

NHS Pensions Employer Newsletter – October 2019

Total Reward and Annual Benefit Statements midyear refresh

The data cut for the midyear refresh of statements will be taken over the weekend of 12-13 October 2019. This means any data amendments will have to be made by 7pm, Friday 11 October 2019.

The refreshed statements will be available in December 2019.

Government Consultation on Pension Flexibilities

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has published a revised consultation on proposed flexibilities to the NHS Pension Scheme. Please follow the link below for more information. The closing date for responses is 1 November 2019.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/830862/NHSPS_flexibility_consultation_document.pdf

Institute of Customer Service membership

NHS Pensions is proud to be a member of The Institute of Customer Service (ICS). This is the professional body for customer service, helping organisations improve their customer experience and business performance. It has a membership body of over 450 organisational and 4,000 individual memberships, creating opportunities for NHS Pensions to benefit from access to research, training, accreditation networking and knowledge sharing platforms. ICS membership is not sector specific; its members range from blue chip finance corporations to small charities at all levels of customer service development.

Currently all managers at NHS Pensions are participating on a 3 day service management workshop with ICS to support them on their journey as customer service professionals in a leader or manager role.

This will be followed with additional training for front line staff and development opportunities through training and qualifications.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

We are now undertaking our employer surveys on a monthly basis and the feedback that is provided helps us to assess and improve our existing processes. It also enables us to look for additional ways in which we can improve the service provided.

Moving to monthly surveys allows us to look at trends in the results and enables us to understand the impact any changes we make have on employers. It is therefore important to us that employers take the time to provide feedback to us when they receive a survey.

Our response rate is currently around 13% and we would really encourage employers to take part in the survey to ensure they take advantage of the opportunity to provide feedback and comments. In September 2019 we received a positive net promoter score and we hope this is something we can continue to improve upon into future months.

The Stakeholder Engagement Team has been working with GP Practice Managers at regional events to understand how we can increase the completion rate and therefore overall results.

We will provide regular updates about the feedback we have received from employers and the actions taken as a result.

NHS Pensions at Best Practice 2019

NHS Pensions will be exhibiting alongside colleagues within the NHSBSA at this year's Best Practice conference held at Birmingham NEC on 9-10 October 2019. Come along to stand G80 to say hello and ask our experts any queries you may have.

Protection of Pay and Voluntary Protection of Pay

The forms and factsheets have recently been updated following a review of the enquiry process. If you need to submit an application, please use the updated SM R9 EA application from the website.

Bulk protection of pay

The universal bulk protection of pay spreadsheet and reply template has now been removed from the website. This was a provision put in place during the period from 2010 to 2012 to cover large national reorganisational changes following Agenda for Change. Receipt of bulk protection of pay requests has gradually reduced over time with each spreadsheet only included a handful of members.

Any outstanding bulk spreadsheets already submitted will be processed as normal but employers should now use the SM R9 EA application form for all protection of pay requests going forward. The historic bulk protection of pay guidance remains available on the factsheet for reference purposes.

Time limits

Employers are reminded to submit the SM R9 EA application within the regulatory 3month time limit for applying for protection of pay and after 12 months but before 15months for voluntary protection of pay. Failure to do so may result in rejected applications. Requests for an extension of these time limits will now only be considered in exceptional circumstances as detailed in the factsheet.

Reason for the reduced pay

The application for both the member and employer now asks for a detailed description of why the pay has been reduced which will help avoid unnecessary follow up enquiries.

GMP Tests revised

Requests for a GMP test need to be sent via email to nhsbsa.gmptestrequest@nhs.net

When requesting a GMP test, the following information is required:-

- Intended retirement date
- Notional Whole time Total Pensionable pay figure

Pensions on Line (POL) Memberzone - data cleanse and exclusions

Data Management are receiving a high number of e-mails regarding cases where an estimate or membership statement cannot be produced through Memberzone as the member's record requires data cleanse or a calculation is not possible due to system exclusion.

Where a member record requires data cleanse action, Memberzone automatically generates a work request for the Data Management team, therefore it is not necessary for employers to email requesting clearance of the issue. Details are shown in POL notifications either when a case has been referred for data cleanse or manual calculation and also when the case has been cleansed, allowing a statement or estimate to be produced through Memberzone.

If the case is returned to data cleanse after this notification, employers can e-mail Data Management for checking however the case may be too complex for Pensions Online.

Exclusion cases cannot be cleared by the Data Management team so an email request to do so isn't required. These types of cases automatically generate an estimate work task for NHS Pensions and will be produced within our usual estimates time frame.

Please check if the member has an Annual Benefit Statement (ABS) available through the ABS Status list in POL. If the member has an ABS available, an additional estimate or the information may be subject to a charge.