

## NHS Pensions Update – October 2021

Welcome to the October 2021 NHS Pensions Employer Update.

### Sharing our performance

*Table 1- Total Transactions (September 2021)*

Item	Volume
Total Transactions	103,985
First retirements	6,492
Estimates	3,144
Annual allowance	6,834
Ill health applications	651
AP/ERRBO/AVC	1,846
Bereavements	6,616
Transfers	3,175
Nominations	2,328
Pensions On Divorce	1,892
Protection of Pay	123
Refunds	1,934
Revised retirements	2,459
Service	3,731
Inbound processing	6,183
Data support	32,133
Pensioner admin	24,368

*Table 2 - First Retirements and Pensioners (September 2021)*

Item	Volume
Applications Processed	6,492
On Time	99.52%
Amount paid in Lump Sums	£222,799,062.00
Amount of Pension Paid	£837,374,550.50
No. Pensioners in Payment	1,035,882

*Table 3 - Employer Helpline statistics (September 2021)*

Item	Volume
Total Volume Calls	3,009
Average Handling Time (s)	495
Average Speed of Answer (s)	57

*Table 4 - Member Helpline statistics (September 2021)*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Volume</b>
Total Volume Calls	28,137
Average Handling Time (s)	609
Average Speed of Answer (s)	97

From May 2021 we have amended the way in which we report transactional values to include all events across the Scheme and all transactions completed for each function, up to and including the actual event itself. This change has been made to provide a more comprehensive overview of transactional volumes on a month-by-month basis.

## **TRS and Annual Benefits Statement refresh**

The process of the mid-year Total Reward Statement refresh has started, and member details up to 15 October will be used for the refreshed statements.

Any amendments to member details from 16 October will be included in the annual refresh in 2022. We expect the mid-year refreshed statements to be made available in mid-December.

## **Final pay control re-assessment applications – December deadline approaching**

We are now just over half-way through the timeframe set (July 2021 – 31 December 2021) for you to apply for reassessment of any final pay control charges issued from 1 April 2018.

**Please note, your request for reassessment must be received by us by 31 December 2021. Any requests received on or after 1 January 2022 will not be accepted.**

If you've paid or received an invoice for a final pay control charge on or after 1 April 2018, you can request for this to be reviewed by completing the re-assessment form. The reassessment form must be fully completed with any additional supporting evidence. Please ensure the completed form is returned directly to the final pay control team at: [nhsbsa.fpc@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsa.fpc@nhs.net) in PDF format.

To assist you, we've created a [webpage with all the information you need on final pay controls](#), including how to apply for charges to be reassessed and the application forms you need for this.

## Death in service process reminder

The process for a member who dies in service changed on 1 September 2021. Please do not submit any AW9, AW11 or AW158 forms, as these are now obsolete and have been removed from the website. The forms have been replaced with a new [Death in Service Notification Form](#) that is available in the [Employer forms](#) section of the Employer hub.

NHS Pensions is now paying the initial dependant pension to spouses as well as partners, in line with the new Death in Service Notification form, so please ensure you do not pay any new, initial pensions (although please continue to pay any initial pensions that you already have in payment).

## Changes to the AW171 retirement benefits process

It's been a few months since we introduced the final system changes to automate the AW171 process. You now no longer need to send us the AW171 form to trigger a review of the pension in payment and determine whether a revised pension is appropriate.

We appreciate there have been numerous queries whilst the process has been bedding in and we sent out a set of FAQs to answer the most common queries we had received to alleviate concerns.

Following your feedback, we have made some slight changes to the process, for example, if we have already had the pay from you, we will use it. We are also looking to refine the original tolerance level set so we can make sure any anomalies can be addressed within a smaller margin.

It's still really important to make sure any arrears are recorded in the Scheme year they relate rather than the year they were paid. Doing this correctly ensures the pay is not overinflated for an incorrect year. Any changes that cannot be made electronically, such as changes to retirement dates or lump sum changes, should be emailed to [nhsbsa.pensionemployers@nhsbsa.nhs.uk](mailto:nhsbsa.pensionemployers@nhsbsa.nhs.uk)

Some of you queried why a revised award had been processed where no changes had been made by you. These changes were because we carried out the uplift for 2015 members to increase their pensions in line with CPI. This change will be an annual event going forward.

We hope, now the process has been in place for a few months, you are confident about the changes. However, we are here should you have any concerns.

We are still working on the ESR/POL SD55E process and how best to make that work fully end-to-end without intervention or double handling. We will work with you to make sure we get this right over the coming months.

Finally, we have reached out to some employers for feedback on how this process is now working for you, and we will share the feedback soon.

## **Make Contribution Payments (MCP) application: Improvements to the manual payment process**

The manual payment process in NHS Pensions involves employers submitting their pension contribution information by remittance slip, which is sent across to the NHS Pensions Finance team via email. These employers are unable to pay their pension contributions via the direct debit process due to reasons such as auditing controls, organisational structure, or regulations.

Currently on the MCP application, there is no option to submit the remittance slips or submit the pension contribution information paid via a manual method. We will soon be releasing a feature on the MCP application which will allow employers to submit their contribution payment information by remittance slip for their manual payments. Employers will also be able to see their remittance history.

This process will speed up the manual payment information collection in a more secure manner, as well as speeding up the reconciliation process.

## **III Health Retirement forms**

When sending III-Health application forms, please ensure a job description for the member and all Occupational Health reports are enclosed. Please also include any report(s) from a member's specialist(s).

Before sending III-Health application forms to NHS Pensions, please check that the correct version of the III-Health Retirement form has been used:

- AW33E v18
- AW240 v12
- Occupational Health form (Part C) - this should be completed by the Occupational Health Doctor, a GP or Specialist.

Page 10 of the AW33E application form must be completed in full by the employer. Please include an employer address in the EA Official stamp box to allow NHS Pensions to send any decision letters direct to the employer.

Any old versions of the application forms will be rejected by NHS Pensions.

Links to the forms on the NHS Pensions website:

## **III-Health Retirement**

[The Consideration of Entitlement to III Health Retirement Benefits \(AW33E\)v18](#)

## **Early payment of Deferred Benefits due to III-Health**

[The Consideration of Entitlement for Early Payment of Deferred Benefits due to III Health \(AW240\)v12](#)

## **Part C Occupational Health**

[Consideration of Entitlement to III Health Retirement Benefits AW33E Part C](#)

## **Change to NHS Pensions procedure where hours exceed whole time equivalent**

Where hours worked by a member exceed the whole time equivalent in a period, hours are restricted, and the excess are not pensionable.

NHS Pensions currently amend hours to the maximum allowable for the period and advise the relevant employer of the revised, restricted hours. Employers must then adjust pay and contributions accordingly and amend the member's NHS Pension membership record through ESR or Pensions Online.

Where benefit calculations are made before employers amend NHS Pensions member data, this can result in an inflated pay figure used in calculations. To ensure that inflated pay figures are not used for Annual Allowance, Annual Benefit Statements and other benefit calculations, NHS Pensions is changing its own processes, and in addition to restricting hours, will also amend pay and contribution figures pro rata to the reduction in hours.

During October, you will begin to receive SM8's with additional information, showing adjustments we have made to pay and contributions in addition to the reduced hours for the period.

There is no change in the action required by employers. You must still adjust the pensionable hours to the figure we have advised, calculate the correct pensionable pay and contributions, and update the member records to show the confirmed amounts.

## Changes to contact details within your organisation

It is the responsibility of employers as the local administrators of the NHS Pensions Scheme to inform NHS Pensions of any contact detail changes within your organisation.

Where details change, the appropriate form needs to be completed and returned to NHS Pensions. [The change of contact details form can be found here.](#)

It is imperative that organisations also update their Pensions Online and Make Contribution Payment admin users when any changes happen.

## Additional GP Practice Manager events – Level 1

Due to the exceptional demand, we've arranged additional Level 1 GP Practice Manager events to take place in November.

As a reminder, there are two training sessions:

- GP Practice Manager Event Level 1 Part 1
- GP Practice Manager Event Level 1 Part 2

You will need to attend two consecutive training sessions. The second session needs to immediately follow the first. For example, if you select to attend Tuesday 2 November Level 1 Part 1, you must also select Wednesday 3 November Level 1 Part 2.

Only after the two consecutive sessions have been attended will you receive a Continued Professional Development (CPD) accreditation. All the events will be delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams.

GP Practice Manager Event Level 1, Part 1 - Tuesday 2 November 1pm to 3pm

This session includes NHS Pension Scheme website, Annual Benefit Statements and roles and responsibilities.

Link to Eventbrite: [Level-1-Part-1](#)

GP Practice Manager Event Level 1, Part 2 - Wednesday 3 November 1pm to 3pm

This session includes: POL, AW8 and the member journey.

Link to Eventbrite: [Level-1-Part-2](#)

## **Additional GP Practice Manager events – Level 2**

The NHS Pensions Stakeholder Engagement Team are delivering additional Level 2 GP Practice Events, commencing in October and November, presenting educational training tailored for Practice Managers. These events will be delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams.

There are 2 training sessions:

- GP Practice Manager Event Level 2 Part 1
- GP Practice Manager Event Level 2 Part 2

Practice Managers will need to attend two consecutive training sessions. The second session needs to immediately follow the first. For example, if you select to attend Tuesday 26 October Level 2 Part 1, you must also select Wednesday 27 October Level 2 Part 2.

Only after the two consecutive sessions have been attended, will you receive a Continued Professional Development (CPD) accreditation.

Level 2 GP Practice Manager Events will take place on the following dates:

GP Practice Manager Event Level 2, Part 1

Tuesday 26 October 13:00 - 15:00

This session includes Roles and Responsibilities / Pensions Online

To register, visit the [GP Practice Manager Event Level 2 Part 1 \(G04L2P1\) page](#) on Eventbrite.

## GP Practice Manager Event Level 2, Part 2

Wednesday 27 October 13:00 - 15:00

This session includes Ill Health and Family Benefits / Flexible Retirement

To register, visit the [GP Practice Manager Event Level 2 Part 2 \(G04L2P2\) page](#) on Eventbrite.

## GP Practice Manager Event Level 2, Part 1

Tuesday 16 November 13:00 - 15:00

This session includes Roles and Responsibilities / Pensions Online

To register for this session, visit the [GP Practice Manager Event Level 2 Part 1 \(G05L2P1\) page](#) on Eventbrite.

## GP Practice Manager Event Level 2, Part 2

Wednesday 17 November 13:00 - 15:00

This session includes Ill Health and Family Benefits / Flexible Retirement

To register, visit the [GP Practice Manager Event Level 2 Part 2 \(G05L2P2\) page](#) on Eventbrite.

## GP Practice Manager Event Level 2, Part 1

Wednesday 24 November 13:00 - 15:00

This session includes Roles and Responsibilities / Pensions Online

To register, visit the [GP Practice Manager Event Level 2 Part 1 \(G06L2P1\) page](#) on Eventbrite.

## GP Practice Manager Event Level 2, Part 2

Thursday 25 November 13:00 - 15:00

This session includes Ill-Health and Family Benefits / Flexible Retirement

To register, visit the [GP Practice Manager Event Level 2 Part 2 \(G06L2P2\) page](#) on Eventbrite.



If you register and then are unable to attend, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can reallocate your reserved place to the next available person.

If your organisation would like to request training/attendance directly from the Stakeholder Engagement Team, please complete the event/meeting request form available on our [Stakeholder Engagement Team webpage](#) and email the team for consideration: [nhsbsa.stakeholderengagement@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsa.stakeholderengagement@nhs.net)

## **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.

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.

The scheme has been introduced for eligible frontline health and social care workers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The scheme covers staff who provide hands-on personal care for people who have contracted coronavirus or who work in health or social care settings where the virus is present.

The scheme recognises the increased risk faced by staff during the crisis. It covers coronavirus-related deaths of workers in frontline health and social care roles during the outbreak.

A payment of £60,000 will be made to the estate of eligible individuals who die from coronavirus contracted during their frontline essential work.

England scheme information and Wales scheme information is available for:

- claimants
- employers

If you need information on this website in a different language or format, for example, accessible PDFs, large print, easy read, audio recording or braille, contact us by email [nhsbsa.clastranlation@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsa.clastranlation@nhs.net).

## **Changes to public service pension schemes**

Our website now includes a dedicated hub area focusing on the government changes to public service pension schemes as a result of the introduction of transitional protection - sometimes known as the McCloud judgment.

The webpages include a new introductory video on the changes, and a factsheet to support members to understand if they are affected and what the changes mean.

New information will continue to be added to the webpages and our [FAQs on Knowledge Base](#) as this becomes available. There is also dedicated page for employers that further content will be added to over time.

## **2019/20 Pensions Annual Allowance Charge Compensation Policy**

Both NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) and NHS Wales have published guidance on their respective 2019/20 Pension Annual Allowance Charge Compensation policies, including an application form for eligible clinicians to apply for the scheme and information on the actions that employers now need to take.

It follows the NHSEI and NHS Wales announcements at the end of 2019 that clinical staff who go over their annual allowance for the 2019/20 tax year and who use Scheme Pays to pay the tax charge can be compensated in retirement for any reduction to their NHS Pension Scheme benefits.

You can find resources for employers, downloadable application forms and details of how to confirm eligibility on the NHSEI website if you're based in England, or the NHS Confed website if you're based in Wales:

- PAACCS information for England: [www.england.nhs.uk/pensions/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/pensions/)
- PACCS information for Wales: [www.nhsconfed.org/NHSPensionsWales](http://www.nhsconfed.org/NHSPensionsWales)

PCSE is accepting forms from GPs for endorsement in application windows. The next GP application window will be open from 13 December 2021 to 11 February 2022.