

NHS Pensions Employer Newsletter 1 - February 2018


We would like you to spend a few minutes providing feedback for this newsletter, please complete this [short survey](#).

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1. Sharing our performance – December 2017

Our current performance

The table below shows our recent monthly performance for pension award processing:

	Number of awards due to be paid in month (our target)	Number of awards cleared within the month (our performance)	Completion rate
	3,143	3,096	98.5%

Our Christmas plans were achieved by Pensions staff working additional hours during November and December to ensure the work payable during the Christmas period was cleared in advance. This enabled the majority of people to have a nice break and enjoy the festivities with their families without impacting the work position.

Officer and Practitioner Awards continue to be in a good processing position. We are closely monitoring the volume of applications coming through for our peak processing period at the end of March and have already started to process some of them.

The turnaround time for manual estimates has improved significantly, continuing to improve the service we provide to our members.

The Greenbury window opened much earlier this year giving employers a bit longer to submit their requests.

Progress continues in our priority work area of sub awards. The current plan to recover in this area is April for Practitioners and August for Officers. We will keep you updated on this.

2. Stakeholder engagement update

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent events in Peterborough, Carlisle, Leeds and London. We have received positive feedback which we appreciate and will use as we work to improve these events to meet your needs.

Our upcoming events



Date	Employer type	Location
7 March 2018	ESR	Birmingham
April	GP Practice	Birmingham
April	GP Practice	Exeter
May	GP Practice	Leeds

Service Improvement and Development Board update

The latest Service Improvement and Development Board took place on 11 January where the change and improvement log was reviewed and updates were provided to the board.

We are waiting on a number of impact assessments but we did report confirmation that some changes have been approved and will be developed over the course of the next couple of months. A couple of examples are:

- Update to 'ADP 4' form on Pensions Online (POL) to include more information such as whether members have Mental Health Officer (MHO) or Special Class (SC) status, whole time/part time information, additional voluntary contribution(AVC)/transfer in data
- 'Non updated records' form on Pensions Online will be renamed 'Non updated years' and be exportable to Excel.

Updates on progress of these deliverables will be provided and we will be seeking involvement from some employers to assist with the look and feel of the new data nearer the time.

3. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

As you may be aware, new data protection regulations will come into UK law on 25 May 2018. GDPR will update the Data Protection Act and is more stringent in its rules.

We will need to be much more specific in how we describe to people how we wish to use their personal information. A great deal of our documents and forms will need to be updated with new 'privacy notices'. Therefore, we ask that you **do not** stock pile forms or documents so that your members will always have access to the latest version with the most up to date information.

The NHS Business Services Authority is currently looking at the impact GDPR will have on its services, including NHS Pensions and the NHS Injury Benefits Scheme. We will let you

know over the coming months what changes we are implementing and the effect this could have on you.

4. 2018-19 NHS Pension Scheme compliance statement and contribution estimate

Previously it has been a requirement that all NHS organisations provide a statement of estimated total contributions for the next financial year.

However, there has been a change to the Scheme Regulations where this requirement is permissive and on request by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) rather than it being compulsory. The requirement still exists for Practitioner contributions and we are co-ordinating collecting this information with NHS England directly.

5. Submitting a retirement benefits claim form (AW8) on Pensions Online (POL)

Since changes to Pensions Online (POL) were implemented in September, we have received a large number of AW8s that have been submitted with either incorrect payable dates or incorrect reasons for retirement. We have also received applications that should not have been submitted electronically, or where we have not received the additional supplementary forms.

When the changes were made, the validations on POL became limited, therefore it is your responsibility to ensure:

- the member is eligible to claim the type of benefits that are being selected. The member must be eligible for these benefits at their last day of service.
- the payable date input is correct.
- any additional information is sent to nhsbsa.polia@nhs.net or nhsbsa.practitioners@nhs.net (if the member is a Practitioner) immediately upon submission of the AW8.

Do not rely on POL to advise you if the member is or is not eligible for the benefits you have selected.

Where the above information is submitted incorrectly, or is not received, this may cause a delay in the member's application process.

6. Pensions Online – Submitting employer comments

In Employer Newsletter 9 – September 2017, we asked that when submitting an employer comment on Pensions Online (POL), you ensure information is provided to enable us to clear the error.

We are still receiving a high volume through without meaningful information to help clear the errors. This means we are unable to resolve the error and much needed resource is being diverted from clearing errors from employers who have provided meaningful information.

As a consequence, we have no choice but to remove any employer comments received without the relevant information included. The data error will still be present and viewable through Pensions Online but we will not hold the comment on our record.

This will enable us to prioritise the employer comments where the information has been provided to clear the error without the need to contact you further.

The Data Management Team will continue to work on all errors in line with our business priorities, including those where an employer comment has not been submitted.

7. GP forms are now available

The 2016/17 Annual Certificate of pensionable profits that all GP Providers and non-GP Providers who are partners or 'single- handers' (i.e. sole traders) are required to complete is now available. The certificate is available from [our website](#).

The certificate must be completed by all GMS, PMS, APMS, and sPMS Providers with the exception of those who are shareholders.

A GP Provider is legally required to complete a certificate in respect of **each** GMS, PMS, APMS and sPMS contract they are a party to.

A non-GP Provider is legally required to complete a certificate in respect of **one** contract only even though they may be involved in several. This is because they can only pension income from one surgery.

The certificate is available in Excel format. Also on the website are comprehensive guidance notes in respect of completing the 2016/17 Annual Certificate.

The statutory deadline for submitting a completed Annual Certificate to the relevant body (i.e. PCSE or Local Health Board) is 28 February 2018.

Those GP Providers and non-GP Providers who were members of the 2015 NHS Pension Scheme in 2016/17 and had a break in 2015 Scheme membership are subject to the 'annualised tiered employee contribution rate rule'.

GP Providers and non-GP Providers will still be subject to one tiered rate based on their global GP pensionable income if:

- They remained a member of the 1995 or 2008 NHS Pension Scheme throughout 2016/17.
- They were a member of the 1995 or 2008 NHS Pension Scheme during 2016/17 and had breaks in membership.
- They transitioned (i.e. switched) from the 1995 or 2008 NHS Pension Scheme to the 2015 NHS Pension Scheme on or after 1 April 2016 and the transition was seamless; i.e. there were no breaks in membership during 2016/17.
- Joined the NHS for the first time on 1 April 2016, became a member of the '2015 NHS Pension Scheme, and did not have any breaks during 2016/17.

Refer to the guidance notes for more detailed information.

The limited company version of the 2016/17 certificate that GP Providers and non-GP Providers who are shareholders must complete will be available soon.

8. GMS/PMS/APMS Contractors liabilities regarding the commissioning of GP Locums

When a GMS/PMS/APMS contractor commissions the services of a freelance GP locum there is an agreement between the two contractors on how much the rate of pay is for this service; here at NHS Pensions we cannot dictate what this rate should be.

According to NHS Pension Scheme Regulations, when a GMS/PMS/APMS contractor engages with a freelance GP locum to carry out services and where the GP locum is a member of the NHS Pension Scheme, they must provide the GP locum with the 14.38% employer contributions and administration levy. If the GP locum does not wish to pension this income they must make this clear from the outset. If the GP locum intended to pension the income but changed their mind they must **repay** the employer contributions and employer levy back to the GMS/PMS/APMS contractor.

All freelance GP locum pension forms can be located on our website and are transparent in that they break down the fee, the pensionable element (i.e. 90%), and the relevant contributions. In light of recent concerns raised by some freelance GP locums

GMS/PMS/APMS contractors are reminded that they are liable to pay Scheme employer contributions and the levy; not the locum. That is, where a GMS/PMS/APMS contractor agrees a fee with a freelance GP locum that fee should not be reduced if the locum elects to pension the income by virtue of the contractor's liability to pay the 14.38%.

9. Equitable Life Money Purchase Additional Voluntary Contributions (MPAVCs) – Change of bank details

In Employer Newsletter 2 – February 2017 we advised that the Equitable Life Assurance Society had changed the bank account for the payment of contributions for members of the NHS Money Purchase Additional Voluntary Contribution (MPAVC) scheme with immediate effect.

However, some employers are still sending contributions to the old account and their previous bank will no longer forward them to the correct account. The contributions are now being returned to the responsible employers for them to send the money to the correct account.

We can confirm that the MPAVC scheme is a part of the NHS Pension Scheme, which is administered by the chosen providers on behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. Therefore there is no requirement for NHS Pensions to complete change of bank detail forms for individual employers. Those employers who have not already made the change must therefore accept this notice and begin making payment to the correct Equitable Life bank account without delay. The account details are:

Barclays Bank
East and South Region 1
1 Churchill Place
London
E14 5HP

Account number: 23324443
Sort code: 20-03-62

Please ensure that any contributions that have been returned because they were sent to the wrong account are also paid as soon as possible.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that contributions to the MPAVC scheme are invested by the AVC provider to build up a retirement fund. Sending contributions to an incorrect account delays investment, which could reduce the value of the fund and affect the pension benefits an employee will be able to buy when they retire. The Pensions Ombudsman may hold an employer responsible for any loss incurred as a result of the delay.

The regulations governing the NHS MPAVC scheme set a deadline of 7 days after contributions have been deducted from pay for employers to pay them to the correct account. We will consider reporting any breaches for delayed and non-payment of MPAVC scheme contributions to The Pension Regulator and the NHS Pensions Board.

Please note: the bank details in respect of contributions to Prudential and Standard Life for the NHS MPAVC scheme have not changed.

10. Emailing the Data Management Team

If you wish to direct a new query to the Data Management Team please use nhsbsa.datamanagement@nhs.net only. Avoid copying in other NHS Pensions mailboxes or individuals as this causes duplication. Equally, if you are responding to a request from NHS Pensions then please respond direct to the email that you were sent. Again, there is no need to copy in other mailboxes or individuals. Thank you for your co-operation.

11. Most viewed Ask Us articles

Each month we provide you with the 10 most viewed articles in Ask Us. The results for employer articles for December are below:

Most viewed article	Hits
How can I calculate the notional whole time salary for a part time staff member?	119
When would it be necessary for me to post a retirement benefit claim form (AW8) to NHS Pensions?	86
What should I do if I have paid the incorrect amount of contributions to NHS Pensions?	69
Do I need to submit the SD55 and SD55T when a member is retiring?	66
What are final pay controls?	66
What are the joiner and leaver forms?	64
How should I submit an AW8 application form if I do not have access to Pensions Online (POL)?	58
How can I apply for Mental Health Officer (MHO) status?	56
How does an employer pay their pension contributions to NHS Pensions?	52
What is an AW171 and how should it be submitted?	37

12. Pensions Online downtime

Pensions Online (POL) will be unavailable from 7pm on Friday 2 March until 7am on Monday 5 March 2018.

Please note: at times we may need to take POL offline at short notice. Updates will be provided on our website when possible.

We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

The next issue (March) of the Employer Newsletter will be published at the end of February 2018.