

NHS Pensions Update – January 2024

Welcome to the January 2024 NHS Pensions Employer Update.

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- Pensions Online (PoL) downtime (All employers)
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- Price Change for Additional Pension Payment and ERRBO (All employers)
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- NHS Pensions members events (To be shared with all members)

Sharing our performance

Table 1- Total Transactions (December 2023)

Item	Volume
Total Transactions	87,896
Apply Annual Increases	1,813
Buy Additional Pension	881
Buy AVCs	74
Buy ERRBO	32
Calculate and Pay Retirement Benefits	7,221
Claim Protection of Pay	12
Complaints	82
Death Benefits Calculated and Paid	5,635
Defer Benefits	1,199
Determine Continuing Entitlement	46
Elect for Scheme Pays	256
Make Enquiry	43,968
Manage Complaint	930

Manage Data	10,644
Manage Ongoing Payments	1,074
Manage Overpayment	57
Nominate or Change Beneficiary	1,406
Pension Share/Pensions on Divorce	958
Recalculate Retirement Benefits	2,659
Receive Estimate of Benefits	4,754
Receive Savings Statement	845
Refund of Contributions	1,730
Transfers	1,702

Table 2 - First Retirements and Pensioners (December 2023)

Item	Volume
On Time	98.67%
Amount paid in Lump Sums	£241,178,165.82
Amount of Pension Paid	£1,028,693,905.21
No. Pensioners in Payment	1,128,324

Table 3 – Employer Helpline statistics (December 2023)

Item	Volume
Total Volume Calls	2,370
Average Handling Time (s)	471
Average Speed of Answer (s)	29

Table 4 - Member Helpline statistics (December 2023)

Item	Volume
Total Volume Calls	24,720
Average Handling Time (s)	558
Average Speed of Answer (s)	6

Please note, from May 2021 we amended the way we report the number of transactions shown in these tables. The number provided for each function, now records all items of work or transactions we have undertaken within that service area, including the handling of calls, emails and support work. This change has been made to provide a more comprehensive overview of transactional volumes on a month-by-month basis.

Pensions Online (POL) downtime

POL will be available throughout January and February between 7am and 7pm apart from the following dates when there will be downtime for scheduled system maintenance:

- Saturday 17 February
- Sunday 25 February

If we do need to bring POL down at short notice for urgent maintenance, we will advise you as soon as we can in advance via the POL homepage.

Disclosure of senior managers' remuneration Greenbury 2024

The Greenbury functionality within Pensions Online (POL) is now available.

Please provide the best estimated pay figure, as you can only make **one** submission.

Requests for disclosure information should be received by NHS Pensions between 15 January 2024 and 28 February 2024 to enable us to provide you with the necessary information to meet your reporting timescales.

Key Points to note for this year:

- Public Service Pension Remedy (McCloud) rollback impact - for a member affected by rollback you'll notice a difference between the benefits and Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) we quote for this year compared to the benefits and CETV we quoted for year ending 2023. You'll need to include a disclosure note in your report to explain these differences and further guidance is available on our website: [Technical guidance | NHSBSA](#). If you're unsure if a senior manager is affected by the remedy, you can find useful information on our website: [Understanding if your NHS Pension is affected by changes to public sector pensions | NHSBSA](#)
- The factors used to calculate CETVs for all members increased in March 2023, this will also affect the calculation of the real increase in the CETV.
- You should avoid using the comments box on POL unless necessary as this prevents cases running through the system automatically.
- Employment should be updated to 31 March 2023. Please make sure you have checked this before you submit, or there will be a delay to the processing of the CETV calculation.
- We do not anticipate any queries from you until you have received your calculation as these will also cause a delay to our processing. If you then have a query about an individual member, please submit on the POL Comments box.
- If a member was part of the exercise last year the previous year's figures will be available to view by pressing the 'show / compare button'.
- If you need help with technical POL issues, please call the Employer Helpline on 0300 330 1353 (press option 2 for POL).
- If you require a detailed understanding of the calculation, please refer to the guidance available on our website: [Technical guidance | NHSBSA](#)

Please [read the article in full on our website](#) for all the key points you'll need to be aware of for this year.

Price Change for Additional Pension Payment and ERRBO

Following a change to the discount rate used for public service pension schemes that HM Treasury announced on 30 March 2023, the prices used to calculate Additional Pension purchases have changed. These will be implemented from 1 April 2024. All members who are currently paying monthly contributions to purchase Additional Pension will be contacted shortly.

In general, the cost to purchase Additional Pension has increased. Members who wish to purchase Additional Pension by a single lump sum may wish to do so prior to the price increase in April 2024.

There has also been a price increase for Early Retirement Reduction Buy Out agreements. Members who have entered into such an agreement will also be contacted shortly regarding the increase.

Partial Retirement Calculator is available

The issue that was affecting the Partial Retirement Calculator has been resolved.

The Partial Retirement Calculator can be accessed from the partial retirement page of the website: [Partial retirement | NHSBSA](#)

As a reminder, members can use the Partial Retirement Calculator to see:

- how much lump sum and annual pension they might want to claim when they take partial retirement
- the amount their pension benefits will grow for every year they carry on working as a member of the 2015 Scheme, helping them to plan when might be the best time to fully retire – the calculator will show figures for up to 8 years in the future
- any impact on benefits caused by 'abatement' in the first 12 months after partial retirement – this refers to the effect on pension when pay after partial retirement added to pension is more than salary before partial retirement
- for members affected by McCloud, how much their pension is worth depending on the benefits they choose for their pensionable service between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022
- what percentage of their pension to take at partial retirement to avoid having to repay overpaid pension when they make their McCloud choice later on – this is referenced in the calculator as 'safe percentage'.

If you have any difficulties accessing the calculator, try clearing the cache and cookies in your web browser. If you're unsure how to do this, there are guides available online - this process can differ depending on the web browser you're using.

You may need to adjust the zoom in your web browser to view the calculator fully.

Further details on the information members need to have to hand are also available on the partial retirement page of the website: [Partial retirement | NHSBSA](#).

McCloud Remedy Status

An addition has been added to Pension Online that refers to McCloud.

The new Pensions Online functionality will be called 'McCloud Remedy Status' and will appear on the list of options from the main 'Employer menu' page in Pensions Online and will be shown at the bottom of the list of options.

Within this new functionality you will not be able to amend any information or submit any details to NHS Pensions.

The 'McCloud Remedy Status' option allows you to check on all your staff members who are currently paying pension contributions to the NHS through your organisation and have an 'Active' employment under your EA/GP code to see if they were eligible for McCloud remedy and whether they are Remedy Eligible or not.

Selecting the 'McCloud Remedy Status' option will list all your staff members who are currently paying pension contributions to the NHS through your organisation and have an 'Active' employment under your EA/GP code on our system and the information supplied on the form is – Surname – Forename – NI Number - SD Number – Remedy Eligible. The 'Remedy Eligibility' field will either have an 'Y' or 'N' populated to advise you if the member of staff is eligible for McCloud remedy or not.

A new POL Guide is available on our website: [Pensions Online | NHSBSA](#)

NHS Pension contributions remittances

For those Employing Authorities who do not utilise or have not onboarded the Making Contribution Payments (MCP) or (Pensions Online) POL platforms we would like to remind you to include a payment remittance when submitting your contribution payments, these should be forwarded to- eafinance@nhsbsa.nhs.uk.

Emailing a remittance when submitting your contribution payments will ensure that your payment data is promptly allocated, minimising the risk of incurring a Late Payment Charge.

Using the MCP service for paying pension contributions to NHS Pensions offers several benefits:

- **Convenience:** The MCP service streamlines the payment process, providing a convenient and user-friendly platform for submitting payments and remittance data.
- **Timeliness:** By utilising MCP, employers can ensure that their pension contributions are submitted in a timely manner, reducing the risk of delays, or missed deadlines.
- **Payment Options:** MCP offers flexibility in payment methods. Employers can choose between the 'Automated' option for users with a Direct Debit mandate, or the 'Manual' option for those who need to make separate payments by BACS or another payment method.

- **Allocation Efficiency:** MCP facilitates the efficient allocation of contributions, ensuring that the funds are promptly attributed to the applicable Employing Authorities account.
- **Risk Reduction:** By using the MCP service, employers can minimize the risk of incurring Late Payment Charges, as timely and accurate payments and data will be allocated correctly.

Please note that by choosing the Direct Debit mandate you are in control of the date this payment leaves your account.

Overall, the MCP service simplifies the payment process, improves efficiency, and helps employers meet their pension contribution obligations to NHS Pensions effectively.

For further information on onboarding the MCP online platform please email: stakeholderengagement@nhsbsa.nhs.uk or visit our website: [Make Contribution Payments - POL & non-POL | NHSBSA.](#)

Capacity Code reminder

Employers are reminded that when a member with a 03, 08 or 10 capacity code changes from part time to whole time or vice versa, or hours to sessions, the employment must be closed and reopened on Pensions Online (POL) to ensure benefit calculations are correct. This is also the case for members who are taking partial retirement.

NHS Cost Claim Back Scheme

The NHS Cost Claim Back Scheme is for members affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy

Those affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy (PSPR), sometimes called the McCloud remedy, will have a choice of 1995/2008 Scheme or 2015 Scheme pension benefits for their membership during the remedy period – the remedy period is from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.

What is covered by the NHS Cost Claim Back Scheme

This scheme allows members directly affected by the remedy, or their personal representatives or designated persons, to apply to claim back direct financial losses or tax losses, incurred because of the remedy. The remedy has been designed to correct the age-related discrimination identified in the McCloud ruling, and choosing pension benefits for the remedy period will be straightforward for most members. However, a small minority with more complex situations may need professional advice. Members can apply to

recover the cost of this advice, as well as any other direct financial or tax losses, using the Cost Claim Back Scheme.

Where to find the scheme rules and application form

The full details of the NHS PSPR Cost Claim Back Scheme are explained in [the scheme rules](#). Members should read these rules before completing a [claim form](#). The types of losses this claim form covers need to meet conditions 1 or 2 in paragraph 5 of the scheme rules.

[Read the full article on our website.](#)

Stakeholder engagement events

The Stakeholder Engagement Team run a series of events throughout the year providing regular updates and delivering educational training.

Please see the [employer events section](#) of the [Employer Hub](#) for upcoming events. These events are free of charge, and some include CPD accreditation. The NHSBSA does not endorse any other third-party training events.

If your organisation would like to request training or attendance directly from the Stakeholder Engagement Team, please complete the [event/meeting request form](#) and email the team for consideration: stakeholderengagement@nhsbsa.nhs.uk.

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Administration foundation course dates

This course is available to all new local administrators of the NHS Pension Scheme who are less than 12 months in post and provides an overview of what is expected of you as an NHS Pension Scheme administrator throughout a Scheme year.

At the end of the course, you will have a high-level understanding of the actions required to enable you to administer the NHS Pension Scheme at a local level.

The course could also be used as a refresher course for anyone restarting in local NHS Pension Scheme administration. The details for the next available courses are as follows:

- [Tuesday 5 March, 10am to 11am](#)

GP Practice Manager training

Further dates are available for the Level 1 and Level 2 GP practice manager events, which include educational training tailored for practice managers, delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Practice managers need to attend the whole training session to receive a Continued Professional Development (CPD) accreditation.

Level 1 GP Practice Manager events

This session includes information on the NHS Pension Scheme website, Annual Benefit Statements, roles and responsibilities, Pensions Online (POL), the AW8 and the member journey.

Details for the next available courses are on the [employer events section](#) of the [Employer Hub](#).

Level 2 GP Practice Manager events

These sessions include roles and responsibilities, flexible retirement, leave overview, ill health, and family benefits.

Details for the next available courses are on the [employer events section](#) of the [Employer Hub](#).

NHS Pensions member events

The NHS Pensions member events aim to help members understand everything they need to know about their NHS pension and how to navigate through the Scheme.

We have a number of events planned throughout the year to help them which includes:

- Understand what the NHS Pension Scheme is
- Find out all they need to know about their Total Reward Statement and Annual Benefit Statement
- Explore their retirement options