



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

**WHC 2026 017**

## WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR

**Issue Date:** 31 March 2026

**Status:** Action

**Category:** Primary Care

**Title:** Enabling community pharmacies to supply medicines ordered by optometrists as part of providing NHS care in Wales

**Date of Expiry / Review:** N/A

**Action by:**

Community Pharmacies and optometry practices providing NHS services in Wales

**For Information to:**

Chief Executives, Health Boards  
Directors of Primary Care, Health Boards  
Directors of Pharmacy, Health Boards  
General Practitioners  
Primary Care Services, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership  
Optometry Wales  
Community Pharmacy Wales  
General Practitioner Council, Wales  
Royal Pharmaceutical Society  
College of Optometrists  
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Health Education and Improvement Wales

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**Enclosures:** Example WP10(SO) form

Dear Colleagues

## **Enabling community pharmacies to supply medicines ordered by optometrists as part of providing NHS care in Wales – Important changes from 6 April 2026**

This Welsh Health Circular sets out important changes in primary care to improve patients' access to essential eye care services affecting NHS optometrists and community pharmacies in Wales, which come into force on 6 April.

### Introduction

Amendments to the [National Health Service \(Pharmaceutical Services\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2020](#) made in 2024 enable NHS community pharmacies in Wales to supply specified ophthalmic listed medicines and appliances in accordance with an NHS signed order written by a qualifying optometrist in Wales.

As a result of these changes, from 6 April NHS optometrists working in Wales will be able to provide their patients with a signed order for a limited list of medicines and appliances to treat common eye conditions. These can then be supplied by pharmacies free of charge. Pharmacies will be reimbursed the cost of any medicines or appliances and receive a fee for each supply they make against an NHS optometry signed order.

### Legislative background

The Human Medicines Regulations 2012 provide exemptions for specified classes of persons to sell, supply or administer specified prescription only, pharmacy and general sales list medicines in specified circumstances. These persons, medicines and circumstances are set out in Part 4 of Schedule 17 to the Human Medicines Regulations and permit registered optometrists to sell or supply all medical products on a general sale list, all pharmacy medicines and some prescription only medicines including chloramphenicol eye drops and eye ointment, preparations containing fusidic acid, and preparations containing cyclopentolate hydrochloride. Part 1 of Schedule 17 permits registered pharmacies to supply these medicines to patients on the presentation of an order signed by a registered optometrist ("a signed order").

### Supply of medicines against signed orders from optometrists providing NHS services

Amendments to the terms of service for community pharmacies in Wales made in 2024, require that where a person presents a signed order for an ophthalmic listed appliance or an ophthalmic listed medicine signed by a qualifying optometrist, the pharmacy must supply those medicines in accordance with any directions given by the qualifying optometrist.

## Use of NHS signed order forms by optometrists in Wales

From 6 April, optometrists providing NHS services in Wales will be supplied with the **new NHS WP10(SO) signed order form** (see enclosure) to be used when ordering medicines as part of their NHS practice.

Further information for optometrists regarding the use of signed orders in the course of providing the Welsh General Ophthalmic Services (WGOS) can be found in the WGOS service manual which can be accessed at [Eye Care Docs - NHS Wales](#).

An initial supply of two pads each containing 100 WP10(SO) forms (i.e. 200 forms in total), will be provided to each optometric practice in Wales. **Optometrists do not need to order the initial supply**. When additional forms are required, optometrists can place an order with the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership stores department from which they currently order WGOS forms.

When completing a signed order optometrists should ensure the following information is included on the form:

- The name and address of the person to be supplied;
- The name, address and professional registration details (i.e. the General Optical Council registration number) of the optometrist making the order;
- The generic name<sup>1</sup>, form, strength and quantity of the medicines or appliances to be supplied; and
- Any directions for the appropriate use of those medicines or appliances.

Forms will be provided to patients or their representatives who will be told to present them at a community pharmacy to be supplied with the medicines or appliances ordered by the optometrist.

## Medicines and appliances which can be ordered by NHS optometrists in Wales

In 2025, the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) consulted on the list of medicines and appliances which can be ordered by NHS optometrists using the WP10(SO) form and which will be reimbursed by the NHS. The Wales General Ophthalmic Services – Signed Orders Formulary containing the (ophthalmic listed) medicines and appliances which can be ordered as part of NHS agreed by AWMSG, can be accessed at [Wales General Ophthalmic Services – Signed Orders Formulary - All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre](#). This list will also be published in Part XVIIID of the Drug Tariff from April.

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<sup>1</sup> Optometrists should order medicines and appliances using the generic name other than when ordering retinol palmitate with white soft paraffin, light liquid paraffin, liquid paraffin and wool fat eye ointment preservative-free where Hylo Night® is the only available preparation and may be ordered by its proprietary name.

Signed orders should be made using the generic name of the medicines or appliances to be supplied.<sup>1</sup>

### Supplying medicines and appliances ordered by NHS optometrists in Wales

The terms of service for pharmacy contractors requires pharmacies to supply the medicines and appliances ordered by NHS optometrists on presentation of a WP10(SO) form.<sup>2</sup> Listed medicines and appliances ordered on WP10(SO) forms can be supplied free of charge by any pharmacy providing NHS services in Wales; however, they cannot be used at pharmacies in other parts of the UK.

Pharmacies may supply any preparation which conforms to the specification of the medicines or appliances ordered and reimbursement will be based on the price of the medicine or appliance listed in the Drug Tariff or where they are not listed, the manufacturer's list price. Orders for medicines and appliances not included in the Wales General Ophthalmic Services – Signed Orders Formulary will not be reimbursed.

When supplying a medicine or appliance in accordance with an NHS signed order, pharmacies should label the medicine or appliance supplied with the name of the medicine or appliance, the name of the person being supplied and any instructions for the appropriate use of the medicine or appliance given by the optometrist making the order.

Pharmacies must make a computerised (or written) record of any prescription only medicines supplied in accordance with a signed order on the day of the supply, or if that is not reasonably practicable, on the next day. This record must contain:

- The date on which the prescription only medicine was sold or supplied;
- The name, quantity and, except where it is apparent from the name, the pharmaceutical form and strength of the prescription only medicine sold or supplied;
- The name and address of the optometrist ordering the prescription only medicine;
- The name and address of the person for whom the prescription only medicine was ordered; and
- The date on the signed order.

### Submission of signed order forms by pharmacies

Pharmacies will receive professional fees and practice payments for each medicine or appliance they supply against WP10(SO) forms as set out in Parts III and VIA of the Drug Tariff.

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<sup>2</sup> Unless the order is for a medicine or appliance not listed in Wales General Ophthalmic Services – Signed Orders Formulary.

Pharmacy contractors must submit WP10(SO) forms to the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership for pricing at the end of each month. Forms should be submitted using the established arrangements for submitting NHS prescriptions for payment.

Details of the number of WP10(SO) forms and items supplied in accordance with signed orders should be included on the pharmacy's WP34C form. The number of WP10(SO) forms and items do not need to be separately identified and should be included in the total number of declared forms and items. The usual endorsement rules apply to WP10(SO) forms and submitted forms should be included in Group 1A for processing. Further information on submitting WP10(SO) forms for payment can be accessed at [Community Pharmacy - NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership](#).

Signed order forms submitted by pharmacies for payment will be retained by the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership and can be viewed by pharmacies using the [online payment schedule](#) (e-schedule) system.

#### Further information

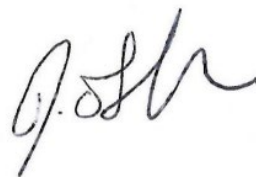
Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) will provide profession specific continuing professional development opportunities and support where appropriate. These will be advertised through HEIW's usual channels.

We ask that optometry and pharmacy teams familiarise themselves with the information provided in this Welsh Health Circular and the links contained within it to ensure the changes are implemented smoothly and to the benefit of people requiring essential eye care in Wales.

Yours sincerely



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