



Partners in improving local health

# Medicines Optimisation Update

## Electronic Prescribing and Repeat Dispensing

North of England  
Commissioning Support

### What this includes:

ERD (electronic repeat dispensing) are repeat dispensing prescriptions sent using EPS2 (electronic prescription service release 2). % ERD is a measure of the percentage of all EPS2 prescriptions that are repeat dispensing.

### Identifying the problem:

Practice and prescriber reports are available from the Information Services Portal:  
<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/3607.aspx>  
 Select: Reports > Prescribing Monitoring > Repeat Dispensing

### What are the benefits of ERD?

ERD simplifies the repeat prescribing process and offers a range of benefits, including:

- ERD allows the prescriber to authorise and issue a batch of repeatable prescriptions for up to 12 months with just one digital signature.
- patients don't need to contact the surgery to reorder at regular intervals unless their condition changes.
- dispensers must ask patients if they have had any changes to their condition, or require all items on their prescription before each issue, to avoid medicines wastage.
- ERD puts the prescriber in control rather than allowing the patient or dispenser to continue re-ordering unnecessary items - which leads to oversupply and stockpiling.
- Use the NHS Digital benefits estimator to see how your practice could benefit.

### How does ERD work?

- ERD stores all issues of the ERD prescriptions securely on the NHS Spine and automatically downloads them to the patient's nominated community pharmacy at intervals set by the prescriber.
- patients are required to give their consent for repeat dispensing. However, this can be verbal and formal written consent is not required.
- ERD allows the cancellation at item or whole prescription level, which will cancel all subsequent issues on the Spine.
- ERD allows the patient to change their nominated dispenser part-way through a batch, which updates all subsequent issues on the Spine.
- 'When required' medication can be prescribed using ERD on a separate batch to their regular, daily medication, allowing flexibility and reducing waste.

### Starting off with ERD:

- Identify what time and resources are available in your practice for training and implementation. Investing time now will ensure everyone can use the system confidently when it goes live, preventing problems and saving time.
- Identify who in your practice is involved in production or issuing of prescriptions – what training and support will they need?
- Once the prescribing decision is made by a clinician, the mechanics of ERD can be undertaken by either clinicians or prescription clerks – choose the system that is right for your practice staff, building training and protocols around it.
- Do you have an ERD champion, who is skilled in ERD, can promote it to other staff within your practice and support them with any difficulties?
- As an introduction, all relevant practice staff can take the NECS NHS Digital ERD e-learning module. This shows how to use ERD on all common clinical systems. Register to join an NHS Digital ERD webinar to learn more.
- Discuss with your local community pharmacies that you will be starting to use ERD. Can they support you by identifying suitable patients, providing advice to patients, supporting you with re-authorisation or resolving teething problems?
- Practices can join or host a local awareness or training session, support is available from NHS Digital and system suppliers.
- Use the awareness session presentation and workbook to get your practice ready for ERD launch.

NECS medicines optimisation website. Available at <http://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/guidelines/cumbria-guidelines/>

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- How can your patient involvement group help you with ERD? Think about how you will discuss ERD with patients so that they understand it. What are the benefits for them and how will it work? Order a supply of ERD leaflets or use 'Explaining ERD to patients' to support practice leaflets and conversations.
- Which patients will you start with? Start small and build up. You could consider those taking only one particular medicine with a simple, stable, daily regime eg. levothyroxine; or a stable medical condition e.g. hypertension. How will you target them?
- A practice protocol can support relevant staff with the re-authorisation process at the end of their ERD batch, ensuring reviews take place and the new ERD batch issued.

### Problem solving for ERD:

- Ensure your prescribers are set-up correctly on your clinical system – the responsible party for all ERD should always be a senior, permanent clinician eg. senior partner; this ensures the prescription is allocated correctly when a prescriber moves between practices.
- Use the NHS Digital EPS DM+D factsheet to understand how to set up complex prescription items e.g. inhaler doses and sip feeds.
- When an EPS2 prescription does not arrive with the dispenser as expected, dispensers or practices can use the NHS Digital prescription tracker to follow it up.
- Explore successes and issues regularly with your local community pharmacies. Do they have good practice to share?
- Review your repeat prescribing system and ERD workbook regularly to support problem solving and ensure your system is robust.

### Moving on with ERD:

- Can you link ERD services in with other digital healthcare services suggested locally as part of your CCG's Digital Roadmap?
- For all patients on new medicines, once they are stable, is ERD the default choice for prescribing?
- Consider linking in issuing ERD with reviews of medication or chronic conditions. This is an ideal time to set up a new issue and provides an opportunity for the patient's treatment to be reviewed at re-authorisation.

### Resources and references:

- NHS Digital benefits estimator: <https://epsestimator.digital.nhs.uk/#!/prescriber>
- NECS and NHS Digital ERD e-learning module: <https://learning.necsu.nhs.uk/nhs-digital-electronic-repeat-dispensing-elearning/>
- Awareness session presentation, checklist and workbook: <http://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/7847-2/>
- NHS Digital ERD webinar: <https://digitising-medicines.online-event.co/registration/nhs-digital-4>
- NHS Digital EPS DM+D factsheet: [https://digital.nhs.uk/media/786/dmanddfact1/pdf/EPS\\_dm\\_d\\_and\\_prescribing\\_systems\\_combined\\_factsheet\\_Feb\\_17\\_v0-13](https://digital.nhs.uk/media/786/dmanddfact1/pdf/EPS_dm_d_and_prescribing_systems_combined_factsheet_Feb_17_v0-13)
- NHS Digital prescription tracker: <https://portal2.national.ncrs.nhs.uk/prescriptionsadmin/>
- Print ERD leaflets for patients: <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2018-01/eRD%20leaflet%20A5%20%28V1%29%20for%20local%20printing%2012.2017.pdf>
- Explaining ERD to patients: [https://digital.nhs.uk/media/670/Patient-text/pdf/Patient\\_text](https://digital.nhs.uk/media/670/Patient-text/pdf/Patient_text)
- NECS Model Repeat Prescribing System: <https://medicines.necsu.nhs.uk/model-repeat-prescribing-system/>
- NHS Digital Electronic Repeat Dispensing Guidance (full): <https://www.england.nhs.uk/digitaltechnology/info-revolution/erd-guidance/>
- NHS England Digital Roadmaps: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/digitaltechnology/info-revolution/digital-roadmaps/footprints/north-england/>
- NHS Digital ERD further resources: <https://digital.nhs.uk/Electronic-Prescription-Service/Electronic-repeat-dispensing-for-prescribers>

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