

Sending EPS prescriptions with the right exemption information

Don't lose out: pharmacy teams must check they have recorded all of the relevant exemption information onto each EPS prescription before it is submitted for pricing to ensure accuracy. This factsheet explains what to do.

For each Electronic Prescription Service (EPS) Release 2 prescription, pharmacy teams must mark whether a prescription charge was made or an exemption category applied, and whether evidence of any exemption was seen.



See page 11 for more guidance on checking the exemption status. Pharmacy system suppliers have flexibility in the way they support pharmacy teams with entering the right exemption information. Learn how your system helps you set the exemption category to be recorded onto the prescription.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Do the Pricing Authority use the EPS tokens I submit to determine exemption status for the purpose of pricing our pharmacy's prescriptions?

A. No. Tokens are not used to price pharmacies' prescriptions, they are used for audit purposes ie to check for patient charge exemption fraud. Exemption information recorded by the patient onto either dispensing tokens (pharmacy-issued) or prescribing tokens (GP-issued) is solely used to assist with this.

As part of your business continuity planning, it's useful to know how you will manage (and reduce the risk of) issues such as a broken printer, lack of ink, or an absence of token stationery (see psnc.org.uk/epscontingency).

Q. I asked the patient to pay just after they had turned 60 years old. Is the patient exempt? Can my system help determine exemption category?

A. Yes* exemption can be determined at the point at which the patient is asked to pay. Your EPS system may auto-suggest an exemption category but you may need to override this e.g. systems might use the date the Dispense Notification (DN) was sent and compare this with the patient's

- date of birth; or
 - certificate validity period recorded into the PMR.
- However the date the DN



was sent may be different to the date the patient was asked to pay, causing the need to override the exemption category suggested by the system.

Note: The printed patient's 'age' on a prescription token or dispensing token may show the age at the time of the printing.

*subject to the prescription still being within the period of validity

For further information see psnc.org.uk/epsexemption

System supplier discussion points about exemption

Get more out of your system. Additional discussion points to raise with your team include:

- **Preventing prescriptions being accidentally sent with 'paid' status:** Whilst the majority of prescriptions are expected to have the exempt status, pharmacy teams report that some systems allow prescriptions to be sent for pricing with the paid status by default without any warning messages suggesting this is double-checked. Other systems may already assist users by (1) preventing prescriptions from being sent unless a category option is selected; and/or (2) where needed, asking whether either, the 'paid' status is right, or, if instead, the category needs adjusting.
- **Can it support easy recording at the right time?** E.g. Will the system efficiently support accurate recording of exemption information where it is obtained at the point of hand-out or before?
- **Can it allow the exemption category to be changed where needed after submission for pricing?** Suppliers can introduce the ability for pharmacy teams to, as a last resort, change the exemption category even after having submitted the prescription (but before the prescription is 'locked' by the pricing authority for pricing).
- **Using exemption certificate expiry dates:** Can the system automatically treat as exempt prescriptions processed within a certificate validity period that has been entered into the PMR? Risk areas: what happens if no expiry date has been entered or the expiry date has passed?
- **Audit reports:** What audit reports will the system generate to support checking that staff have entered exemption information where required?
- **Month-end reports to support submission:** Does the system generate reports of prescriptions dispensed and exemption status to support a month-end audit to see whether staff have entered the information correctly?

For further information see: psnc.org.uk/systems