

NHS Pensions Employer Newsletter – July 2019

Sharing Our Performance:

First Awards

A total of 3708 applications have been processed so far in June (25th) of which 97.98% were paid on time.

To recap for the full month of May, 4358 were processed of which 97.77% were paid on time.

Bereavements

Bereavements processing is progressing well through recovery. Our forecast is to be fully recovered by 31 July 2019.

Revised Pensions (AW171)

Staff training on the new business process for revised pensions has been completed and the clearance rates are really encouraging. 1164 cases were cleared during the first month between 16 May and 14 June.

Contact Centre

During May, collectively across all 4 lines, a total of 61,698 calls were received. Each call on average took approximately 7 minutes 54 seconds to resolve and customers were waiting no more than 17 minutes for their call to be answered on any given day which shows an improvement on the month before. In June so far we have received 38,971 calls and on average callers were waiting 15 minutes for their call to be answered.

The messages remain on the lines to further support customers at this time. However, as a longer term solution, we are recruiting more call handlers to help reduce the wait times to improve the ongoing service to our customers.

TRS Refresh 2019

The TRS data cut for the annual refresh took place as planned at 7pm on Friday 21 June 2019. If all goes to plan, we expect refreshed statements to be made available on Wednesday 21 August 2019. The data cut will capture successfully updated records up to and including 31 March 2019.

For any records updated after 21 June, this information will not be reflected in statements until after the mid year refresh in December 2019.

Pensions Online (POL) replacement system 2020

A Project has commenced to update the current version of Pensions Online. The first phase of the delivery will be to re platform the service and the aim is to do this in the early months of 2020. The new platform will look different but essentially it will offer the same level of service available today, but unlike the current service, it will be available to all employers to use.

Once the new platform has been delivered, this will act as an enabler for new employer services and improvements to the existing functionality. As we develop the new platform, we will share our progress so you can see how it looks and feels before the system is implemented. We will be looking for volunteer employers to get involved in testing over the coming months so please watch out for our monthly updates.

POL availability

POL will be available throughout July 7am – 7pm apart from the periods noted below for scheduled system maintenance:

Friday 12 July 7pm – Monday 15 July 7am

Friday 31 July 7pm – Monday 2 August 7am

Farewell to our CEO

Our CEO Alistair McDonald retired on 30 June after almost 30 years working for the NHSBSA. Alistair started a journey over the last 2 years to transform the strategic direction of the NHSBSA and has encouraged all of us in the organisation to explore what we can achieve for the good of the wider health and care system.

Welcome to our new CEO

We are delighted to announce that Michael Brodie will succeed Alistair as the new CEO for the NHSBSA and will take up his new post at the beginning of September. Michael is currently Finance and Commercial Director at Public Health England. As well as having extensive experience at Board level and across the public service, Michael held the role of Finance Director at the NHSBSA before taking up his current post at Public Health England in April 2013, so he knows the organisation well. Michael said of his new appointment “I feel privileged to be appointed as the new leader and I am looking forward to meeting everyone and continuing the excellent work the NHSBSA does for patients, the public and the taxpayer.”

Make Contribution Payments (POL Organisations)

On boarding of existing employers to our new contribution payment platform, Make Contribution Payments (MCP), is progressing well and we hope that by the end of June we will have over 3000 subscribed to the new system.

- All organisations with a direct debit in place were asked to complete a short questionnaire
- Organisations that completed this and fulfilled the on boarding criteria will have then received a user name and password to the new system
- Primary users that were on boarded will have also been subscribed for the contribution reminder email. If you have received this reminder, you have been registered on our system. If you did not receive your username and password, please go to the MCP website - <https://services.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/employer-service/fic/> - and click 'forgotten password'
- We will be contacting organisations that did not respond to the initial survey shortly requesting information to on board them over the coming months. Migration to the new system is mandatory for organisations using POL as the functionality will be removed over the coming months

Organisations who have not fulfilled the on boarding criteria at this time (multiple EA codes or where you have provided alternate contact details for the survey) will be on boarded over the coming months. Until then, please continue to make contribution payments via Pensions Online.

We are now starting to receive a number of frequently asked questions regarding the functionality of the new system and these have been published, alongside the answers on our website - <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/employer-hub/nhs-pensions-finance>

If you have any questions about the new Make Contribution Payments system, please contact nhsbsa.stakeholderengagement@nhs.net

Make Contribution Payments - Non POL Organisations

As part of the ongoing programme of digitisation work, we have developed a service for all employers to instruct the collection of employer and member contributions through a web based platform. We have now on boarded in excess of 2000 employers who are currently using Pensions Online.

We would now like to further extend this service to non POL organisations.

Benefits of using the new system include:

- The facility for pensions administrators to schedule payments in advance of the monthly deadline to negate late payment
- The flexibility to access the MCP system on any computer with an internet connection
- The ability to access multiple EA codes in one area
- The opportunity for organisations administering a number of EA codes to use file upload facilities

The Stakeholder Engagement team will be contacting non POL organisations over the next month to understand which employers would like to be on boarded at this time.

End of Year Certificate 2018-19

This only applies to Independent Provider and New Fair Deal employers. The certificates will be available for the financial year 2018-19 in early July and employers will be emailed directly regarding this. The certificates will also be available from our website. The return date for completed certificates for 2018-19 is 31 July 2019.

All member records should have been updated to 31 March 2019. The deadline for member record updates is two calendar months after the financial year end, which is 31 March.

Overpaid Employer Contribution Rate 2019-20

Further to the communication in the March Employer Newsletter where we advised that all Employers should continue to remit 14.38% employer contributions to the Scheme, it has come to our attention that a number of employers have paid an increased rate from April 2019.

We have already started to contact employers who we believe may have applied the incorrect employer rate and to discuss the refund of any overpaid contributions.

With immediate effect, please only submit 14.38% in employer contributions to NHS Pensions.

If you have not been contacted directly by the Pensions Finance Reporting Team and you have paid over the higher employer contribution rate and require a refund, please email:-

nhsbsa.pensionsfinance@nhs.net

Ensure you provide the following information:-

- EA code
- How you made the payment
- Date and value of higher rate payment
- The correct value of employer contributions
- The refund payment you require

Exhibitions

In May we had an exhibition stand at the Royal College of Nursing Congress Exhibition 2019 in Liverpool and were overwhelmed with the interest we received during the three days. All in all we engaged with around 400 members of the NHS Pension Scheme.

This month we have attended the Clinical Pharmacy Congress Expo at the ExCeL in London where Angela Williams, NHS Pensions Stakeholder Engagement Manager, took to the stage and gave a presentation about NHS Pensions. This session was very popular and directed members to our stand, where we engaged with over 450 members.

Later in June we were at the NHS Confed in Manchester where we joined other services from the NHSBSA to increase our profile and inform employers of the services provide.

Below are the events that we will be attending this year, so if you are a delegate please come along and see us:

Date	Event	Venue	Stand
26-27 June	Health Care Plus	ExCeL London	*Business Services Authority

4-5 September	NHS England Health and Care innovation	Manchester Central Convention Complex, Manchester	*Business Services Authority
9-10 October	Best Practice 2019	Birmingham NEC, Birmingham	*Business Services Authority There will be an NHS Pension presentation by Angela Williams
12-13 November	Acute and General Medicine	ExCeL London	NHS Pensions

*We will be sharing a stand with other services provided by the NHS Business Services Authority such as NHS Jobs, ESR, NHS Fraud, Digital Services, EHIC, NHS Dental Services NHS Prescription Service and Scanning Services.

Supreme Court Ruling – McCloud & Sargeant

The Supreme Court has refused permission for the Government to appeal the Court of Appeal's December 2018 judgment in the cases of *McCloud* and *Sargeant*. This means that the Court of Appeal's judgment stands, and that 'transitional protection' gave rise to unlawful discrimination in the Judges' and Firefighters' schemes.

The Government will now be required to introduce a remedy to compensate individuals for the difference in treatment since 2015 in those schemes. The Government is considering the impact of this judgment on transitional protection arrangements in other schemes, including the NHS