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## EPS nomination and direction of electronic prescriptions

Correct as of 11 June 2020

In April 2005, the National Health Service (Primary Medical Services) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2005 came into force which stipulates that when operating the [**Electronic Prescription Service (EPS)**](https://psnc.org.uk/dispensing-supply/eps/), a prescriber must not seek to persuade a patient to [**nominate**](https://psnc.org.uk/dispensing-supply/eps/patient-nomination-of-a-dispensing-site/) a dispenser recommended by the prescriber. The regulations also state that, if asked to recommend a chemist, the prescriber is to provide a list of all chemists in the area that operate EPS, as provided by the local NHS England Team (this provision is continued by the National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) Regulations 2015 – see Regulation 58 (4)).

The GMC has [**guidelines**](https://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/ethical_guidance/21161.asp) (see the section called “Decisions on Patient Care”) linked to the direction of prescriptions which make it clear that patients should be free to choose from which pharmacy to have their prescribed medicines dispensed and doctors must not allow their own or their employers’ financial or commercial interests in a pharmacy to influence the way they advise their patients. A doctor’s failure to adhere to these standards could form the basis of a complaint of professional misconduct.

**BMA and PSNC Joint Guidance – Jan 2020**

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices/prescribing/prescription-direction-to-certain-pharmacies>

**GMC Guidance**

<https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/learning-materials/prescription-direction>

All our GP Practices are encouraged to enable and utilise EPS, in line with the [letter sent from NHSE to primary care on 19th March 2020](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/preparedness-letter-primary-care-19-march-2020.pdf).

The guidance regarding direction of prescriptions has not changed/been relaxed during the Covid-19 pandemic, patients must be offered choice and the patient must nominate the preferred pharmacy, not be led to a specific pharmacy by a GP Practice.

Please note - The [guidance on electronic repeat dispensing (eRD) has recently changed – 04.06.2020](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/C0546-electronic-repeat-dispensing-letter-4-june-2020.pdf)  and the latest guidance regarding eRD temporarily relaxes the need for patient consent for eRD. This does not affect the rules regarding nominating a pharmacy, the patient must still nominate their preferred pharmacy, as detailed above.

If you are unsure about anything related to the content of this email please seek advice and guidance from the CCG Medicines Management Team - VOYCCG.Rxline@nhs.net