as both meet this generic description.	Endorse the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● pack size used to dispense from; ● brand name or the name of the manufacturer or supplier from whom the product was purchased; ● if the product is less common, the purchase price before discount (ex VAT).



2. What do the codes on my returned prescriptions actually mean?

When a copy of a prescription is returned to a pharmacy for clarification, payment is only delayed for the product(s) identified. All other products on the form have already been processed and reimbursed as usual. The form will specify which item number has been referred back for additional endorsement information. The following table explains what these return codes mean:

Endorsement required	Return code (these all start 'RB' for "referred back")																
	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E	3A	3B	3C	3D	3E	4	5
Supplier or manufacturer	✓	✓			✓											Not applicable for pharmacy accounts	
Pack size used (e.g. 28/56)	✓		✓														
Basic price per pack, ex. VAT	✓		✓														
Type of liquid				✓													
Presentation						✓	✓										
Strength						✓		✓									
Quantity dispensed						✓			✓		✓		✓				
Product name										✓							
Size (length or width)											✓	✓					
DT catalogue number											✓				✓		
Type of appliance											✓			✓			
Size of vial, ampoule or cartridge																	✓
	1A	1B	1C	1D	1E	2A	2B	2C	2D	2E	3A	3B	3C	3D	3E	4	5

3. Resubmitting returned prescriptions

When resubmitting in the next month's prescription bundle, these returned forms should be sorted at the top of the 'exempt' or 'charge paid' group as appropriate. The number of returned forms and items being resubmitted should also be declared, in the relevant boxes on Part 1 of the FP34c Submission Document.

Please remember only the number of items returned for clarification where payment has been delayed should be declared on the submission document. This is because payment will already have been received for any other items on the returned forms.

4. Disallowed prescriptions

Copies of prescriptions returned marked as 'disallowed' let pharmacy contractors know if an item has not been passed for payment by the Pricing Authority as it is not permitted on an NHS prescription. These copies can be used as learning opportunities for pharmacy staff to help prevent future disallowed items.

Guidance on whether a particular product can be dispensed on an NHS prescription is available from the Pricing Authority's helpdesk (0300 330 1349) or from the PSNC Information Team (info@psnc.org.uk or 0203 120 810).

Where a copy of a prescription has been returned incorrectly marked as 'disallowed', it should be returned to the Pricing Authority with the normal monthly prescription submission. The resubmitted item should be placed on the top of the bundle and clearly marked "Pricing Authority Error – resubmitted for reimbursement" (or equivalent).

PSNC closely monitors problems with copies of prescriptions being returned for clarification incorrectly. Please report suspected incorrect returns to the PSNC Information Team who will ensure that this is fed back to the Pricing Authority.

For the most up to date information on CIP/pricing, please visit the **PSNC website**: psnc.org.uk/cip