

## NHS Pensions Employer Newsletter - December 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:

We are pleased to say that the Awards recovery plan is now complete. As part of our normal business as usual activity, we have some pension applications awaiting information from members or employers and as soon as this information is received we will get these pensions put into payment as well.

Our key message today is to please assure any members you may have that have recently applied for their pension, or are close to applying, that the service is on track and they should not face any delays in receiving their benefits as long as their information is complete and submitted to us in a timely manner.

We still have some areas where we can improve. We acknowledge the need to complete our initial checks much sooner following receipt of the application and we will pick this up as an action as we start to shape Phase 2 of our Awards plan in January.

The primary focus of Phase 2 will be to ensure we can significantly increase the percentage of Pension applications we consistently put into payment by someone's retirement date and it is our aim to have achieved this by April 2019. We will provide more on this as we develop the plan further over the coming weeks.

During November (as at the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018), we have processed 5986 pension application forms with still a couple of days to go. Over 70% of them were paid in time for the person's retirement date.

You may remember when we started the recovery plan we had over 11,500 applications on hand. Today, the total number of applications on hand stands at 5398 and is continuing to reduce despite pension applications being received daily.

Sub awards - The routine processing of sub awards remains on hold pending a Compendia system functionality release which is currently in development. We continue to process small volumes on demand through means of escalation, purely due to the manual nature of each one.

We will keep you informed of these developments and provide you with more details regarding our plans, including volumes and timescales as they progress over the coming months.

Calls coming through the Contact Centre continue to fluctuate with all 4 lines being reported as above tolerance this week. The main types of queries being reported across the member and employer lines are in relation to awards and estimates.

The next update will be in the January 2019 newsletter.

## **2: TRS refresh**

The TRS Mid year refresh is near completion. We expect to be able to make the statements available from Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

We will be bringing the TRS service down on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December from 4pm to enable the upload of the refreshed statements to take place. The service will come back on line from Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

We will notify you via email once they become available so you can advise your employees.

## **3: POL changes**

A new POL Validation has been created and will be Included in the December release.

Where the member is a Scheme Transition Member and is retiring on ill health grounds, they must select the same commutation from the scheme which is linked to the 2015 scheme. Where different commutation options are selected on POL, a message will be produced advising that the options must be the same.

We have also made a change to how we record medical acceptance and this must now be held individually for each scheme the member is accepted for ill health. If when submitting an AW8 you receive the message to advise that our records show that the member has not yet been accepted for ill health, please email [nhsbsa.illhealthcases@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsa.illhealthcases@nhs.net) who will arrange for the members record to be updated for you to continue with the AW8.

## **4: POL Helpdesk Christmas opening hours**

The Christmas opening hours for the POL helpline is as follows:

24<sup>th</sup> December 2018 – Closed all day.

27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 – open as normal 10am – 2pm.

## 5: Verify update

Government Gateway access to TRS and ABS is closing

The Government Gateway route to access Total Reward Statements (TRS) or Annual Benefit Statements (ABS) will be decommissioned on the 12 December 2018 and replaced by the Government-wide GOV.UK Verify service.

Those using Government Gateway to access their statement will need to register with GOV.UK Verify to continue to access their TRS or ABS.

GOV.UK Verify has been developed by the Government Digital Service (GDS) and meets the highest levels of international standards for security and data protection.

Once registered online, those eligible to receive either a TRS or ABS will be able to gain access to their and other Government services using the same details.

Individuals can register and begin using GOV.UK Verify now ahead of the Government Gateway route closing on 12 December 2018.

[Click here for more information or to register with GOV.UK Verify.](#)

## 6: Greenbury

### **Disclosure of senior managers' remuneration (Greenbury) 2019**

We anticipate that the Greenbury functionality within Pensions Online (POL) will be available from Monday 7 January 2019. Requests for disclosure information should be received by NHS Pensions between 7 January 2019 and Friday 28 February 2019 to enable us to provide you with the necessary disclosure information by 1 April 2019. This will allow you time to prepare and submit your draft accounts by noon Wednesday 24 April 2019.

Please note, we can't guarantee that requests or queries received after 28 February 2019 will be dealt with by 1 April 2019.

#### **1. Who should employers request Greenbury figures for?**

The Department of Health and Social Care Group Accounting Manual (GAM) 2018-19 states the remuneration report must disclose information on those persons in senior positions having authority or responsibility for directing or controlling major activities within the group body. This means those who influence the decisions of the entity as a whole rather than the decisions of individual directorates or departments.

The GAM goes on to say:

“The Chief Executive or Accounting/Accountable Officer must be asked to confirm whether this covers more than the executive and non-executive directors (for CCGs – attendees at Governing Body meetings). It is usually considered that the regular attendees of the entity's board meetings are its senior managers.”

The NHS Foundation Trust Annual Reporting Manual (ARM), provided by NHS Improvement, defines senior managers at 2.49

2.49 The definition of “senior managers” is ‘those persons in senior positions having authority or responsibility for directing or controlling the major activities of the NHS foundation trust’. The chief executive should confirm whether this covers more than the chair, the executive and non-executive directors of the NHS foundation trust (who should be treated as senior managers as a matter of course).

## **2. What will NHS Pensions provide?**

NHS Pensions will provide disclosure information for executive directors and other senior managers, as confirmed by the Chief Executive. We will not carry out any calculations for non-executive directors because they do not meet the criteria in the GAM of a senior manager, due to their self-employed or fee based status.

## **3. What if an executive director is also a medical General Practitioner (GP)?**

Disclosure information will only be provided where the GP is an employed senior manager or executive director. If the GP is employed (i.e. contract of service) by a Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) as a senior manager or executive director and pays pension contributions then they will be classed as an Officer for pension purposes and Greenbury disclosure will apply.

If the GP is also engaged under a contract for services arrangement (i.e. self-employed) by a CCG then Greenbury disclosure will not apply to this element of their work. Under this arrangement the GP is afforded Practitioner status which is not included in the calculation of the accrued pension, lump sum and cash equivalent transfer value (CETV).

Where NHS Pensions is asked for disclosure information for a GP and their pension record holds Practitioner membership only then we will assume they are a non-executive director and no information will be provided. It is important for employers to check that the pension records of their senior managers are completely updated.

NHS Pensions will provide information based on calculations using NHS staff (Officer) membership **only**.

This exercise only relates to remuneration in Public Bodies which means GP Practices and most Direction bodies are not required to take part.

## **4. How to submit disclosure information requests for the 2019 exercise**

- Employers must request Greenbury senior manager remuneration disclosures for the 2018/19 financial year via Pensions Online (POL).
- These screens will also be used by NHS Pensions to return the requested pension, lump sum (where applicable) and CETV to each employer.
- Employers will only be able to view their own disclosure requests.

The Pensions Online Guidance for Greenbury is available on our website at: <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Pensions>

Employers will need to nominate a user and allocate Greenbury access to that user before disclosures can be requested. Employers will be able to use the previous year's user and password details. If you have any queries about registering a user on POL, please contact the POL Helpline on 0870 011 7108. Any other Greenbury queries should be directed to: [nhsbsa.greenbury@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsa.greenbury@nhs.net).

The Greenbury screens will also support:

- communication between employers and NHS Pensions concerning Greenbury queries
- requests for re-calculation of Greenbury disclosures
- comparison of this year's disclosure figures with last year's figures

Full guidance on how to register and use the POL system to make your requests is now available on our website at: <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Pensions>

## 7: Keep in touch days

Keep in touch days are where a member who is taking maternity or adoption leave etc, carries out up to 10 days work for their employer during their leave period.

For pension purposes, keep in touch days do not break the period of leave. The member will pay contributions at the same rate that they were paying the day before the KIT day; any additional pay received during the KIT days will be excluded.

## 8: Career breaks

A number of cases have come to light whereby a member has been offered a career break immediately following sick leave. Career breaks should not be used instead of sick leave, or to prevent the member accruing disallowed days. Where a member has reached a period of no pay sick, this should be recorded as disallowed days.

Career breaks can affect the pension benefits members are entitled to in a detrimental way if they opt to apply for ill health retirement or in the event of their death.

Please note if the member is having a legitimate career break; an employee may choose to continue making contributions to the NHS Pension Scheme during a career break; prior to the break the employee should make this decision in respect of their pension. Arrangements for continuing payments must be made prior to commencement of the break.

For the first 6 months contributions are payable, by both the employee and employer, as if the employee was at work.

An individual who has paid contributions regularly during the first 6 months of a break may continue to contribute to the scheme for a further period of up to 18 months

(maximum of 2 years in total). During the extended period, the employee will be responsible for paying both their own and the employer's contributions.

Contributions will be based on the employee's normal pensionable pay. They must continue to be paid monthly, by standing order or Direct Debit; arrears will not be allowed to accumulate.

If contributions are not made as agreed, the employee's pension record will be closed from the date of the last contribution.

## 9: Ask Us articles

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