

Electronic Prescription Service (EPS)

dm+d and Prescribing Systems

EPS factsheet for prescribers

dm+d and Prescribing Systems

The NHS Dictionary of Medicines and Devices (dm+d) is the standard for transferring medicine and medical device information between clinical systems. It is also required for all EPS Release 2 prescribing. This factsheet covers some common issues when using EPS Release 2.

Re-authorising items

This is the most common reason for an item not being able to be transmitted via EPS Release 2 – where a prescriber is re-authorising a non-dm+d item that has previously been prescribed.

You should delete the old template and re-prescribe using the dm+d item.

Re-authorising items

Delete old templates and re-prescribe using dm+d item.

Missing items

Sometimes a medicine or medical device might not be available for prescribing. The main reason for this is the item is in the dm+d, but has not been added to the system.

Occasionally, the product you want to prescribe may not be in the dm+d. In this situation, check whether the item is actually in the dm+d by using the dm+d browser: <https://apps.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/DMDBrowser/DMDBrowser.do#>

If you can find the item in the browser, but not in the system, please contact the system supplier to ask why it isn't available. It is a GPSoC requirement (GP- 07.1-02), that the prescribing system database must include all dm+d items.

If an item you wish to prescribe is not in the dm+d, then please contact your system supplier and ask them to raise this with the dm+d team at nhsbsa.dmdenquiries@nhs.net.

Unavailable or discontinued items

Items in the dm+d will be flagged as unavailable once they are no longer on the market. They will be flagged as soon as the dm+d team are made aware that they are no longer being manufactured. This can lead to a situation where an item has been flagged as unavailable in dm+d, but stock of the item is still available for dispensing. The item can continue to be dispensed until the stock is exhausted or expired.

Where an item has been flagged as unavailable, it is recommended that:

- patients should not be started on the item long term
- for patients already on the item, alternatives should be considered
- if there is a clinical need to start or continue a patient on the unavailable item, it is recommended that the patient is made aware of issues regarding the availability of the item.

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Invalid items

It is recommended that items flagged as 'invalid' in the dm+d shouldn't be prescribed. For new prescriptions this isn't normally a problem, as the system should prevent this from happening. Where it can cause a problem is when the item forms part of a:

- repeat prescribing template
- repeat dispensing prescription.

Items in the dm+d are only made invalid where either a mistake has been made or where the dm+d Editorial Policy has been changed. It follows that prescribing an invalid item from dm+d may not be clinically safe.

Re-authorising a prescription that contains an invalid item is not recommended. The best thing to do is to re-prescribe the invalid item by finding the replacement item in the system.

Not generic prescribing

Where a product is prescribed that has a supplier in the description, then this is not generic prescribing even if it has a 'generic' name e.g.

- Simvastatin 10mg tablets (Teva UK Ltd). Only this product can be dispensed and reimbursed.

Assorted flavours

For food supplement / food replacement products, it is possible to ask the pharmacy to dispense assorted flavours, without the need to specify which flavours and how many of each. By doing this you can give the patient the flexibility to choose which flavour(s) they want each time.

To do this, you need to:

1. **Prescribe a flavour not specified food product at brand/AMP (Actual Medicinal Product) level – these all have the description of 'Flavour Not Specified', e.g.**
 - Ensure Plus milkshake style liquid (Flavour Not Specified)
 - Fortisip Bottle (Flavour Not Specified)
2. **Apply the 'assorted flavours' electronic endorsement. This is usually a tick box in the prescribing system marked AF.**
 - Don't write 'assorted flavours' or 'multiple flavours' in the dosage instructions or instructions to dispenser, as only the electronic endorsement is acceptable.

Pack prescribing e.g. pump dispensers

There are occasions when a prescriber may wish to prescribe a pump dispenser, rather than tubes of cream. Dermol cream (Dermal Laboratories Ltd) is a product which is available in a 100gram tube and a 500gram pump dispenser. When a prescriber prescribes:

- Dermol cream (Dermal Laboratories Ltd) x 500gram

The dispenser can either dispense 1 x 500gram pump or 5 x 100gram tubes. If the prescriber wants the patient to have the pump dispenser, then they could add a 'note to the dispenser' to request this.

Paracetamol 'caplets'

Some patients who are prescribed paracetamol, prefer to receive a 'capsule shaped tablet' or 'caplet' rather than a round tablet. It is not possible to have a generic / VMP (Virtual Medicinal Product) of paracetamol 500mg caplets in the dm+d, as 'caplet' is not a recognised formulation by either the British Pharmacopoeia or European Pharmacopoeia.

If you want your patient to have 'caplets' then you can:

Assorted flavours

1. Prescribe a flavour not specified food product at brand/AMP level—these all have the description of 'Flavour Not Specified'.
2. Apply the 'assorted flavours' electronic endorsement. This is usually a tick box in the prescribing system marked AF.

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- prescribe Paracetamol 500mg tablets and add a note to the dispenser or contact the dispenser and ask if they would supply caplets
- prescribe a specific brand / AMP, but this would not be generic prescribing. If a supplier has called their product “caplet” this is reflected in the brand / AMP description in dm+d.

Prescribing inhalers and sprays as ‘doses’

When prescribing an inhaler in EPS Release 2, you need to prescribe the number of doses rather than the number of inhalers – remember some inhalers are available in two different pack sizes. For example:

Salbutamol 100micrograms/dose inhaler CFC free

- You would prescribe 200 dose if you want one inhaler.
- You would prescribe 400 dose if you want two inhalers.

Ciclesonide 160micrograms/dose inhaler CFC free

- This inhaler is available as a 60 dose and a 120 dose inhaler.
- In this case, you would prescribe how many doses (in multiples of 60) that you want the patient to have and the dispenser would dispense the appropriate number of packs.
- If you specifically want your patient to have 2 x 60 dose inhalers, then you would need to add a note to the dispenser asking if they would supply two of the 60 dose.

‘Pack converter’ and excessive quantities

In order to make the above easier for prescribers, some prescribing systems provide a pack converter where a prescriber can enter for example 1 inhaler and the system will convert this to 200 dose.

Please be very careful when using this functionality. As prescribers become more familiar with prescribing in EPS, we have seen examples where the prescriber has entered 200 with the intention of prescribing 200 doses, but has in fact used the pack converter and so prescribed 200 inhalers or 40,000 doses.

Excessive quantity examples include:

- Glyceryl trinitrate 400micrograms/dose pump sublingual spray x 32,400 dose (180 x 180 dose GTN sprays have been prescribed here)
- Salbutamol 100micrograms/dose inhaler CFC free x 40,000 dose (200 x 200 dose inhalers have been prescribed here)
- Juvella gluten free fibre loaf sliced (Hero UK Ltd) x 160,000 gram (400 x 400 gram loaves have been prescribed here)

Non dm+d units of measure

A prescriber prescribes a product and a quantity – this will either be a generic product called a virtual medicinal product (VMP) in dm+d or a branded / named supplier product or actual medicinal product (AMP).

A dispenser dispenses a pack or packs to fulfil that quantity – an actual medicinal product pack (AMPP).

The quantity prescribed is made up of a numerical value and a unit of measure, for example:

- 28 tablet
- 56 capsule
- 30 gram
- 200 ml
- 10 vial
- 5 cartridge
- 3 pre-filled disposable injection
- 3 pessary

The unit of measure used must match exactly the unit of measure in dm+d and this is why prior to moving onto EPS Release 2 you had to change from 28 tablets to 28 tablet etc.

Occasionally, system suppliers may not have the correct unit of measure and this will prevent you from sending the prescription by EPS Release 2. Examples have included using millilitres or mls instead of ml, grams instead of gram or 1 tube instead of 5 gram.

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If you find any products that do not have the correct dm+d unit of measure please raise these with your system supplier to be corrected. You can check how a product is represented in dm+d by using the browser at: <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/PrescriptionServices/4910.aspx>

Medicines available in more than one flavour e.g. Gaviscon

In EPS Release 2, branded products or actual products, available in more than one flavour, can't be prescribed without reference to their flavour. If you want your patient to have the brand 'Gaviscon', then you must choose the flavour you require. If you wish, you can prescribe this type of product generically without any reference to flavour - in which case the dispenser will dispense an appropriate brand or supplier that meets this prescription.

Prescribing generically (VMP)

- Alginate raft-forming oral suspension sugar free

Prescribing by brand (AMP)

- Gaviscon Cool Liquid (Reckitt Benckiser Healthcare (UK) Ltd)
- Gaviscon Original Aniseed Relief (Reckitt Benckiser Healthcare (UK) Ltd)
- Gaviscon Peppermint Liquid Relief (Reckitt Benckiser Healthcare (UK) Ltd)
- Peptac liquid aniseed (Teva UK Ltd)
- Peptac liquid peppermint (Teva UK Ltd)
- Acidex liquid aniseed (Pinewood Healthcare)
- Acidex liquid peppermint (Pinewood Healthcare)
- Entrocalm Heartburn and Indigestion Relief oral suspension (Galpharm International Ltd)

For Gaviscon Advance:

Prescribing generically (VMP)

- Sodium alginate 500mg/5ml/Potassium bicarbonate 100mg/5ml oral suspension sugar free

Prescribing by brand (AMP)

- Gaviscon Advance oral suspension aniseed (Reckitt Benckiser Healthcare (UK) Ltd)
- Gaviscon Advance oral suspension peppermint (Reckitt Benckiser Healthcare (UK) Ltd)

Drugs to medical devices

There are a range of products including emollients, eye, ear or nose drops that have been re-classified by the MHRA as medical devices over the last few years. For a medical device to be prescribable on the NHS, it must be listed in Part IX of the Drug Tariff. All medical devices listed in Part IX of the NHS England and Wales Drug Tariff are populated in dm+d and should be available to prescribe by EPS Release 2.

This re-classification has resulted in some products having minor changes of name when changing from a 'drug' to a medical device. An example of this is 'Cetraben emollient cream' which should now be prescribed as Cetraben cream (Thornton and Ross Ltd) which is the CE registered medical device listed in Part IXA.

If you are prescribing one of these products from an old template you will need to delete it and re-prescribe.

Assorted flavours

For food supplement / food replacement products, it is possible to ask the pharmacy to dispense assorted flavours without the need to specify which flavours and how many of each. By doing this you can give the patient the flexibility to choose which flavour(s) they want each time.

To make this happen you need to:

Prescribe a flavourless food product at AMP (Actual Medicinal Product) level – these all have the supplier of 'Flavour Not Specified', e.g:

- Ensure Plus milkshake style liquid (Flavour Not Specified)
- Fortisip bottle (Flavour Not Specified)

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- Fortijuce liquid (Flavour Not Specified)
- Fortisip compact liquid (Flavour Not Specified)

Apply the 'assorted flavours' electronic prescriber endorsement. This is usually a tick box in the prescribing system marked AF.

- Writing 'assorted flavours' or 'multiple flavours' in the dosage instructions or instructions to dispenser is not sufficient as a prescriber endorsement must be in the prescriber endorsement field.

Do not prescribe a plain or neutral flavoured product if you want your patient to have assorted flavours.

- Prescribing plain or neutral is still a flavour in dm+d so cannot be prescribed if you want the patient to have a choice of assorted flavours. For example, Scandishake Mix oral powder 85g sachets unflavoured (Nutricia Ltd) is one of five flavours available, the others being banana, strawberry, chocolate and caramel.

Do not prescribe a 'mixed' or 'assorted flavours' product if you want your patient to have their choice of flavours.

- These products contain pre-set flavours so cannot be prescribed if you want the patient to have their choice of assorted flavours. For example Vitasavoury 200 powder mixed flavour (Vitaflo International Ltd) or Ensure Plus Commence liquid assorted (Abbott Laboratories Ltd).

Remember you can still prescribe specific flavours for your patient, for example, if they wanted 4 packs of chocolate and 2 packs of unflavoured:

- Scandishake Mix oral powder 85g sachets chocolate (Nutricia Ltd) x 24 sachet
- Scandishake Mix oral powder 85g sachets unflavoured (Nutricia Ltd) x 12 sachet

Or if you want your patient to have the pre-determined set of flavours that are in the 'assorted' pack, then you can prescribe:

- Ensure Plus Commence liquid assorted (Abbott Laboratories Ltd) x 2200ml