



HSC Pension Service

Provided by



Business Services Organisation

GP STAFF NEWSLETTER

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1. Nomination of a Local Scheme Administrator (LSA)

The HSC Pension Scheme [Employer's Charter](#), which details the high level roles and responsibilities of Scheme Employers, has been produced in consultation with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, HSC Pension Service and HSC Employers. To ensure compliance with the Charter, the HSC Pension Service will, in the next few weeks, be requesting that all GP Practices nominate a Local Scheme Administrator (LSA), who would normally be the practice manager, to be responsible for the administration of the Pension Scheme.

It is imperative that the Principle GP, Practice Manager and the nominated Local Scheme Administrator, if different, familiarise themselves with their roles and responsibilities detailed within this charter, and understand the consequences of non-compliance and the impact this will have on scheme members benefits.

The onus for submitting all accurate HSC Pension forms, on time and in accordance with scheme regulation's is the responsibility of the Employer. HSC Pension Service is available to offer support and guidance, however is not accountable for any inaccuracies or non returns of required documentation.

Cases of member dissatisfaction can result in referrals to the Pensions Ombudsman or the Pensions Regulator who can impose fines on schemes and employers (and their individual managers) who do not comply with Scheme requirements.



2. Cessation of Contracting Out

The State Pension is changing to a single tier system from 6 April 2016. The introduction of a single tiered State Pension means that 'contracting out' will end and HSC Pension Scheme members will no longer pay a lower rate of National Insurance. While this will have an effect on members' take home pay, it will not affect their HSC Pension.

Please read [Public Sector letter](#) from the Department for Work and Pensions for more information.

3. Scheme Allocation

The Health and Social Care (HSC) Pension Scheme 2015 opened on 1st April 2015. HSC Pension Service has 2 schemes running simultaneously; the HSC Pension Scheme and the HSC Pension Scheme 2015. Most members of the HSC Pension Scheme moved to the 2015 scheme on 1st April 2015, however some members closer to retirement may have had full protection or tapered protection. For more information on Scheme Protection see

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

If the practice manager is unsure what scheme a member should be in they can refer to the Pension Reform Tapered Protection Calculator 1995/2008 Section by clicking on this [link](#) or contact the Team here in HSC Pension Service for advice - 02871 319111 – option 5.



4. Contribution Rates 2016/17

Tier	Full-Time Pensionable Pay used to determine contribution rate	Contribution rate (before tax relief) (gross) <u>1 April 2015 to 31 March 2019</u>
1	Up to £15,431.99	5.0%
2	£15,432.00 to £21,477.99	5.6%
3	£21,478.00 to £26,823.99	7.1%
4	£26,824.00 to £47,845.99	9.3%
5	£47,846.00 to £70,630.99	12.5%
6	£70,631.00 to £111,376.99	13.5%
7	£111,377.00 and over	14.5%

For the 2016/17 financial year, the tiered contribution rate will be based on the 2015/16 Whole Time Equivalent Salary. Please be aware that an employee whose rate of pay for an existing job changes (including increments) the contribution rate should be reassessed based on their annual pay and the member allocated a new contribution rate (if applicable) in the current financial year.

HSC employers will continue to pay 16.3% employer contributions for Scheme years 2016/2017, 2017/2018 and 2018/2019.

Further guidance and examples on tiered contribution rates are available on this [Factsheet](#).



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5. Administration and Interest Charges

From 1 April 2015 Administration and Interest charges were introduced for late payment of Scheme Contributions. Employers will not pay any interest or administration charges if they comply with the direct debit plan as laid out in Section 7 of this Newsletter.

Requests to pay contributions on time is not always successful and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety NI (DHSSPSNI) has concluded, like other pension schemes, that charging a standard rate of interest reflecting the lost income is the best way to encourage prompt payment.

The administration charge is not a 'penalty charge', but reflects the cost to HSC Pensions of recovering late payments, which is currently borne by all employers. The amount of the administration charge for 2016-17 will be £75 for payments made late on and after 1 April 2016

There are provisions in the regulations for HSC Pension Service to waive an administration charge and/or interest payable where contributions are paid late, in circumstances which the Scheme Administrator considers are exceptional. However, 'exceptional circumstances' will mean exactly that and charges are unlikely to be waived for reasons of staff pressure or short banking or postal delays, where an employer has released payment very close to the final due date. Employers wishing to claim exceptional circumstances for late payment must write to HSC Pension Service immediately, at the following email address

hscpensions@hscni.net with evidence for and a clear explanation of the late payment.



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6. Monthly GP1 Forms

Completion of the monthly [GP1 form](#) is mandatory in order to inform HSC Pension Service of your monthly employee and employer contributions. On completion, the GP1 form should be emailed to hscpensions@hscni.net.

Contributions will then be made via Direct Debit from your bank account on the dates detailed in section 7 of this GP Staff Newsletter.

Practice managers must ensure that appropriate contribution rates are applied, contributions rates are listed in Section 4 of this GP Staff Newsletter.

When completing the GP1 please ensure that;

- All practice information is fully completed, paying particular attention to the “GP Practice Identifier” (4 digit alphanumeric reference unique to each GP practice).
- Practice Manager / Local Scheme Administrator name and contact e-mail address, are provided -please note accountant contact information is not accepted in this field.
- The “Month Payment Relates to:” box is completed which states the relevant month the contributions are for. We often find that this has not been updated from the previous month, and due to audit requirements we are unable to accept the GP1 form. This creates a request for revision and resubmission by the practice manager.
- The Employer and Employee contributions are included in correct boxes. Again we often find that these two columns are mixed up which again needs to be corrected by the practice before the form can be processed.

If your GP Practice changes their bank account, please forward a [new Direct Debit mandate](#) form to HSCPS. An original copy is required which we will then forward onto your bank, once the new details have been recorded.



7. GP1 Direct Debit Plan 2016/17

Please find details below for the GP1 submission deadlines and direct debit collection dates for financial year 2016/17.

Month Payment Relates To	GP1 Submission Deadline	Direct Debit Date
April 2016	05th May 2016	16th May 2016
May 2016	06th June 2016	14th June 2016
June 2016	05th July 2016	14th July 2016
July 2016	05th August 2016	15th August 2016
August 2016	05th September 2016	14th September 2016
September 2016	05th October 2016	14th October 2016
October 2016	07th November 2016	14th November 2016
November 2016	05th December 2016	14th December 2016
December 2016	05th January 2017	16th January 2017
January 2017	06th February 2017	14th February 2017
February 2017	06th March 2017	14th March 2017
March 2017	05th April 2017	14th April 2017

Please note it is no longer necessary to send the GP1 form to the 'billtocash@accountni.gov.uk' email address.



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8. Annual GP55a's 2015/16

The GP55A form is an end of year return due for submission by 31st May 2016. It provides the member information relating to the previous financial year i.e. 01/04/2015 to 31/03/2016.

The completion of this form is a regulatory requirement therefore Practice Managers must ensure it is completed accurately and on time.

The GP55a Form can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

Please ensure all relevant information is provided. Guidance for completion of the form is detailed both within the cells on the spread sheet and also on a separate tab 'Column Explanation'. Please be aware of the following points when completing the form:

- Pensionable Pay is the actual superannuable earnings up to 31 March and should not include additional hours worked over the full-time hours per year.
- In the case of a part time member, the Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) salary should be detailed.
- The NI Earnings can sometimes be confused with the members National Insurance Contributions, however these are very different. Please see guidance notes on spread sheet for additional assistance.
- The Basic Contributions should be obtained from the practice payroll system.
- Total hours are the actual superannuable hours that a member worked within the financial year.
- Standard hours - these are the hours a member would work if employed on a whole time contract.



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9. How to Contact Us

By writing to us at:-

HSC Pension Service
Waterside House
75 Duke Street
Londonderry
BT47 6FP

Via e- mail at:- hscpensions@hscni.net

By Telephone: **028 7131 9111**

9.00am to 5.00pm – Monday to Thursday; 9.00am to 12.00pm Friday

If you have any suggestions for the newsletter or would like a particular topic covered in future publications please do not hesitate in contacting us by emailing: hscpensions@hscni.net



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