

AMS Digital Pharmacy Payments Programme Programme Update

Background

As part of the move towards a completely digital environment, towards the end of this year National Services Scotland (NSS) will start paying prescriptions from only the electronic claim message that you submit for barcoded AMS prescriptions. The AMS Digital Pharmacy Payments Programme (AMS Digital for short) is managing this transition, and this newsletter highlights a few changes to both your day-to-day and end-of-month processes that are coming your way.

The two main changes are as follows:

1. You will have to submit electronic claims after patient collection, rather than when you are labelling the prescription.

Many pharmacies already operate in this way, but it is also currently acceptable to make your electronic claim at the point of labelling because the claim isn't paid until the patient has collected and you have submitted the paper prescription. At the moment, the barcode acts as a trigger to process your electronic claim when it reaches NSS we then scan your end of month submissions. However, in the future, the barcode will no longer be the trigger for payment and instead there will be a 14-day window after electronic claims are made for you to make any changes to the claim. This means that, for example, if you make a claim and the patient does not collect the item, you would be paid inappropriately.

2. Barcoded prescriptions which you have electronically claimed will be sent directly for storage and destruction, with only your non-barcoded prescriptions and barcoded prescriptions that you have not been able to claim electronically being scanned at NSS for payment from the information on the paper form.

This means that you will have to separate your prescriptions into those that have associated electronic claims and those that do not. This will require a change to both your daily prescription count process and your end-of month process.

We are piloting these changes in several pharmacies, starting from May. Below you will find more information on the various aspects of this change programme – and you can find our contact details at the bottom of this newsletter if you have any questions.



What changes are happening that you need to know about?

**Let's
talk**

Change

- Courier Bags and Collections
- GP34 Declaration Forms / e-GP34
- PMR System Changes including, Claiming at point of Collection
- Incremental Delivery Approach
- AMS Digital Training Material
- Relocation of the Pharmacy Scanning Service from Bain Square
- Own Arranged Deliveries of Prescriptions

Courier Bags and Collections

Once your pharmacy is brought on board to the new way of working, you will need to submit two bags to PSD at each submission – one for storage and destruction (because the electronic claims have already been sent and the paper is not needed) and the other for scanning and payment from the information on the paper prescription (i.e. where there is no electronic claim). How you prepare your courier bag for collection will therefore be changing, with one bag being placed within another to minimize postage costs.



You will still be getting your supply of pre-labelled courier bags, but you will also be getting a supply of sealable plastic 'inner' bags. The new 'inner' bag will be used for your barcoded GP10 prescriptions that you have already submitted an electronic claim for. This bag will be sealed and placed inside the outer Parcel Force courier bag. Any other forms that need to be scanned for payment (e.g. dental, HBP, GP10, barcoded prescriptions without an electronic claim etc.) will be placed inside the outer courier bag before it is then sealed. Your scheduled collection dates are unlikely to change.

When the bags are delivered to the scanning team, the outer bag will be opened and the inner bag containing the barcoded prescriptions that have already been claimed for will be removed. As these prescriptions are no longer required for payment, the inner bag will not be opened but will be sent straight to storage. After the required four-month retention period, they will be securely destroyed. The prescriptions that you could not claim for electronically and any other forms that you placed in the outer bag with your GP34 will go through the scanning process to payment. It is important that prescriptions are placed in the correct bags to enable accurate and timely payments.

GP34 Declaration Forms / e-GP34



We are looking at the GP34 form with the view of creating an electronic GP34 form or eGP34. Unfortunately, this will not be available prior to AMS Digital going live but we are expecting the eGP34 to be implemented early in 2024.

In the meantime, the paper GP34 will continue to be used as your claim declaration.

Further information on how the form will be completed with the 'bag in a bag' process will be issued once the details have been decided and agreed.

PMR System Changes

The ultimate aim is for this programme to deliver PMR changes that provide you with full reconciliation of what you have submitted vs. what you have been paid for. This is a complex change with long development times, so we have agreed with PMR suppliers an essential specification that allows the programme to meet its current timelines.

The four mandatory PMR changes of the 'lite' specification are:

- **Switch to enable AMS Digital mode**
This will allow us to bring pharmacies on board one by one in the initial testing phases.



- **Showing status as Processed**

The 'lite' functionality will affect all electronic claims including AMS, MCR, PFS and UCF and will update the claim status to 'Processed' once PSD have received and processed the claim you have sent. At the moment, there is no feedback to PMRs to confirm that a claim has been received by PSD so this is a helpful step forward on the way to full reconciliation of claims.

- **Prevent claims for items owing before full item has been satisfied or cancelled**

This will help prevent incorrect payments of claims for owing items.

- **Claiming at point of Collection**

This will prevent claiming at point of labelling and will only allow claims to be made at the point of patient collection (or afterwards if the pharmacy prefers to batch claim)



Incremental Delivery Approach

AMS Digital will be delivered in a staggered incremental approach; the programme team have selected 3 pharmacies that will be used in the first step.

The pharmacies are from different Health Boards and use different PMR suppliers. During the early stages of the incremental delivery, we will monitor the contents of their two end of month prescription bags and check that those placed in the 'For Destruction - Already Claimed' bag do in fact have an electronic claim and those in the 'For Claiming' bag are the correct type of form for that bag to go through the scanning process for payment.

The monitoring of the bags will provide assurance that the sorting process is workable in the pharmacy network. It will also highlight any issues that may arise and give us the opportunity to address them before widening out the sorting process to more pharmacies. We have produced a chart that will assist pharmacies as a visual aid when it comes to sorting what form should go in what bag and this will be issued to all pharmacies.

AMS Digital Training Material

The AMS Programme team are working with Health Board IT Facilitators, NHS Education for Scotland, CPS and PMR Suppliers to prepare training material to assist you with the changes to your current working practices.

A Frequently Asked Questions page is being created on the PSD Pharmacy section on the NSS website. It will answer some of the questions you might have about the AMS Digital Programme. We will issue the link to the FAQ page when it is available on the website.



We are looking at different ways we can deliver training and information to you, such as: online webinars, web pages, training packs and posters. Please keep an eye on your inbox and mail deliveries for more information.



Relocation of the Scanning Service from Bain Square

The Pharmacy Scanning Team will be saying a final farewell to their building in Bain Square, Livingston, when they lock the doors for the last time and move out at the end of 2023.

The new Pharmacy Scanning Service will be moving to the Gyle Square building in Edinburgh. Gyle Square is the head office of NHS National Services Scotland and is already the home to other Pharmacy Teams including Data Processing, Payments, and the e-Pharmacy Helpdesk.

Own Arranged Deliveries to Gyle Square

There are some pharmacies that do not use the CPS Parcel Force contract and choose to arrange their own delivery. With the scanning service moving to Gyle Square in Edinburgh, those pharmacies that hand deliver their prescriptions to Bain Square should consider if this will still be feasible. Those that deliver via their own van service will need to plan for the change of address and how deliveries are accepted at Gyle Square.



Whatever method you choose for sending in your prescriptions, you will still be required to adopt the 'bag in a bag' process as mentioned above. We are considering the implications of how this will affect pharmacies that do not use the courier contract and how we can support their transition to the new process.



Do you have a question regarding the AMS Digital Programme?

If you have a question or concern about anything you have read in this update, we want to hear from you.

Please contact the e-Pharmacy Helpdesk either by telephone on 0131 275 6600 or via e-mail at nss.psdhelp@nhs.scot.

Thank you.