

PURCHASING SYSTEM FOR GENERAL PRACTICE SERVICES INFORMATION FACTSHEET FOR COMMISSIONERS

This factsheet is for local commissioners of primary medical (“GP”) services - NHS England regional teams and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) with delegated authority.

NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) has launched a new online purchasing system (technically known as a ‘Pseudo’ Dynamic Purchasing System) which allows local Alternative Provider Medical Services (APMS) to be procured in a more streamlined way.

The system was published in January 2020 and is open to providers wishing to apply to join.

This factsheet provides more information, the benefits and how you can find out more and support.

What APMS services are in scope?

There are two main “lots” to the APMS services in scope:

Lot 1. Routine GP services. To support procurement plans for replacing existing or securing additional GP services and covers the core list-based services expected from all GP practices in England.

The emphasis here is on meeting planned needs that are typically subject to full commissioning and procurement processes. APMS contracts awarded will reflect the bespoke needs of each local commissioner.

Lot 2. Caretaker Services. This lot seeks to support urgent cover arrangements, approved by primary care commissioning committees, on a case by case basis, to ensure a safe and sustainable GP service continues for patients when a GP contract terminates suddenly or unexpectedly.

The new purchasing system

This new system is being set up under the Light Touch Regime for Health Care contracts within the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 the initial set up is being managed by North and East London Commissioning Support Unit (NELCSU). NELCSU is leading the system set up on behalf of the CSU collaborative that provides procurement services for commissioners, including primary care, on behalf of NHSEI.

The new system is a 4-year procurement exercise being managed through an e-procurement platform and will see:

- GP providers appointed to an electronically managed list of pre-approved providers – providers can apply to join the list almost at any time, unlike a traditional procurement framework, as there will be a series of regular application rounds held during the 4-year period. The pre-approval is largely concerned with eligibility to hold an APMS contract.
- Approved GP providers will be invited via the e-platform to respond to requests for APMS services from local commissioners. This local “call off” will be matched to the bespoke needs of local commissioners and is where providers will set out their plans to deliver the services in question.

To ensure the system can be managed efficiently while also being sensitive to local commissioner (and provider) needs it is broken down in to geographical lots

Our regional footprints

North East and Yorkshire

1. Cumbria and the North East
2. West Yorkshire and Harrogate
3. Humber, Coast and Vale
4. South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw

North West

5. Lancashire and South Cumbria
6. Greater Manchester
7. Cheshire and Merseyside

East of England

19. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
20. Norfolk and Waveney
21. Suffolk and North East Essex
22. Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes
23. Hertfordshire and West Essex
24. Mid and South Essex

London

25. North West London
26. Central London
27. East London
28. South East London
29. South West London

Midlands

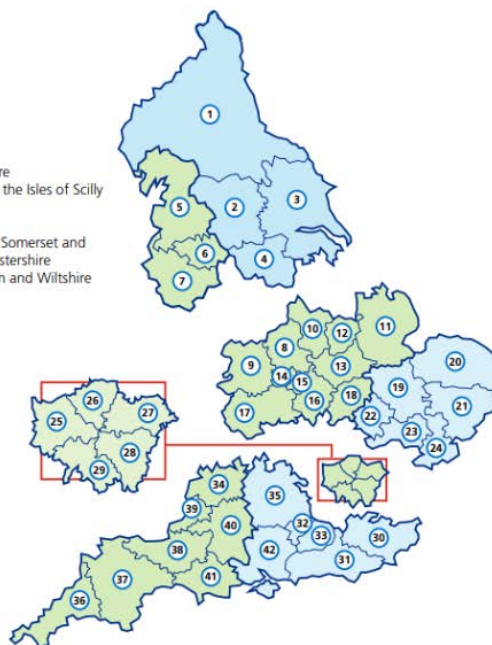
8. Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent
9. Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin
10. Derbyshire
11. Lincolnshire
12. Nottinghamshire
13. Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland
14. The Black Country
15. Birmingham and Solihull
16. Coventry and Warwickshire
17. Herefordshire and Worcestershire
18. Northamptonshire

South East

30. Kent and Medway
31. Sussex and East Surrey
32. Frimley Health and Care
33. Surrey Heartlands
35. Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West
42. Hampshire and Isle of Wight

South West

34. Gloucestershire
36. Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
37. Devon
38. Somerset
39. Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire
40. Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire
41. Dorset



GP Providers will apply to be an approved APMS and/or caretaker provider in one (or more) of NHSEI's seven operating regions. Applicants will also be asked to indicate (for information) which local areas within those operating regions they will be interested in providing services. These local area "sub-lots" mirror the System and Transformation Partnership (STP) areas and constituent Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) covering the whole of England.

What are the benefits for local commissioners?

- The initial assessment to be an approved provider and admitted on to the purchasing system will be conducted by CSUs on behalf of NHSEI.
- This pre-approval has downstream benefits for both commissioners and GP providers - eligibility is assessed once¹ regardless of the number of call offs a commissioner makes (or a provider bids for).
- Call off requirements can be conducted in a more streamlined and efficient manner focussing solely on local commissioners' bespoke requirements.
- It is anticipated that once all pre-procurement and commissioning activities have been completed, a typical APMS call off procurement, could be completed in as little as 6-8 weeks (subject to the complexity of the service requirements).
- Caretaking procurements in urgent cases could be undertaken in under a week dependent upon the information required from the provider and any due diligence required.
- Call offs will be facilitated and run through an e-platform with CSUs leading and supporting commissioners through the process, meaning commissioners can focus on ensuring their service requirements are met.
- The system provides greater transparency and openness for both commissioners and GP providers.

¹ Approved GP providers will be required under the purchasing system contract to report any changes which could impact their eligibility.

- For commissioners, transparency on the prospective GP provider market available to meet their service needs (and the opportunity to grow this through continuing provider engagement to seek applicants to the PDPS).
- For GP providers, the service opportunities available for them will be in one place – approved GP providers will receive notifications for service requirements in any/all areas they have stated they are interested in.
- The system also supports clear governance for APMS contract awards, providing assurance and audit trail that a robust procurement approach has been followed.
- The system will provide easy access to further management information on procurement activity improving commissioner intelligence and insight – locally, regionally and nationally.

Do local commissioners need to use the new system?

We hope the benefits of the new system will speak for themselves and NHSEI encourages all commissioners to use the new system for their APMS procurements.

However, its use is not mandatory, and it is recognised that growing the lists of pre-approved GP providers may take some time following the initial launch.

Commissioners can help drive growth in the list of pre-approved providers that will support its use by:

- **Signalling to the local GP provider market local intentions to use the system – this could be on individual procurement basis until there is a developed provider base to adopt this routinely; and**
- **Sharing the Provider Factsheet information with local providers and provider networks to facilitate a greater number of local applications; and**
- **Sharing details of substantive APMS contracts/procurement pipelines with NELCSU so that there is transparency for prospective providers on possible future opportunities: a formal request will be issued shortly, and this information will be made available to the market via the e-platform.**

Both actions will help generate interest from providers in applying to join the system.

What do providers need to demonstrate to qualify as an approved provider?

Providers that meet the relevant eligibility criteria will be admitted onto the system. Minimum threshold on suitability and capability will need to be met and key pass/fail questions will be asked of providers in the following areas:

- Technical and professional ability
- Mandatory and discretionary exclusion questions
- Other subject matter questions such as past performance (contractual and CQC, for example).

The pre-evaluation questionnaire and further guidance is available to interested providers via the e-platform in January 2020, see link below in the section titled “How do providers apply?”

When contract opportunities arise, commissioners will invite approved GP providers to bid on the local requirements only.

How do providers apply?

The PDPS contract notice was published in January 2020 opening up the system and inviting providers to apply.

To apply you need to register on the online portal and submit an application to join the PDPS before one of the Application Round deadlines. Instructions are shown in the Contracts Finder advert, link: <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/6f4aae1b-7289-4b78-88eb-f5d36757f21c>

- New application rounds are opened (for those who have not yet applied to join); or,
- when a service is being commissioned at Call-Off (Call for competition) where bids will be invited for specific APMS contract opportunities (for those who have already been successful in their application to join the pre-approved provider list).

Commissioners are invited to share the published Provider Factsheet to raise awareness with their current contractors and any prospective GP providers.

What is the timetable for the rounds?

The table below is the timetable for the 2020 application rounds, it may be necessary during the life of this project to move these dates slightly, any changes will be with appropriate notice via the EU Supply portal, please ensure that you regularly check this portal for updates.

Round	Application Period	Clarification period	Deadline for submission/ Evidence Provision by	Maximum Evaluation Period	Decision Letters	MOU in place
Round 1	21.01.2020 – 14.02.2020	21.01.2020 – 03.02.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	14.02.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	17.02.2020 – 28.02.2020	06.03.2020	13.03.2020
Round 2	17.02.2020 – 13.03.2020	17.02.2020 – 02.03.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	13.03.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	16.03.2020 – 27.03.2020	03.04.2020	09.04.2020
Round 3	16.03.2020 – 09.04.2020	16.03.2020 – 30.04.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	09.04.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	14.04.2020 – 24.04.2020	01.05.2020	07.05.2020

Round	Application Period	Clarification period	Deadline for submission/ Evidence Provision by	Maximum Evaluation Period	Decision Letters	MOU in place
Round 4	14.04.2020 – 07.05.2020	14.04.2020 – 27.04.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	07.05.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	11.05.2020 – 22.05.2020	29.05.2020	05.06.2020
Round 5	11.05.2020 – 05.06.2020	11.05.2020 – 26.05.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	05.06.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	08.06.2020 – 19.06.2020	26.06.2020	03.07.2020
Round 6	08.06.2020 – 03.07.2020	08.06.2020 – 23.06.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	03.07.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	06.07.2020 – 17.07.2020	24.07.2020	31.07.2020
Round 7	06.07.2020 – 31.07.2020	06.07.2020 – 21.07.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	31.07.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	03.08.2020 – 14.08.2020	21.08.2020	28.08.2020
Round 8	03.08.2020 – 28.08.2020	03.08.2020 – 18.08.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	28.08.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	01.09.2020 – 11.09.2020	18.09.2020	25.09.2020
Round 9	01.09.2020 – 25.09.2020	01.09.2020 – 15.09.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	25.09.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	28.09.2020 – 09.10.2020	16.10.2020	23.10.2020
Round 10	28.09.2020 – 23.10.2020	28.09.2020 – 13.10.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	23.10.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	26.10.2020 – 06.11.2020	13.11.2020	20.11.2020
Round 11	26.10.2020 – 20.11.2020	26.10.2020 – 10.11.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	20.11.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	23.11.2020 – 04.12.2020	11.12.2020	18.12.2020
Round 12	23.11.2020 – 18.12.2020	23.11.2020 – 08.12.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	18.12.2020 at 12.00 (noon)	21.12.2020 – 08.01.2020	15.01.2020	22.01.2020

Where can I find out more?

Further documentation supporting this work including FAQs and contractual documentation underpinning the system is available on the e-platform or can be requested via the email contact address below.

Any specific queries may be addressed to nelcsu.APMS.PDPS@nhs.net or alternatively contact local CSU primary care procurement lead for further information.

