

PART VIC – ADVANCED SERVICES (PHARMACY AND APPLIANCE CONTRACTORS)(ENGLAND)

NHS Pharmacy First Service - from 31 January 2024

Pharmacy First Clinical Pathway – Caps

From April 2025 the methodology to set monthly caps for Pharmacy First Clinical Pathways delivery will follow these core principles:

- Average monthly delivery will be calculated using 3 months of the most recent data available.
- Total service delivery should not exceed a set figure which will be used to calculate the different caps according to delivery. This is to ensure spend is evenly distributed throughout the year for the service to ensure fair and consistent access for all contractors. Any underspend, where caps are not met, will be redistributed and factored into calculations for subsequent months.
- Contractors delivering activity below a set threshold will be grouped together with a single monthly cap termed Band 1. This will not be set at a level that would prevent contractors from qualifying for the monthly fixed payments.
- The remaining contractors will be split into a set number of bands according to delivery. Each band will have a different cap and this will apply to all contractors assigned that band each month. The top Band cannot exceed 700 consultations each month.
- From April 2025 until May 2026 each band had an equal number of contractors based on previous delivery. From June 2026 contractors will be split between bands so that each band is delivering an equal number of consultations.
- We will continue to review the process regularly to ensure the methodology is robust, supports contractors to deliver the service and provides value for money to the NHS. We will consult on any changes to the methodology prior to implementation.

The Cap Methodology from April 2025

The methodology for April 2025 is illustrated in the example below:

Step 1: The average monthly delivery for each contractor between November and January will be calculated.

In April 2025, November-January will be the most recent data available.

Step 2: Where average monthly delivery is calculated to be <15 per month, then the monthly cap for Band 1 will be set at a minimum of 30 per contractor.

This ensures contractors are not prevented from securing the monthly fixed payments.

Step 3: The monthly allocation for those delivering an average of ≥ 15 per month will be calculated using this formula: Cap available = Total monthly allowance – cap allocated to Band 1 + redistribution from earlier in the year.

Step 4: Where average monthly delivery is calculated to be ≥ 15 appts per month, for Bands 2 and above, contractors will be split equally into bands each with a different cap. The top Band cannot exceed 700 consultations per month.

Step 5: The activity per contractor per band will be calculated using this formula: Cap for pharmacies in Band x = Cap available * Band proportion of total delivery by pharmacies delivering an average of ≥ 15 per month from the most recent data available from November to January / number of pharmacies in Band x.

NOTE: This will be designed to prevent a significant jump between Bands 1 and 2. If this methodology results in a difference between Band 1 and Band 2 that exceeds 30 consultations, we will adjust redistributed funding so that the difference does not exceed 30 consultations.

From June 2026 the cap methodology will largely remain the same, with one alteration in step 4. The contractors in Bands 2 and above will be split so that each band has an equal proportion of consultations delivered, prior to this date the bands have been split so that there were equal numbers of contractors.