

# New Medicines Service (NMS) FAQs

## General

### 1) What is the New Medicines Service (NMS)?

The NMS is a service designed to provide support and empower patients in the management of their long term condition by helping them improve adherence to their newly prescribed medicine(s). After identifying and inviting an eligible patient for the NMS (engagement), the pharmacist will hold a discussion with the patient within a short period after the new medicine has been started (initial intervention), with a repeated discussion (follow-up) held soon after, in an attempt to encourage effective medicine-taking.

### 2) Is it mandatory for pharmacies to provide the NMS?

No. The New Medicine Service (NMS) is an Advanced service, pharmacy contractors can opt whether to provide this service or not.

### 3) Are there any requirements to be met before one can start providing the NMS?

- Pharmacists will have to be accredited to provide MURs.
- The pharmacy premises, from where the service is to be conducted is required to have an accredited consultation area which is at least at the level required for provision of MURs.
- All pharmacists providing the service will have to complete and sign a 'NMS – self assessment of readiness form'.

### 4) Can pharmacy support staff carry out the initial intervention and follow-up stages of the NMS?

No. The initial intervention and follow-up discussion with the patient can only be conducted by an eligible pharmacist. However, pharmacy technicians and other pharmacy support staff can assist with other elements of the service such as making appointments, issuing reminders etc.

### 5) Is verbal consent from the patient acceptable for participation in the NMS?

No. A consent form must be provided to the patient to complete and sign before the service can be started. The consent relates to the sharing of information discussed as part of the service with the patient's prescriber as necessary, and with the PCT/successor organisation and the NHS BSA.

### 6) Are children eligible to participate in the NMS?

Yes, as long as the child is capable of giving consent themselves. Parents or carers are NOT permitted to give consent on behalf of a child. A child incapable of giving written consent personally is not eligible for the NMS.

### 7) What conditions/therapy areas are eligible under the NMS?

The conditions/therapy areas included in the initial roll-out of the NMS are asthma, COPD, diabetes (type 2), hypertension and patients on antiplatelet/anticoagulant therapy.

### 8) Which medicines are covered under the NMS?

Qualifying medicines for the NMS relate to the active ingredients listed under the specified British National Formulary (*BNF*) categories (as agreed by PSNC and NHS Employers). Patients with an eligible long-term condition/therapy prescribed a new medicine containing one or more of the active ingredients listed under

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any of the specified *BNF* categories may be able to receive the service.

### 9) Where can I find a list of medicines covered under the NMS?

The NPA SOP Guidance document alphabetically lists the active ingredients corresponding to their *BNF* categories that are eligible for NMS provision. The PSNC have also produced a NMS medicines list.

### 10) Does a patient qualify for the NMS if they are prescribed a new medicine listed under one of the specified *BNF* categories but NOT for one of the eligible conditions/therapy areas?

No. Currently only those patients prescribed a qualifying **new medicine** (ie prescribed for the first time to that patient) for any of the following eligible conditions/therapy areas can be recruited to the NMS.

### 11) Are specials covered – for example, a liquid specials such as Gliclazide oral suspension?

Yes. Specials containing one or more of the active ingredients listed under the specified *BNF* categories would qualify a patient for the NMS as long as the new medicine prescribed is for one of the eligible conditions/therapy areas.

### 12) Does a patient with an eligible long term conditions/therapy qualify for the NMS if they are prescribed a new medicine that is NOT included in the specified *BNF* categories?

No. Only those medicines listed under the specified *BNF* categories would qualify a patient for the NMS.

### 13) If a patient is prescribed two qualifying new medicines at SAME TIME on one prescription form are they eligible for two separate NMS episodes?

No. You will only be paid on completion of **ONE** NMS episode regardless of the number of qualifying new medicines started by the patient at the same time.

### 14) Is there a limit on the number of NMS episodes a patient can receive in a year?

No. There is no limit on the number of NMS episodes a patient can receive. For example, if a patient is prescribed one qualifying new medicine today and a different qualifying new medicine a few months later, they would be eligible for two separate NMS episodes (as the two qualifying new medicines have NOT been prescribed at the same time). In this case, the patient can choose to receive the NMS from the same pharmacy or different participating pharmacies for each new medicine prescribed.

### 15) How will local prescribers know that my pharmacy provides the NMS?

It is up to each pharmacy to make local GPs and practice staff aware that the pharmacy provides the NMS. Pharmacy contractors should ensure that all GP practice staff and members of the wider healthcare team (such as practice nurses, community matrons and non-medical prescribers) are aware of the benefits of the NMS and are able to identify and refer eligible patients to the pharmacy for the service.

### 16) Will local prescribers be directing patients to particular pharmacies which provide the NMS?

No. Prescribers should NOT be directing patients to a particular pharmacy. They may verbally refer a patient to a participating pharmacy or indicate on the prescription for the new medicine that the patient is eligible to participate in the NMS. Patients are free to choose the pharmacy from where they wish to have their prescription(s) dispensed and subsequently join the NMS.

### 17) How long should it take for each of the initial intervention and follow-up discussion stages?

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The duration for each appointment could vary depending upon the number of qualifying new medicines a patient has been prescribed. The research average duration was 12 minutes, so you should allow between 10 to 15 minutes for the initial intervention appointment. The follow-up discussion is likely to be shorter in duration in most cases.

### **18) What should I do if a patient is eligible for the NMS but my pharmacy does not currently offer the service?**

You can signpost the patient to another pharmacy which offers the service although this will mean that the prescription for their new medicine will have to be dispensed by that pharmacy. The patient is only eligible for the NMS at the first occasion their new medicine is dispensed by a community pharmacy. If the patient's new medicine is first dispensed by a pharmacy not offering the NMS, the patient cannot subsequently join the NMS for the same new medicine at a different pharmacy offering the service.

## Funding

### **19) Does the implementation payment have to be claimed prior to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2012?**

Yes. A fixed, conditional, one-off payment of £750 can be claimed in year one of the service (which runs from October 2011 to March 2012). To claim for this payment, the pharmacy must confirm they have provided the NMS a minimum of six times between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012. After 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, contractors will no longer be able claim for the implementation payment.

### **20) How can the pharmacy claim for the NMS payments (implementation and target)?**

The implementation payment can be claimed through the NHS BSA using a special form (yet to be agreed by PSNC and NHS Employers). Target payments can be claimed from the NHS BSA using a FP34C form.

### **21) Do the target payments need to be claimed for in the same month the NMS is completed or can the number of completions be carried forward to future months to claim for payment?**

Pharmacies will be paid each month for the highest target band they achieve. Each month is considered separately and NMS completions for one month cannot be carried forward to improve performance in later months.

### **22) When will the revised Fp34C be available?**

The BSA will send out to contractors in October – contractors don't need to do anything.

### **23) Claiming for NMS payments on completion if the NMS has been started in one month but is completed in another month?**

You claim in the month of completion – it is fine for a NMS episode to straddle two months.

## Record-keeping

### **24) How long do signed patient consent forms need to be kept?**

This has not yet been determined. The PSNC will agree guidance on this with NHS Employers.

### **25) How long do paper copies of the NMS worksheet need to be kept for?**

This has not yet been determined. The PSNC will agree guidance on this with NHS Employers.

### **26) How long do the patient record forms have to be retained for?**

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2 years.

**27) Do pharmacies have to give a copy of the consent form to the patient?**

No.

**28) How long do the consent forms have to be retained for?**

No formal requirement in the Directions, so we suggest 2 years.

**29) Do the consent forms have to be included in the PCT reports quarterly?**

No.

**30) What if the patient refuses to let the pharmacy record their ethnicity? Are they still able to have the NMS? (the NMS record-keeping requirements specify that the patient's ethnicity has to be recorded? Is there any room for flexibility?)**

Has to be recorded, but there is a 'not stated' option in the 16 + 1 Government standard codes.

### Possible scenarios

**31) If a patient has their new medicine dispensed at a pharmacy not providing the NMS but has their following prescription for the same new medicine dispensed at a pharmacy providing the NMS, would the patient still qualify for the service?**

No. As above, a patient is only eligible for the NMS on the first occasion the new medicine is supplied by a participating community pharmacy.

**32) If a patient signs up for the NMS at the engagement stage, but does not attend the initial intervention or withdraws consent before the intervention discussion takes place – will this count as a completed NMS?**

No. This will not count as a completed NMS.

**33) If a patient taking only one qualifying new medicine completes the initial intervention stage and requires referral to the prescriber – can the pharmacy claim for one completed NMS?**

Yes, the pharmacy can claim for one completed NMS if a patient taking only **ONE** qualifying new medicine requires referral back to their prescriber at the initial intervention stage. This would also apply to patients taking multiple medicines as long as **ALL** of their qualifying new medicines require referral back to their prescriber.

**34) If a patient taking multiple qualifying new medicines, completes the initial intervention stage but requires referral to the prescriber for one of the new medicines and can proceed to the follow-up stage for the other new medicines – can the pharmacy claim for a completed NMS?**

If a patient has a problem with one medicine which requires referral to the prescriber but the other medicines do not, the pharmacy can only claim for a completed NMS once the patient has completed the follow-up stage for the those medicines that do not need referral at the initial intervention stage.

**35) If a patient completes the initial intervention stage and makes an appointment for the follow-up**

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**stage but does not attend the follow-up discussion on the scheduled day or cannot be contacted – can the pharmacy claim for a completed NMS?**

Yes, as long as the pharmacy has attempted to contact the patient at least once but fails to reach the patient OR if the patient is contacted but a follow-up appointment is refused or cannot be re-arranged for a later date.

**36) A patient has their new medicine initiated in hospital and is referred to receive the NMS by their prescriber. Does the patient qualify for the NMS or would they be ineligible for the service as their new medicine has already been initiated for the first time in hospital?**

A patient is still eligible to join the NMS if they are referred into the service from secondary care even though their new medicine has been initiated in hospital.

**37) Can a patient be enrolled on to the NMS if he/she has been taking their new medicine for two months?**

No. A patient is only eligible for the NMS on the first occasion the new medicine is supplied by a participating community pharmacy and the initial intervention can only take place within 7 to 14 days of the new medicine(s) being supplied to the patient for the first time by a participating community pharmacy.

## **Resources**

**38) What resources are available for me to prepare and deliver the NMS?**

- The NPA has produced a comprehensive range of resources to help pharmacists prepare for and deliver the NMS with confidence. All our NMS resources are available online for ALL pharmacists to access freely from: <http://www.npa.co.uk/Information-Services/New-Medicine-Service-NMS/>.
- NPA members will have received one free copy of the NMS support pack, and extra copies may be ordered at a charge from the NPA communications department.
- Other resources are available from the PSNC and CPPE.