

Pharmacy Matters

What does it take to process your pharmacy payment? [FAO all contractors]

Every month, more than 140 colleagues and several digital platforms support the processing of millions of dispensed items. This helps ensure pharmacy contractors are paid accurately and on time.

Martin Morrison, Associate Director in Primary and Community Care, takes us through the journey from receiving a prescription to making a payment, including the challenges the team manages each month.

Read Martin's full article on our webpage to [learn more about the work behind accurate, on-time pharmacy payments](#).



Operational update [FAO all contractors]

Last month's payments were paid on schedule+. For July dispensing, paid September 2026:

- 6,130,900 prescription forms were scanned
- 10,364,368 items were processed
- £144.55m of payments were made to pharmacy contractors.
- 99.91% payment accuracy for September 2026 (target: 99.5%). Visit our webpage to [learn how we calculate the payment accuracy figure](#).

Payment information

+ In September all payments were made on schedule. Lothian contractors received an estimated payment, with any necessary top-up paid separately by CHAPS on the same day.

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This was due to a major network outage affecting our scanning and processing systems and a combination of other factors, including an exceptionally high volume of claims received. Any overpayments will be recovered in full on 30 October 2026 and are estimated at around 0.3% of total payments across Scotland.

Help us process your prescriptions and payments on time [FAO all contractors]

Thank you to everyone who follows [our guidance for submitting paper prescriptions](#).

Good quality submissions help us pay you on schedule.

Paper prescriptions trigger payments, and some individual prescriptions are worth hundreds or thousands of pounds. It is therefore important that every form arrives clean, clear and complete.



Paper prescription forms that require additional preparation before scanning must be processed manually, which can cause delays. Payments for an NHS board area can only be made once all contractors' prescriptions have been processed. Poor-quality paper prescription submissions could therefore put payment on the agreed date at risk for the whole NHS board area.

Help us keep your payments on track



Neat prescriptions



Quick scans



Timely payments

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Simple steps you can take to prevent delays

For example, we have noticed that some stickers are being removed before submission. We appreciate this effort, but removing stickers can leave residue that prevents scanning. Please do not use stickers on paper prescriptions. Please also avoid labels, sticky notes and staples, as these can cover important information or cause scanning problems.

We will also remind GP practices not to attach stickers or staples to prescriptions.

Need help?

Contact us before submitting your paper prescriptions. We are happy to help you avoid delays or rejected items.

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Reminder: Additional dressing products accepted for payment [FAO community pharmacists]

To help reduce Pharmacy First Scotland claim rejections, ten additional dressing products have been added to the data reference file used from August 2026 dispensing month onwards. Pharmacy teams should familiarise themselves with the products now eligible for payment.



For further guidance please visit:

[The Pharmacy First Scotland: Additional Dressing Products webpage](#)

Monthly Pharmacy eSchedule communication messages [FAO all contractors]

You can view the latest messages on the Pharmacy eSchedule communication webpage.

[Monthly Pharmacy eSchedule communications webpage.](#)

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Adjustments for GP14 prescriptions for Duraphat [FAO community pharmacists]

Since May 2023, GP14 prescriptions for Duraphat have been reimbursed through nDCVP using product information held within the Dictionary of Medicines and Devices (dm+d). A review has identified that Duraphat is not included in [Part 8 of the Scottish Drug Tariff Dental Formulary](#), which defines the products that may be prescribed on a GP14 in Scotland.

As a result, GP14 prescriptions for Duraphat were not eligible for reimbursement and were paid in error.

What happens next

We will review payments made since May 2023 and apply any necessary recovery adjustment using the following rules:

- Where Duraphat was prescribed without also stating sodium fluoride, the full value of the payment will be recovered.

In the following instances, adjustments will be based on the applicable Scottish Drug Tariff Part 8a price for sodium fluoride:

- Where Duraphat and sodium fluoride were prescribed on the same GP14 prescription, the price for sodium fluoride will be paid.
- Where sodium fluoride was prescribed but Duraphat was endorsed as the product supplied, the price for sodium fluoride will be paid.

Adjustments for Duraphat 2800 for dispensing months May 2023 to April 2026 were processed in the July 2026 dispensing month (September 2026 eSchedule).

Adjustments for Duraphat 5000 for dispensing month April 2026 were processed in the July 2026 dispensing month (September 2026 eSchedule).

Any adjustments will appear in your eSchedule under code SystemERR. These adjustments will be ongoing while we work with Public Health Scotland to address how this item is held within the dm+d.

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What you need to do

Claims submitted for Duraphat will be paid and then recovered. To get your claim paid correctly the first time, return any prescriptions presented with 'Duraphat' in the prescribed item name to the prescriber for amendment. Prescriptions should be written using only the generic name 'sodium fluoride'.

Out-of-pocket expenses report [FAO community pharmacists and dispensing doctors]

An issue has been identified with the item-level out-of-pocket expenses report in the eSchedule. The total shown may not always match the total in the PAY001/002 report.

For now, please use the PAY001/002 report to check your total out-of-pocket expenses payments.

An improved out of pocket expenses report is being developed. You need to take no action at this stage. Further information about the improved report will be shared nearer the time.

