

## National Health Service Superannuation Scheme (Scotland)

### Superannuation (Health Service) Circular No. 6/2009

General Managers/Chief Executives

- Health Boards
- NHS Quality Improvement Scotland
- NHS National Services Scotland
- State Hospital
- NHS Health Scotland
- NHS Education for Scotland
- Scottish Ambulance Service
- Golden Jubilee National Hospital
- Melanie Stewart – Director SSPS
- Matthew Little - ATOS

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[www.sppa.gov.uk](http://www.sppa.gov.uk)

13 March 2009

Dear Sir/Madam

## NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE SUPERANNUATION SCHEME (SCOTLAND) ANNUAL RETURN FOR 2008/2009

1. In order that the superannuation records of individual members of the scheme can be updated, employing authorities are asked to supply information about all staff in pensionable employment for the year ending 31 March 2009 Annual Returns should be submitted to the ISU, 7 Tweedside Park, Tweedbank, Galashiels, Selkirkshire, TD1 3TE on 4 millimetre DAT tape or in previously agreed formats **no later than 31 May 2009**.

Employing authorities must also submit their hard copy Annual Returns **no later than 31 May 2009** and ensure that entries are in superannuation number order. Hard copy "invalid records" should be provided in alphabetical order

2. Member contributions from 1 April 2008 were based on a tiered rate depending on the level of pensionable pay. An interim measure allowed some manual workers to pay contributions at a rate of 5% regardless of earnings. It should, however, be noted that going forward from 1 April 2009 all Officer Scheme members will be allocated to a contribution tier based on their 2008/09 or 2009/10 pensionable pay. In 2009/10 a member's tiered employee contributions will be based on their 2008/09 pensionable pay subject to being in the same employment on the 31st March 2009 and 1st April 2009. Further information can be found on [www.sppa.gov.uk](http://www.sppa.gov.uk)

The arrangements cover the scheme year 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009. For this year the pay thresholds and contribution rates are:

| <b>Annual Pensionable Pay<br/>(Full Time Equivalent)</b> | <b>Current Contributions</b> | <b>New Contributions</b> |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Up to £19,682  | 5% manuals or 6%             | 5%                       |
| £19,683 to £65,002                                       | 5% manuals or 6%             | 6.5%                     |
| £65,003 to £102,499                                      | 6%                           | 7.5%                     |
| £102,500 to any higher amount                            | 6%                           | 8.5%                     |

This above table applies to those in employment at the beginning of 08/09 for those who started part way through the year reference is required to Circular 2008/14 which can be found on [www.sppa.gov.uk](http://www.sppa.gov.uk)

3. During the past year, the Agency has invested a great deal of time and effort, improving the condition of our data in advance of the implementation of our new IT system. To support us with this ongoing task, we would be very grateful if particular emphasis could be placed on the accuracy of data submission, in particular: -

#### **Contract numbers**

Contract numbers must be included as our system does not accept information without them. Where you have records with no contract number, the Scottish Standard Payroll System Project group will be advising you shortly about a special exercise to identify these cases to the Agency.

#### **Temporary National Insurance numbers**

All efforts should be made to include the correct National Insurance Number when submitting data to the Agency as the use of temporary numbers leads to duplication of superannuation records.

4. Data for employees holding multiple contracts should be reported according to the instructions given on Superannuation (Health Service) Circular 1996/1.

5. The employee's pensionable pay reported on the Annual Return is used in the production of benefit statements and estimates of benefit entitlement. The benefits quoted will be overstated if the pensionable pay reported includes arrears for an earlier financial year. To prevent this, written confirmation of the amount of arrears of pay for the appropriate financial year should be made at the time the arrears are paid. If this has not been done for an employee during the year, the information must be provided with the Annual Return.

6. The service reported must not exceed the calendar period between the start and stop dates of the employment, 365 days in total.

7. The Annual Return for employees who have not received any pensionable pay during the year should have "zeros" inserted for both pay and service. Service cannot accrue if nil pay is reported.

8. The NHS Scheme Earnings Limit which replaced the former “Earnings Cap” has been removed following the introduction of the NHS Scheme Reforms. Also, the dental MAR was removed for service from 1 April 2008. The scheme has however retained a Notional Earnings Limit (NEL) for members who have current added years’ contracts. Members will continue to pay these contracts up to the NEL which was set at £117,600 in 2008/09 and has been set at £123,600 for 2009/10.

9. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009, tiered contributions in respect of a Practitioner or Non GP Partner will be on their actual earnings during the relevant scheme year.

As Practitioners quite often have periods of service with Officer status, it would be useful to provide additional information regarding their Practitioner status.

Membership of the National Health Service Superannuation Scheme (NHSSS) Scotland is open to NHS (Medical, Dental and Ophthalmic) Practitioners who are registered with their relevant Local Health Board. ‘Practitioner’ for this purpose means the following groups of people:

**Principal Practitioners** – GMS Principal GPs, Section 17 C (PMS) GPs, Principal Dental Practitioners, Ophthalmic NHS Practitioners

**Assistant Practitioners** – GMS salaried GPs, Section 17 C (PMS) salaried GPs, GP retainers, GPs on Flexible Career Scheme, Associate GPs, GPs who are Out of Hours Providers (OOHP) and NHS Dental Trainees

**GP Locums** – Freelance GP Locums and existing GP scheme members who undertake GP locum work

GP Registrars (Previously Trainee Assistant Practitioners) are afforded Officer status in the NHSSS (Scotland).

Group Codes on related Agency NSR forms and Annual Returns information require to be recorded correctly to differentiate the various types of Practitioner. The following Group Codes are to be used:

|  |            |    |
|--|------------|----|
| Medical Principal Practitioner           | Group Code | 09 |
| Dental Principal Practitioner            | Group Code | 10 |
| Medical Assistant Practitioner/GP Locums | Group Code | 16 |
| Dental Assistant Practitioner            | Group Code | 17 |

As all Practitioners are considered ‘whole time’, Service Type 03 is used.

For inquiries about Practitioner status, please contact [NHSPEN3@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:NHSPEN3@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

10. State Scheme earnings should be reported for all scheme members (expressed in whole £s).

11. In order to ensure that the correct information is held on the members records, and the correct pensionable pay is used in the calculation of benefits, Payrolls and GP Practice Managers are asked to review their current procedures when recording reduced rates of

pensionable pay and members ceasing to pay contributions after a period of Reduced Rate of Pay as follows:

In most cases of maternity or sick leave, full pay is followed by a period of reduced pay, then possibly nil pay, before the member returns to work.

If the members Reduced Sick Rate of pay ends, and they continue to be employed on nil pay, then NSR 02 (leaver) should be sent to the Agency with Code 20 as reason for leaving and Item 23 showing the last day of superannuable employment.

An NSR 01 (starter) form should be completed and sent to the Agency for any period after the last day of employment for which the person receives pensionable pay (as should be recorded in the NSR 02 (leaver form)) - for example, if annual leave takes place after the actual last day of working but before the actual date of termination of the contract, this is treated for superannuation purposes as part of reckonable service and contributions should be collected.

Where an employee contributes on reduced pensionable pay during sick leave, the employer's contributions should be paid as if there was no reduction. (It is the unreduced pensionable pay on which the employer's contributions are paid that requires to be taken into consideration when assessing the best pensionable pay during the past three years).

## 12. **Employing Authority Resource Accounts - (Disclosure of Salary & Pension Information at 31 March 2009)**

To help employers meet their requirements in relation to salary and pension disclosure for senior staff in their accounts, SPPA will, on request, provide details of an individual's service in the scheme. That information will, however, normally be restricted to the service at 31 March 2008. That is the latest date to which our records are updated as the Annual Returns for the year 2008/09 have not yet been provided by employers. When requesting such information, it is essential that employers provide written consent from each individual. Without this, the Agency cannot release details to employers.

Please note that if any member has Medical or Dental Practitioner service, the request for information should be sent directly to NHS Team 3 at [NHSPEN3@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:NHSPEN3@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

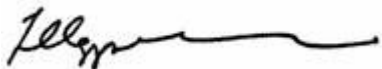
The ready reckoner, which was available last year to calculate and produce information required from employers, has now been updated. Please note that when making a comparison against last years values, you may notice a significant difference. This is due to a change in the factors used to calculate CETV's which came in to force on 1 October 2008.

**Full instructions on the completion of NSR forms have been updated and are available for downloading from our website. Please review this in case there are any changes which affect you.**

The link is - [Scottish Public Pensions Agency - NHS Scheme - Forms and Leaflets](#)

Any enquiries about these instructions should be referred to the Agency on 01896 893100 or alternatively by emailing the appropriate team detailed in **Annex A** attached.

Yours faithfully



Ian Clapperton  
Director of Operations

| Team Name     | Areas Covered   | Telephone No.                                | Email  |
|---------------|---|--|--|
| NHS Awards    | All types of retirement award including death and family benefits     | 01896 893000                                 | <a href="mailto:NHSAwards@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">NHSAwards@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a>   |
| NHS Transfers | All types of transfer in and out of the scheme                        | 01896 893000                                 | <a href="mailto:NHSTransfers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">NHSTransfers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a>   |
| NHS Service   | All types of record information, including refunds and MHO queries    | 01896 893000                                 | <a href="mailto:NHSService@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">NHSService@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a>   |
| NHS Group 1   | Injury Benefits<br>GP Practices and Direction Bodies<br>Practitioners | 01896 893110<br>01896 893120<br>01896 893130 | <a href="mailto:nhspen1@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">nhspen1@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:nhspen2@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">nhspen2@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:nhspen3@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">nhspen3@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a> |