

NHS Pensions Update – November 2020

NHS Pensions coronavirus (COVID-19) response

For the latest information on guidance and easements we have introduced to help support employers at this time, please visit our Coronavirus (COVID-19) contingency planning page on the Employer Hub where we have included lots of useful information and links to other relevant areas of the website.

We thank you for understanding and for your continued efforts in delivering vital healthcare services at this critical time.

Sharing our performance

Table 1- Total Transactions

Item	Volume
Total Transactions	14,787
First Retirements	5,519
Revised Retirements	1,631
Estimates	2,259
Re-Employment Cases	1,197
Transfers In	237
Transfers Out	521
5 Year-Rejoiners	55
Pensions on Divorce	28
Life Assurance Lump Sums	174
Partner Pensions	609
Child Allowance	83
Refunds	2,474

Table 2 - First Retirements and Pensioners

Item	Volume
Applications Processed	5,519
On Time	99.18%
Amount paid in Lump Sums	£233,590,885.44
Amount of Pension Paid	£803,570,966.15
No. Pensioners in Payment	999,351

Table 3 - Employer Helpline statistics

Item	Volume
Total Volume Calls	2,491
Average Handling Time (s)	441
Average Speed of Answer (s)	83

Table 4 - Member Helpline statistics

Item	Volume
Total Volume Calls	29,718
Average Handling Time (s)	564
Average Speed of Answer (s)	69

2019/20 GP Provider and non-GP Provider Certificate of Pensionable Income

The main 2019/20 GP Provider and non-GP provider Certificate of Pensionable Income and supporting guidance is now on our website. It is in the practitioner webpage located within the Member Hub section of the website.

GP providers must complete a certificate in respect of each GMS, PMS and APMS contract that they are a party to.

Non-GP providers who are a party to several GMS, PMS and APMS contracts can only pension income from one contract.

The limited company version will follow shortly.

Greenbury

Disclosure of senior managers' remuneration (Greenbury) 2021

We anticipate that the Greenbury functionality within Pensions Online (POL) will be available from Monday 4 January 2021 (provisional, to be confirmed in December's newsletter). Requests for disclosure information should be received by NHS Pensions between 4 January 2021 and Friday 26 February 2021 to enable us to provide you with the necessary disclosure information to meet your reporting timescales.

1. Who should employers request Greenbury figures for?

The Department of Health and Social Care Group Accounting Manual (GAM) 2020-21 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), defines senior managers as follows:

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 2021 exercise

- Employers must request Greenbury senior manager remuneration disclosures for the 2010/21 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.

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>

The NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme 2020

Information on the government's life assurance scheme for eligible frontline health and social care workers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic can be found on the NHSBSA website via www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/coronavirus-life-assurance-2020

Take a look today and make sure you understand your responsibilities as an employer in helping to communicate the scheme to staff, support bereaved families to make a claim and oversee their claims process.

Allocation – retirement flexibility

Allocation is a retirement flexibility that is available to all members of the NHS Pension Scheme.

Following a review of the enquiries we receive about allocation, it was evident that we needed to make the application process and available guidance clearer and more visible.

Employers are now asked to direct all enquiries to the Member Hub and the Allocation Factsheet as the 'go to' place for information. You do not however need to be involved in the enquiry process itself.

To help reduce unnecessary contact the whole enquiry process will be updated to include the following changes:

Website documents

- Member Factsheet – existing guidance updated and moved from the ‘Nominations’ section to the ‘Applying for your pension’ section of the Member Hub.
- Employer Factsheet – a new factsheet to replace the existing web page information held in the technical guidance section of the Employer Hub
- AW8/11A – the existing initial application form has been updated to include better validation to ensure the member is aware of all the facts before making an enquiry. Additional questions should also reduce the need for any follow up enquiry.

NHS Pension documents

- AW8/11B and AW8/11B (LTA) – our standard allocation enquiry estimate reply letters
- AW8(11) and AW8(12) – allocation consent and doctors medical forms (included with the estimate). These have been simplified for all concerned and should also remove the need for follow up action
- AW8/11C – a new standardised reply template letter

Existing guidance held elsewhere on the website will remain but will be updated to reference the factsheet as the focal point for information.

As always with newly produced documents, please let us know if you have any problems or improvement suggestions of your own.

Retrospective Pay Changes

Correct allocation of retrospective pay or awards and recording of hours or sessions

Can all employers please ensure that any retrospective or backdated pay or awards (like the Clinical Excellence Award) are allocated to the correct pension year where pensionable, so that the correct figures are held by NHS Pensions.

Also, when completing the annual hours or sessions that a member has completed on the annual update, please can you ensure that this is the total annual hours or sessions worked and not the weekly total.

Example 1

Part-time worker 20 hours per week on annual update. The total number of pensionable hours worked would be 1,040.

Example 2

Part-time worker working 3/10 sessions on the annual update. The total number of sessions would be 156.

Placing the pay in the incorrect years and having the incorrect sessions or hours recorded can have an effect on annual allowance and overpayment of benefits for the member. It will also inflate the members TRS / ABS.

To amend previous years POL, users can complete the SD55E to amend the previous years.

Non-POL users please email direction bodies with the new figures and the years that they are to be allocated to.

Exit Code 16 - opted out of the scheme

Employers are reminded of the importance of using the correct termination code when closing down a pension record normally from the beginning of the next pay period.

Exit code 16 should be used for all cases where the member continues to work but has signed form SD502 to opt out of paying pension contributions.

Exit code 01 is used when a member leaves the employment altogether.

A recent review identified several 'opt out' cases where Exit code 01 had been used resulting in an inaccurate membership record. As well as holding incorrect data for the member, this can also lead to several issues with the benefits being paid. For example, inaccurate payable dates where a 24-hour break has not been taken at retirement age, which may lead to the incorrect payment of pension and lump sum as well as taxation issues

In the 1995 Section an opt-out period spanning the members normal pension age can also sometimes mean subsequent periods of pension contributions can be pensionable. Incorrectly using Exit code 01 would identify that the member had left prior to their normal pension age and had instead returned to non-pensionable re-employment.

ESR Upload Frequency

The ESR data is uploaded to the NHSP Compendia member records:

- daily
- monthly
- in a cycle

ESR data is also stored. View the following for upload frequency:

Daily

ESR data that is uploaded daily includes:

- changed National Insurance (NI) number
- changed date of birth
- changed surname
- changed forename
- date of birth verification marker
- gender
- title

- address and postcode
- job code (capacity code)

Monthly

ESR data that is uploaded monthly includes:

- joiner records
- leaver records

In a cycle

ESR data that is uploaded in a cycle includes:

- changed pension start date
- date of change
- employment type
- MHO Indicator
- full-time and part-time indicator
- actual hours
- standard hours
- actual sessions
- bank indicator

These may be uploaded on the date of an employee leaving if that is earlier than the normal cycle date.

Stored

ESR data that is stored includes:

- marital status
- correspondence address
- payslip address
- place of employment
- job title
- occupation code
- annual basic salary
- as and when indicator
- WTE
- standard sessions
- NI class