












How the electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD) cycle works

eRD allows the prescriber to electronically authorise and issue a batch of repeat prescriptions.

eRD prescription issues include the usual information on electronic prescription service (EPS) prescriptions and additionally, the interval between each issue (e.g. 28 days) and how many times the repeatable prescription can be issued (e.g. 13 times). The steps in the eRD cycle are described below, with some optional steps near the beginning, which help eRD to work optimally for all involved.

eRD step	Explanation of the eRD step
 Patient selected	The GP practice team confirms the switch to eRD. The NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) can support this process by providing a list of potential candidates to practices.
 Optional step: Patient's existing stock of medicines is considered	The patient identifies the quantity of medicines currently held by them to enable the generation of a 'synchronising prescription'.
 Optional step: Synchronising prescription generated	Where necessary, the prescriber issues a synchronising prescription to the patient to align the duration of treatment for all medicines, so they will all run out at the same time.
 Optional step: Syncing prescription dispensed	Pharmacy dispenses the synchronising prescription.
 eRD prescription issued	The prescriber selects the number of repeat batches and interval period , e.g. 13 batches, each with a 28-day interval to cover a total of 364 days. eRD is used to prescribe and send the item to the NHS Spine.
 Prescriber may print a token, but isn't required to do so	The prescriber may print a Repeatable Prescription Authorising Token (a paper token representation of the eRD batch issues). Some patients like to receive a token, because it lists the prescription items they can obtain directly from their pharmacy.
 eRD prescription moves from Spine to pharmacy	The NHS Spine sends the eRD prescription to the patient's nominated pharmacy. It may also be 'pulled' by the pharmacy if the pharmacy has the prescription token reference. The first 'batch issue' is downloaded by the pharmacy like other EPS prescriptions.
 Subsequent batch issues	Subsequent issues are timed to arrive after the previous batch issue but before the patient is due to visit the pharmacy for the next supply, to allow time for preparation of the prescription. Subsequent issues within a batch of prescriptions can only be downloaded early if previous issues are completed.
 Requesting a new set of repeats (potentially aligned with a review of the patient's regimen)	A new repeatable prescription is requested after the last issue. After all the issues have been dispensed, or if the eRD issues expire, the patient contacts their GP to request a further batch of issues. GP practices may align this with planned clinical reviews of patients. Pharmacy team members should advise patients of the need to contact their GP practice when dispensing the last issue of a repeatable prescription.
 Change of pharmacy mid-batch	Ability to change nomination between issues: A repeatable prescription is sent to a patient's nominated pharmacy. Patients can change their nominated pharmacy before the expiry of the repeatable prescription. Issues that have not already been downloaded will then be transferred to the new pharmacy.
 Cancellation or change of eRD prescriptions	Unused batch issues can be cancelled by the prescriber at any time. A set of prescriptions may occasionally be cancelled completely and restarted if there is a change to the medicines. Alternatively, a newly prescribed medicine could have its prescription aligned to end at the time of an eRD batch issue, with it then being included in the patient's next set of eRD prescriptions.

Read more about eRD at psnc.org.uk/eRD