

Prescription charge exemptions and switching webinar

Presenters Suraj Shah & Mitesh Bhudia (PSNC)
and Alison O'Brien (NHSBSA)



Introduction

NHSBSA

- Exemption types
- Exemption checking requirements
- NHSBSA tools
- Prescription Exemption Checking Service
- Plastic to digital exemptions
- Real-time Exemption Checking
- Proposed changes to FP10

PSNC

- Switching
 - What is switching?
 - Types of switching
 - Finding your switching figures
 - National switching statistics
 - EPS
 - Top tips to avoid switching



Prescription Charge Exemption and how you can help patients

Alison O'Brien

**Head of Loss Recovery Services,
NHSBSA**

NHSBSA exemptions that entitle a patient to free prescriptions



DWP exemptions which entitle a patient to free prescriptions

				
Income support	Job Seekers	Employment Support Allowance	Pension Credit awards letter	Universal Credit statement

What proof you can ask for to check exemption:

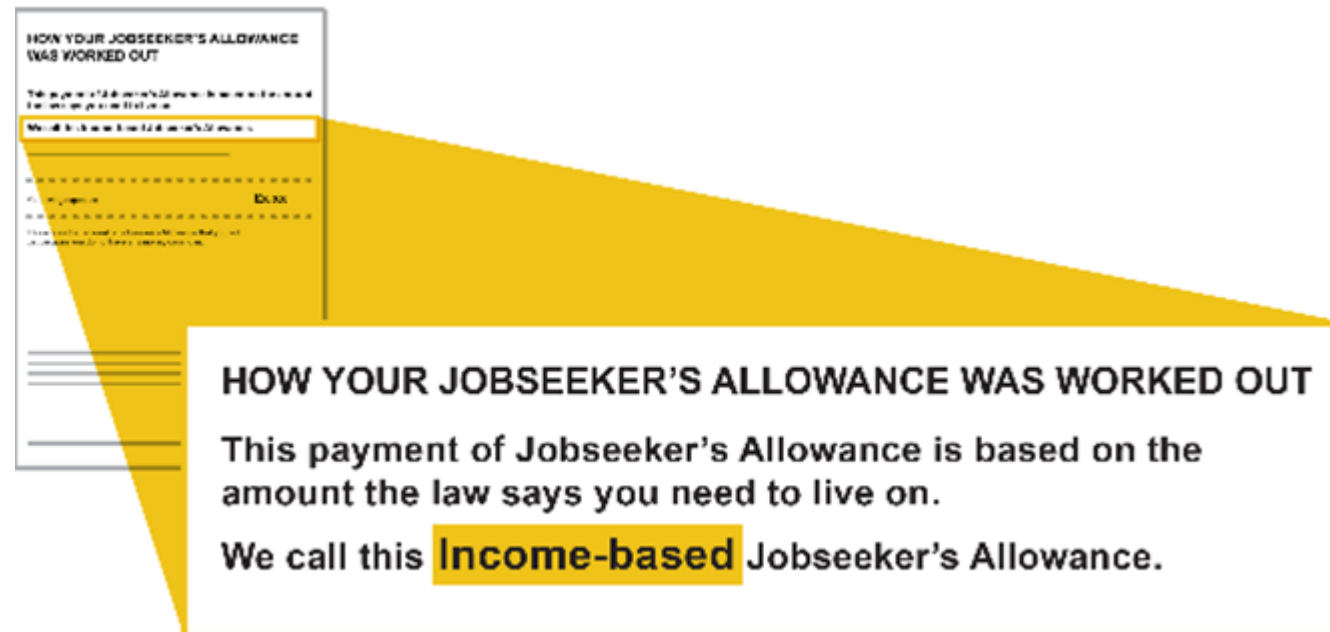
You should ask to see proof of a patients exemption if they are claiming a free prescription. Evidence can include:

- Income support/Job Seekers/Employment Support Allowance/Pension Credit awards letter
- Universal Credit statement (Tick box K)
- Tax Credit Award notice
- Medical Exemption Certificate
- Maternity Exemption Certificate or email
- HC2 full help with health cost certificate
- Prepayment Exemption card or email

If you are not satisfied with the evidence shown, you should mark the prescription as 'evidence not seen.'

Examples of evidence of exemption

- When looking at award notices, Job Seekers Allowance and Employment and Support allowance must show 'income-based'.



HOW YOUR JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE WAS WORKED OUT

This payment of Jobseeker's Allowance is based on the amount the law says you need to live on.





We call this **Income-based** Jobseeker's Allowance.

Examples of evidence of exemption

- Maternity Exemption Certificate.
- Medical Exemption Certificates and Prepayment certificates are also in this format.
- Maternity and Prepayment exemption can also be in email format.



Exemptions which do not entitle a patient to free prescriptions

-  Contribution-based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
-  Contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
-  Pension Credit Savings Credit
-  Incapacity Benefit, Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment or Attendance Allowance

How NHSBSA check prescriptions



Key reasons why patients receive PCNs and what you can do to help:

- Patient is not entitled to free prescriptions and deliberately claims exemption.

Pharmacy to check ID to see if the patient has valid exemption.



Key reasons why patients receive PCNs and what you can do to help:

- Confusion on benefits. For example, patients may tick 'Employment Support Allowance 'Income based' but they are in fact in receipt of 'contribution based' Employment and Support Allowance.

Pharmacy can check if the ESA award notice states 'income based.'



Key reasons why patients receive PCNs and what you can do to help:

- Patient has changed their name or address and not updated records at GP.

Pharmacy can check the patient name and address and encourage them to update at GP.




Key reasons why patients receive PCNs and what you can do to help:

- Patient pays for their prescription but receives a PCN as electronic message submitted incorrectly.

Pharmacy to ensure electronic message for the EPS matches the paper declaration every time.



National 'Check Before You Tick' campaign



**Don't assume
you're entitled to
free prescriptions**

If you claim free prescriptions when you're not entitled, even by mistake, you could face a **penalty charge of up to £100.**

Search "check before you tick" online or ask your pharmacy team

nhs.uk/checkbeforeyoutick

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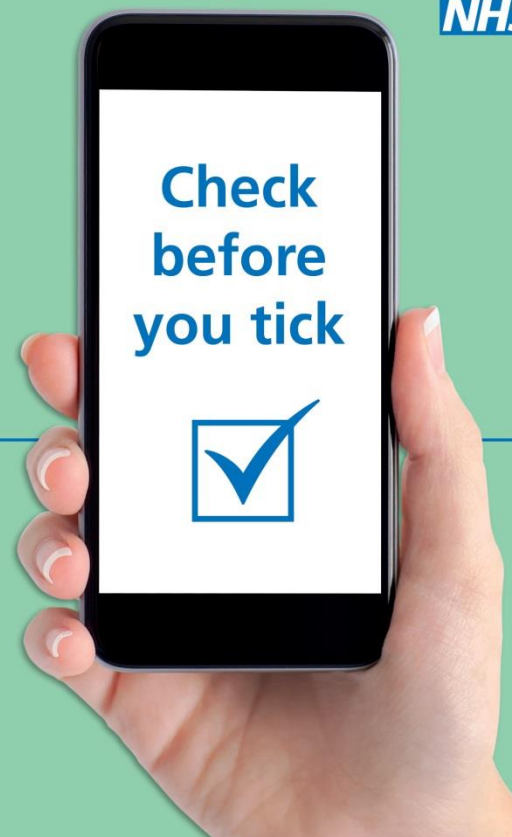
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National Communications Campaign

NHS England and NHS Business Services Authority launched the 'Check Before You Tick' campaign (Sept 2018 – Dec 2018). It aimed to:

- Alert patients that they should not assume they are eligible and that they must check before they claim. Help patients understand their eligibility for free NHS prescriptions and how to claim correctly.
- Highlight the possible consequences of making an incorrect claim – a penalty charge of up to £100.

The campaign also encouraged people who pay for their prescriptions to take advantage of other means of reducing costs, such as prepayment certificates and the NHS Low Income Scheme using the [online eligibility checker](#) tool.

How pharmacists can support the message and help patients



You can help patients by displaying the information. Display information sent to you in your toolkit in September 2018 which included posters, guidance booklets, counter cards and shelf wobblers.



Remind those collecting prescriptions on someone else's behalf to check the eligibility of the person they are claiming for before they tick.



Ask to see proof of eligibility when assisting patients with the exemption status on the back of a prescription.



Encourage patients to check their entitlement prior to making a claim/completing the declaration on the prescription.

Pharmacy images

[illegible]

Eligibility Checking Tool

- There's a simple way for patients to find out if they could be entitled to free prescriptions.
- Patients should search "check before you tick"
- You can direct patients to the eligibility checker here:

<https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/check-if-youre-eligible-help>

BETA

This is a new service - your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

Check what help you could get to pay for NHS costs

Although most NHS treatment is free, there is usually a charge for:

- NHS prescriptions
- NHS dental check-ups and treatment
- sight tests
- new glasses or contact lenses
- repairing or replacing glasses or contact lenses
- NHS wigs
- NHS fabric supports – things like surgical bras, support tights and spinal supports
- travel for NHS treatment

You could be entitled to help with these costs depending on your circumstances.

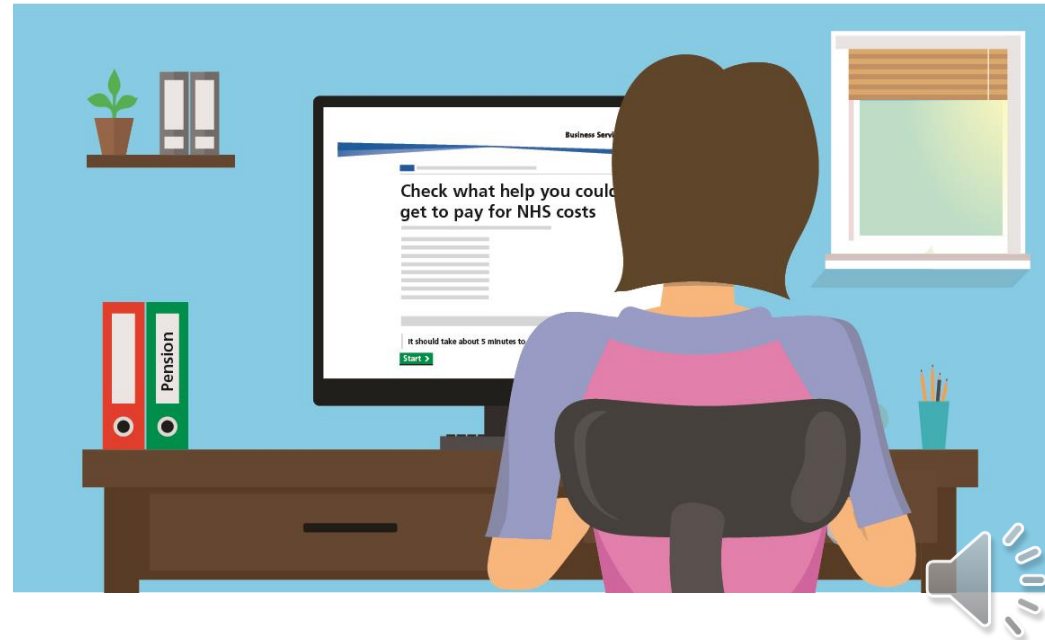
It should take about 3 minutes to check.

Start

>

Eligibility Checker – some statistics

- Pre campaign the average number of users per day was under 1,000.
- One week after launch the average had increased to just under 5,000, with one day peaking at over 20,000 following Moneysaving Expert picking up the campaign.
- The numbers have remained consistently higher, demonstrating its usability for patients.



'Am I Exempt' Tool

- This online tool checks to see if any valid exemptions already exist by answering a few simple questions. This will take less than 3 minutes.

- You can direct patients to the 'Am I Exempt' tool here:

<https://services.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/check-for-help-paying-nhs-costs/start-exempt>

BETA This is a new service - your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

Check if you have to pay for prescriptions

What we can check

This service checks if you're entitled to free NHS prescriptions with any of these:

- prescription prepayment certificate (PPC)
- medical exemption certificate
- maternity exemption certificate
- HC2 certificate
- tax credit exemption certificate

We will also tell you if your certificate is due to expire within the next month.

Electronic Prescription Service



Impact of incorrectly submitted prescriptions

- Each time a patient receives a PCN incorrectly, they are asked to send proof of payment to NHSBSA. The patient also has to contact the pharmacy to ensure they amend the electronic message on their EPS.
 - This is because it's not being amended by the pharmacist at point of dispensing.
- This impacts on the patient, causing a huge inconvenience for them, caused an impact on pharmacy payment and also costs the NHS overall as time and money is spent sending PCNs incorrectly.



Electronic Prescription Service

Community pharmacies play an important role by continuing to always check a patient's entitlement to free prescriptions.

What you can do to help:



Ask patients to sign up to EPS; if there are more patients in your monthly submissions this benefits you as well as the patient.



Always select the correct exemption or charge status for EPS and check the PMR holds the latest exemption information and expiry dates to avoid risk of PCNs being issued.



Electronic Prescription Service

What you can do to help:



Always complete the reverse of the paper prescription correctly (Parts 1, 2 or 3) before submission.



Regularly check that patient exemption status and expiry dates held on the PMR systems are correct before submitting prescriptions. Currently the exempt message on EPS is prepopulated from the PMR system and if this is not checked by the pharmacy the exemption is carried over to NHSBSA.

Case Study - incorrectly submitted Electronic prescription

Zoe has two young children, aged two and four and she works full time. Her partner works long hours and so Zoe also looks after the children, the home and herself.

She struggles to make phone calls as she can't always complete a call uninterrupted. However, she likes to complete things online in her own time, and put the task to one side when she needs to.

Zoe gets a monthly prescription, and opted to have electronic prescriptions at a new pharmacy with longer opening hours. She works from 9am-5pm; so it's more convenient.



Goals

- To take care of her health problems

Pains

- Has received a penalty charge notice as her maternity exemption certificate expired on 06/06/2018.
- Since September she has been receiving penalty charges in the post for claiming free prescriptions that she is not entitled to even though she has paid each time.

Needs

- To understand what has caused this PCN
- To be able to respond to the PCN in her own time and online

Real Time Exemption Checking (RTEC) and how it supports post exemption checking and pharmacy message



Some of the advantages of Real Time Exemption Checking (RTEC)

- The new digital prescription exemption service allows your pharmacist to check real time if the patient needs to pay for their prescriptions
- The new process will mean the patient will spend less time at the counter checking to see if they are eligible for an exemption and signing the declaration
- The new service will offer reassurance to the patient and pharmacy team if the patient is unsure if they are exempt from paying for their prescriptions
- The patient could / will save on prescription costs if they didn't know they were entitled to an exemption

Contact details and useful links

- Alison O'Brien, Head of Loss Recovery Services, NHSBSA.
E-mail: alison.o'brien@nhs.net
- Online eligibility checker for patients: <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/check-if-youre-eligible-help>
- Direct patients to nhs.uk/healthcosts for more information on taking advantage of other means of reducing costs.
- Direct patients to the 'Am I Exempt' tool here: <https://services.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/check-for-help-paying-nhs-costs/start-exempt>
- For more details on the Electronic Prescription Service visit: <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/prescribing-and-dispensing/electronic/>

Follow us on Twitter: [@NHSBSA](https://twitter.com/NHSBSA)





Prescription switching

Presenters Suraj Shah & Mitesh Bhudia



Completing reverse of paper prescription/tokens



- The reverse of the current paper FP10 form contains three parts:
 - Part 1 (exemption)
 - Part 2 (charges paid)
 - Part 3 (signature)

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NOTE Patients who don't have to pay must fill in parts 1 and 3 (unless they are exempt on age grounds, and their age is printed on the front of this prescription). Those who pay must fill in parts 2 and 3. Penalty charges may be applied if you make a wrongful claim for free prescriptions. If you're unsure about whether you are entitled to free prescriptions, pay and ask for an FP57 form. You cannot get one later. The FP57 tells you about getting a refund.

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 B ☐ is 16, 17 or 18 and in full-time education
 C ☐ is 60 years of age or over
 D ☐ has a valid maternity exemption certificate
 E ☐ has a valid medical exemption certificate
 F ☐ has a valid prescription pre-payment certificate
 G ☐ has a valid War Pension exemption certificate
 L ☐ is named on a current HC2 charges certificate
 X ☐ was prescribed free-of-charge contraceptives
 H ☐ *gets Income Support or income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 K ☐ *gets income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 M ☐ *is entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate
 S ☐ *has a partner who gets Pension Credit guarantee credit (PCGC)

*Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ NI no: _____

*I am included in an award of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or Tax Credit. Print the name of the person who gets the benefit.

Declaration For patients who do not have to pay
 I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete. I understand that if it is not, appropriate action may be taken. I confirm proper entitlement to exemption. To enable the NHS to check I have a valid exemption and to prevent and detect fraud and incorrectness, I consent to the disclosure of relevant information from this form to and by the NHS Business Services Authority, the Department for Work and Pensions and Local Authorities.

Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 2 I have paid £ _____ Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 3 Cross ONE box I am the patient ☐ patient's representative ☐

Sign here Date / /

Print name and address* _____

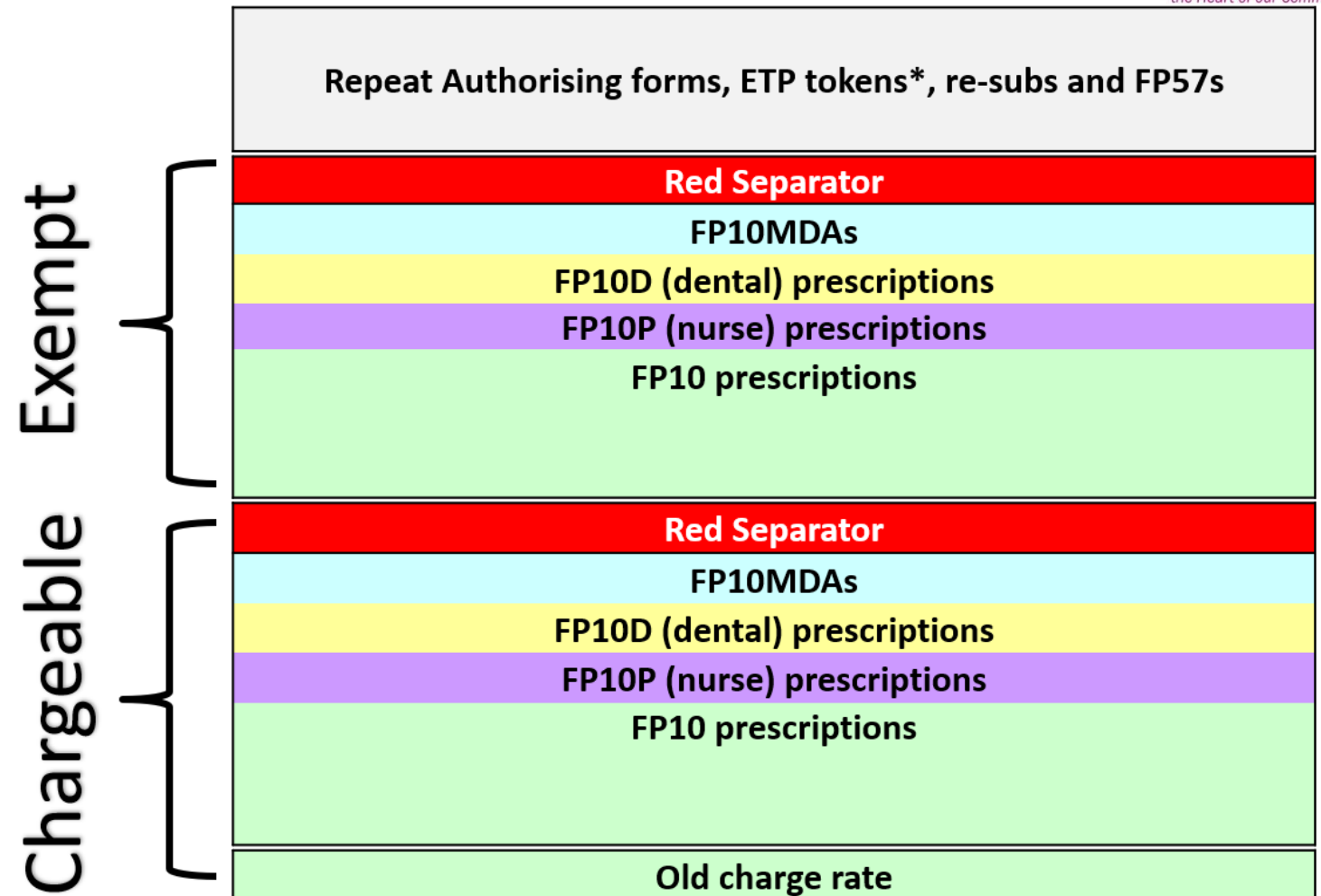
Postcode _____

*If different from overleaf © Crown Copyright

Patient status	Parts of the form which <u>MUST</u> be completed
Exempt	1 & 3
Paid	2 & 3

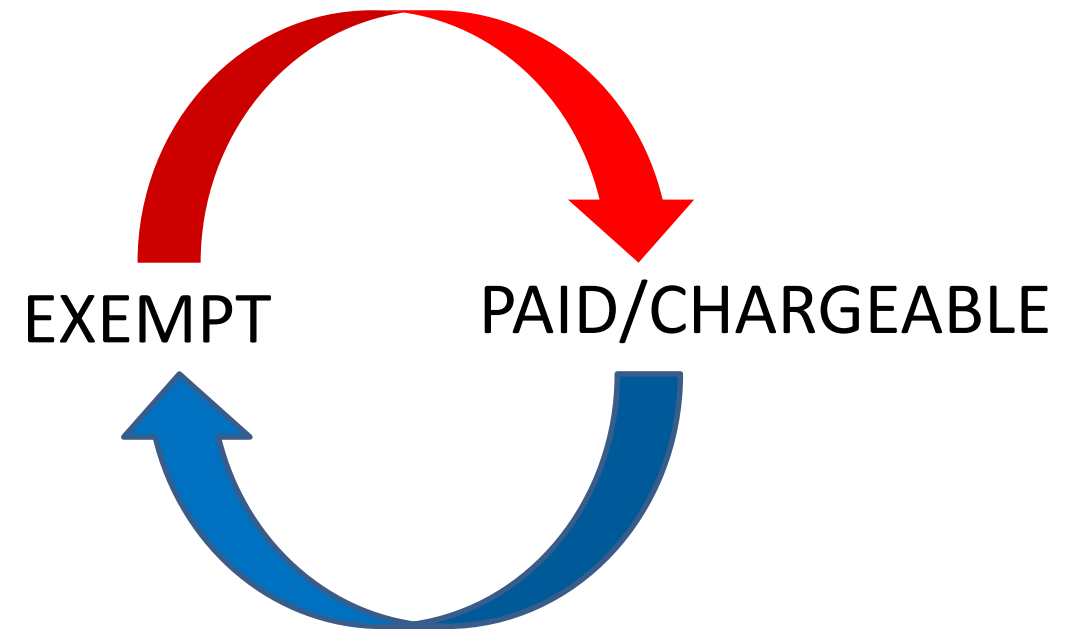
Sorting and submitting paper prescriptions

- At the end of the month, you would separate the paid prescriptions from exempt prescriptions before submitting to the NHSBSA



What is Switching?

- If prescriptions are filed in the incorrect group or the patient has completed their declaration incorrectly, NHSBSA 'switch' the appropriate prescriptions(s) into the 'correct' group (for example from exempt group to chargeable or vice-versa)



Types of Switching

There are 2 main types of switching

1. Prescription is switched from Exempt to Chargeable group if
 - Part 3 is unsigned
 - Part 2 contains a charge rate and the prescription is incorrectly filed in the exempt bundle
2. Prescription is switched from Chargeable to Exempt group if
 - An exempt prescription placed in the chargeable group



E.g.- Exempt to Chargeable: Part 3 Unsigned



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A ☐ is under 16 years of age Collectors of Schedule 2 & 3 CDs should sign their name:

B ☐ is 16, 17 or 18 and in full-time education

C ☐ is 60 years of age or over

D ☐ has a valid maternity exemption certificate

E ☒ has a valid medical exemption certificate

F ☐ has a valid prescription pre-payment certificate

G ☐ has a valid War Pension exemption certificate

L ☐ is named on a current HC2 charges certificate

X ☐ was prescribed free-of-charge contraceptives

H ☐ *gets income support or income-related Employment and Support Allowance

K ☐ *gets income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

M ☐ *is entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate

S ☐ *has a partner who gets Pension Credit guarantee credit (PCGC)

*Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ All no: _____


*I am included in an award of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or Tax Credit. Print the name of the person who gets the benefit.

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Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 2 I have paid £ _____ Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 3 Cross ONE box I am the patient ☐ patient's representative ☐

Sign here  Date / /

Print name and address* _____

Postcode _____

*If different from overleaf © Crown Copyright

-£8.80/item



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Part 3 Cross ONE box I am the patient ☐ patient's representative ☐

Sign here  Date / /

Print name and address* **A.N Other**

Postcode _____

*If different from overleaf © Crown Copyright



E.g.- Exempt to Chargeable: Handwritten D.O.B



Pharmacy Stamp

Age **72**
D.O.B **1/1/47**

Title, Forename, Surname & Address
A.N. OTHER
23 ROAD
LONDON

Please don't stamp over this

Number of days' treatment
N.B. Ensure dose is stated

Endorsements

AMOXICILLIN 125mg/5ml
Suspension
1 x 5ml TDS

Signature of Prescriber
9/1/19

Date

For dispenser
No. of Prescs.
on form

NHS

FP10SS0515

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Collectors of Schedule 2 & 3 CDs should sign their name:

Pharmacy use only
Evidence not seen

-£8.80

* Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ NI no: _____
* I am included in an award of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or Tax Credit.
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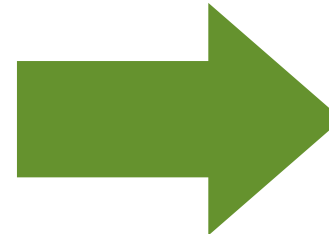
Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 2 I have paid £ _____ Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 3 Cross ONE box I am the patient ☐ patient's representative ☐

Sign here ☐ _____ Date / / _____
Print name and address* _____
Postcode _____

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* Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ NI no: _____
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Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 2 I have paid £ _____ Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 3 Cross ONE box I am the patient ☐ patient's representative ☐

Sign here ☐ **A.N Other** Date / / _____
Print name and address* _____
Postcode _____

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E.g. - Exempt to Chargeable: All Parts completed



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Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 2 I have paid £ **£8.80** Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 3 Cross ONE box I am the patient ☐ patient's representative ☐

Sign here **A.N Other** Date / /

Print name and address* _____

Postcode _____

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-£8.80/item



FP10SS0515

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Sign here **A.N Other** Date / /

Print name and address* _____

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E.g. – Exempt to Chargeable: Wrong bundle



FP10SS0515

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Part 1 The patient doesn't have to pay because he/she:

A	<input type="checkbox"/> is under 16 years of age	Collectors of Schedule 2 & 3 CDs should sign their name:
B	<input type="checkbox"/> is 16, 17 or 18 and in full-time education	
C	<input type="checkbox"/> is 60 years of age or over	
D	<input type="checkbox"/> has a valid maternity exemption certificate	
E	<input type="checkbox"/> has a valid medical exemption certificate	
F	<input type="checkbox"/> has a valid prescription pre-payment certificate	
G	<input type="checkbox"/> has a valid War Pension exemption certificate	
L	<input type="checkbox"/> is named on a current HC2 charges certificate	
X	<input type="checkbox"/> was prescribed free-of-charge contraceptives	
H	<input type="checkbox"/> *gets Income Support or income-related Employment and Support Allowance	
K	<input type="checkbox"/> *gets income-based Jobseeker's Allowance	
M	<input type="checkbox"/> *is entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate	
S	<input type="checkbox"/> *has a partner who gets Pension Credit guarantee credit (PCGC)	

*Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ NI no: _____

*I am included in an award of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or Tax Credit. **Print** the name of the person who gets the benefit.

Declaration For patients who do not have to pay
I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete. I understand that if it is not, appropriate action may be taken. I confirm proper entitlement to exemption. To enable the NHS to check I have a valid exemption and to prevent and detect fraud and incorrectness, I consent to the disclosure of relevant information from this form to and by the NHS Business Services Authority, the Department for Work and Pensions and Local Authorities.

Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 2 I have paid £ **£8.80** Now sign and fill in Part 3

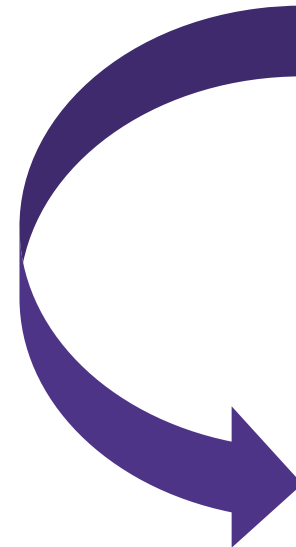
Part 3 Cross ONE box I am the patient ☐ patient's representative ☐

Sign here **A.N Other** Date / /

Print name and address* _____

Postcode _____

*If different from overleaf © Crown Copyright



E.g. – Chargeable to Exempt: Wrong bundle



FP10SS0515

NOTE Patients who don't have to pay must fill in parts 1 and 3 (unless they are exempt on age grounds, and their age is printed on the front of this prescription). Those who pay must fill in parts 2 and 3. Penalty charges may be applied if you make a wrongful claim for free prescriptions. If you're unsure about whether you are entitled to free prescriptions, pay and ask for an FP57 form. You cannot get one later. The FP57 tells you about getting a refund.

Part 1 The patient doesn't have to pay because he/she:

A	<input type="checkbox"/> is under 16 years of age	Collectors of Schedule 2 & 3 CDs should sign their name:
B	<input type="checkbox"/> is 16, 17 or 18 and in full-time education	
C	<input type="checkbox"/> is 60 years of age or over	
D	<input type="checkbox"/> has a valid maternity exemption certificate	
E	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> has a valid medical exemption certificate	
F	<input type="checkbox"/> has a valid prescription pre-payment certificate	
G	<input type="checkbox"/> has a valid War Pension exemption certificate	
L	<input type="checkbox"/> is named on a current HC2 charges certificate	
X	<input type="checkbox"/> was prescribed free-of-charge contraceptives	
H	<input type="checkbox"/> *gets Income Support or income-related Employment and Support Allowance	
K	<input type="checkbox"/> *gets income-based Jobseeker's Allowance	
M	<input type="checkbox"/> *is entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate	
S	<input type="checkbox"/> *has a partner who gets Pension Credit guarantee credit (PCGC)	

*Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____ NI no: _____

*I am included in an award of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or Tax Credit. **Print** the name of the person who gets the benefit.

Declaration For patients who do not have to pay
I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete. I understand that if it is not, appropriate action may be taken. I confirm proper entitlement to exemption. To enable the NHS to check I have a valid exemption and to prevent and detect fraud and incorrectness, I consent to the disclosure of relevant information from this form to and by the NHS Business Services Authority, the Department for Work and Pensions and Local Authorities.

Now sign and fill in Part 3

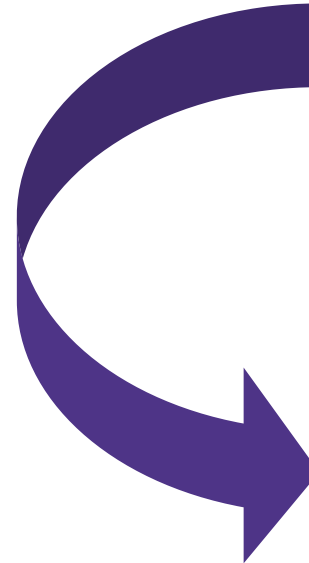
Part 2 I have paid £ _____ Now sign and fill in Part 3

Part 3 Cross ONE box I am the patient ☐ patient's representative ☐

Sign here Date / /

Print name and address* _____ Postcode _____

*If different from overleaf © Crown Copyright



Where to find switching figures on your Schedule of Payment



Schedule of Payments

For:

OCS Code:

Dispensing Month:

PRESCRIPTION DATA

Total forms received (including electronic prescriptions)	2,760
Total electronic prescription forms received	1727
Total electronic prescription items received	3700
Items at zero discount rate, for which a fee is paid	299
Items at standard discount rate, for which a fee is paid (including oxygen)	4,865
Total of items, for which a fee is paid	5,164
Average item value	9.93
Referred back items	6
Referred back forms	2
Medicine use reviews declared	17
Year to date medicine use reviews declared	176
Dispensing staff number of hours declared	
FP57 forms declared	5
Appliance use reviews carried out at patients home declared	0
Appliance use reviews carried out at premises declared	0
New medicine services undertaken	0
New medicine service items	5,088

ITEMS TRANSFERRED BETWEEN EXEMPT AND CHARGEABLE GROUPS	
ExemptToChargeable	11
part 2 contains charge rate	5
part 3 unsigned by patient/patient rep.	6
ExemptToChargeableOldRate	0
ChargeableToExempt	3
declaration shows claim for exemption	3
ChargeableOldRateToExempt	0
Key Part 2 - Prescription charge box on reverse of prescription form	
Part 3 - Patient/representative declaration section on reverse of prescription form	

ITEMS TRANSFERRED BETWEEN EXEMPT AND CHARGEABLE GROUPS

ExemptToChargeable	11
part 2 contains charge rate	5
part 3 unsigned by patient/patient rep.	6
ExemptToChargeableOldRate	0
ChargeableToExempt	3
declaration shows claim for exemption	3
ChargeableOldRateToExempt	0

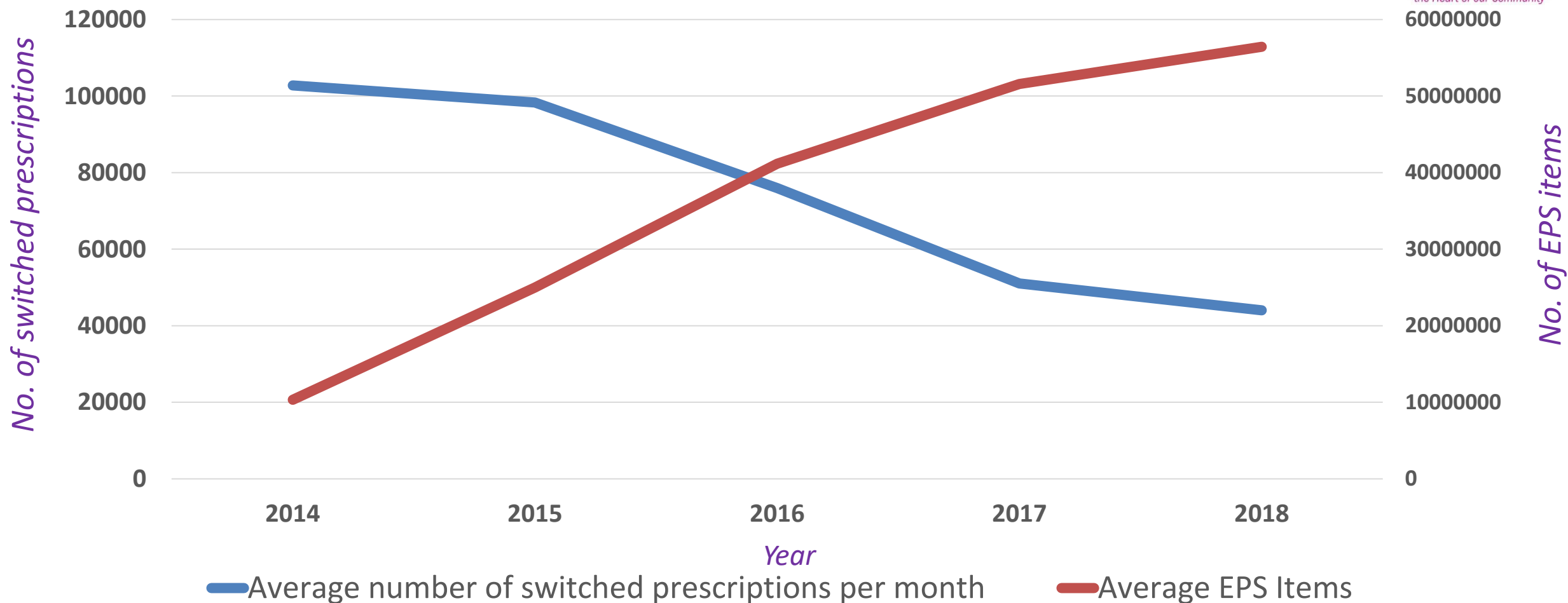
Key Part 2 - Prescription charge box on reverse of prescription form
Part 3 - Patient/representative declaration section on reverse of prescription form

National Switching Statistics

Year	Total switching where Part 3 was deemed incomplete	Approx total charge deductions per year where Part 3 was deemed incomplete
2014 Jan – Dec	1,233,256	£9.9m
2017 Jan - Dec	612,568	£5.2m
2018 Jan – Oct	435,592	£3.8m



Average number of prescriptions switched from exempt to chargeable per year where Part 3 is unsigned vs growth in EPS Items



EPS prescriptions and tokens

- EPS prescriptions and tokens are **NOT** switched
- You must ensure that the paid/exempt field is completed electronically prior to sending the claim message
- Regularly check that patient exemption status and expiry dates held on the PMR systems are correct before submitting prescriptions. Currently the exempt message on EPS is prepopulated from the PMR system and if this is not checked by the pharmacy the exemption is carried over to NHSBSA.

TOP TIPS: How to Prevent Prescriptions from Being Switched



- Check the reverse of the prescription/token has been correctly completed.
- Ensure that each prescription/token is signed
- Ensure that all prescriptions are correctly filed in the appropriate group before submitting your bundle at the end of the month
- EPS – Before submitting a claim, check PMR holds up to date exemption information. Ensure all information regarding patient exemption/ prescription charge status is correctly recorded using the patient declaration made on the token



Switching Rechecks

- Pharmacy contractors are able to request the NHSBSA send them switched forms on a single occasion
- This is for training purposes only
- Subsequent requests will need to be directed to the local NHS England team
- Go to <http://psnc.org.uk/recheck> for the recheck form



Useful resources



Dispensing Factsheet: Prescription Switching

Here our Dispensing and Supply team will take you through the common reasons for prescription switching and give you through their top tips for preventing prescription switching.

How to complete the reverse of a prescription correctly
The reverse of the current paper FP10 form contains three parts: Part 1 (exemption), Part 2 (charges paid) and Part 3 (signature). It is important to ensure that relevant parts are correctly completed by the patient/representative as either exempt or paid. The table below shows parts to complete for each patient status.

Patient status	Parts of the form which MUST be completed
Exempt	Part 1 & Part 3
Paid (Chargeable)	Part 2 & Part 3

The declaration on the reverse of paper prescription forms must be completed on all occasions except where:

- the patient is under 16 or over 60 and a computer-generated date of birth is printed on the prescription
- the patient is a prisoner on release who presents an FP10 or FP10(NCA) with the letters 'HWP' computer printed in the practice address box
- the prescription is a 'Bulk' Prescription (i.e. for two or more patients, see Drug Tariff Part VIII, Note 5)

What is switching?

Once the correct parts on the reverse of the prescription form have been completed by the patient/representative, pharmacy teams are required to sort paper prescriptions into the correct exempt or chargeable group bundles for their end of month submission. Switching occurs when a prescription is moved from the group it was submitted in to the other (for example, moved from exempt to chargeable or vice-versa). When your account is processed by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHS BSA), the reverse of each paper prescription is assessed to determine if it has been filed in the correct group and has been completed correctly by the patient/representative.

1. A prescription is switched from Exempt (Group One) to Chargeable (Group Two) when:

- Part 3 is unsigned - the most common reason for switching from exempt to chargeable group is where the patient has ticked an exemption but not signed Part 3 on the reverse of a prescription (including age exempt patients where the date of birth is computer generated).
- Part 2 contains a charge rate - when a paid prescription has been incorrectly filed with the exempt prescriptions bundle prior to submission.

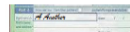
To prevent exempt paper prescriptions being switched to chargeable, ensure that:

- Part 1 of the declaration has been clearly marked with a tick or a cross

Part 2 (the 'amount paid' box) has not been obscured/signed for, e.g. with a signature



Part 3 (the 'signature box') has been signed, a pharmacy stamp is NOT acceptable as a signature



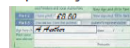
When prescription forms are switched from Exempt to Chargeable, a prescription charge is deducted for each item dispensed on the prescription. This can have huge financial consequences for contractors, as money can be lost through not correctly checking and completing the reverse of an exempt prescription. For example, if an exempt prescription with three items is switched to chargeable, NHS BSA would deduct three patient charges from the pharmacy account costing the pharmacy £8.80 x 3 charges = £26.40.

2. A prescription is switched from Chargeable (Group Two) to Exempt (Group One) when:

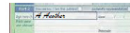
- Part 1 and Part 3 have been completed - a prescription is switched from chargeable to exempt when a form with a completed exempt declaration has been incorrectly filed with the paid prescriptions bundle prior to submission, or where the patient is age exempt with a computer-generated date of birth or age on the prescription.

To prevent chargeable paper prescriptions being switched to exempt, ensure that:

- Part 2 (the 'amount paid' box) has been completed correctly and is clear and legible



Part 3 (the 'signature box') has been signed, a pharmacy stamp is NOT acceptable as a signature



The age or date of birth printed on the front of the prescription is not obscured by a pharmacy stamp or other markings

No charge deductions are made for items on a prescription that is switched from chargeable to exempt status. Do ensure the correct number and amount of prescription charge(s) are collected and declared. This should be noted particularly during months when there has been a change to the prescription charge rate.

psnc.org.uk



NHS penalty charges

Search the NHSBSA website

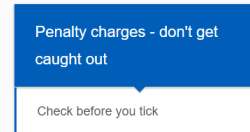
Pay or challenge a Penalty Charge Notice	Penalty charges - don't get caught out	Penalty charges explained
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Check before you tick

Find out if you are entitled to free NHS prescriptions and help with other NHS costs using our eligibility checker.

It usually takes 3 minutes to check.

If you claim free NHS prescriptions when you're not entitled, you could face a £100 penalty charge. Even if it's by mistake.



www.nhs.uk/checkbeforeyoutick



DISPENSING AND SUPPLY FACTSHEET: EXEMPTIONS FROM THE PRESCRIPTION CHARGE

Dispensing Factsheet: Exemptions from the prescription charge

Our Dispensing and Supply Team guides you through the categories of exemptions from the NHS prescription charge and the proof required for each.

Exemption category	Who is exempt?	Proof required	How to apply for exemption
A. Under 16 years of age	Children under 16 years of age	Birth certificate, passport or medical card Please note: Prescriptions with computer-generated dates of birth (DOB) do not require proof of age.	N/A
B. Full-time students aged 16, 17 or 18	Must be aged 16, 17 or 18 and in full-time education from an establishment such as a school, college or university or similar, such as a home tutor. Please note: Apprenticeships are not eligible. However, patients may qualify for a HC2 certificate under the NHS Low Income Scheme (nhs.uk/lowincome)	Proof of age can be found on a child benefit award letter, or birth certificate (passport/medical card and proof they are a full-time student can be obtained from the patient's school, college, university or local education authority (LEA)).	N/A
C. 60 years of age or over	Any patient who is 60 years of age or over.	Birth certificate, passport or medical card Please note: Prescriptions with computer-generated DOB do not require proof of age.	N/A
D. Maternity Exemption	Expectant mothers and those who have given birth to a child (including a still-born child) in the last 12 months.	Possession of a valid Maternity Exemption (MATEx) certificate. Please note: Prescription Services are currently trialing digital maternity exemption certificates. Pharmacies may be presented with one of the following types of exemption certificate: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Digital certificatePrinted copy of the certificatePlastic exemption card More information can be found on the Prescription Services website (nhs.uk/psw)	Patient must complete a FwB form available from GPs, midwives or health visitors. These professionals then sign the form and send it off to Prescription Services who then issue a certificate. Maternity exemption certificate helpline: 0300 330 1341
E. Medical Exemption	Patients with certain medical conditions or physical disability as listed in Part XVI of the Drug Tariff (nhs.uk/drugtariff)	Possession of a valid Medical Exemption Certificate. Please note: Patients with qualifying conditions alone are not entitled to exemption without a valid certificate.	Patients must complete an FP92A form available from GPs. The GP will then send the form to Prescription Services who will issue a certificate. Medical exemption certificate helpline: 0300 330 1341
F. Prescription Pre-payment Certificate (PPC)	Patients in possession of a valid PPC at the point of dispensing. Please note: A PPC is valid for either 3 months or 12 months, depending on the type of PPC purchased.	Possession of a valid PPC. Please note: Prescription Services are working to phase out plastic cards and move towards digital certificates for PPCs. For more information see our website (nhs.uk/ppc)	Patients can complete an FP95 form, available from pharmacies and purchase in store (for pharmacies registered to sell PPCs) or via post (postage details can be found on the FP95). Patients can also purchase a PPC online from Prescription Services (nhs.uk/ppc) or by contacting the PPC helpline 0300 330 1341

psnc.org.uk/switchingfactsheet

psnc.org.uk/patientexemption