RTEC Frequently Asked Questions

Below you'll find answers to the questions we get asked the most regarding Real Time Exemption Checking (RTEC).

Why am I not prompted to perform an RTEC check before sending a Dispense Notification and / or Claim?

You will only be prompted to perform the RTEC check if your system is configured to do so AND the exemption check was not carried out during the dispensing process or carried out manually AND the patient/prescription is otherwise eligible (i.e. not age exempt, prescription is valid, etc).

Why has the RTEC response returned RTEC: Not Known for a patient who is exempt?

The NHSBSA do not currently hold the exemption status for the patient for this prescription. Only prescriptions for patients with maternity, medical, pre-payment, HC2 charges certificate and NHS Tax Credit exemptions can currently be checked.

Why doesn't the RTEC response update the Exemption Details in the patient's PMR?

The specific exemption status is not provided by the NHSBSA. Due to this, the patient's PMR cannot be updated with the patient's exemption.

Why has the exemption tag from the patient's PMR been removed from the ETP grid?

The exemption will be removed if the RTEC response received indicates that the prescription is RTEC: Exempt. If the patient's PMR has their exemption recorded this will show in the blue patient information box and within the Patient Details window.

Can I send an RTEC request for a claimed prescription?

No. Prescriptions with a status of Claim Success are not eligible for an exemption check.

How can I perform an RTEC request whilst dispensing a prescription?

This can be performed by first enabling the *Check Exemption During Dispensing* application setting. Real Time Exemption Checking will then appear as a step in the Dispensing Wizard process.

Why don't all my prescriptions appear in the batch functions grid to send an exemption check?

Prescription for patients not added to your system will be tagged as Patient Not Matched in the ETP grid. These will not appear in the Batch Functions window for exemption checking. Neither will prescriptions with a status of Claim Success. A manual exemption check can be carried out for each prescription using the **[F12 – Exemption Check]** button in the ETP Manager or can be checked during the dispensing process if configured accordingly.

Do I still need to update the Exemption Details in the patient's PMR to send a claim?

You must ensure that prescriptions for patients flagged as RTEC: Not Known have their exemption set up correctly in their PMR. Those with an exemption of *Not Known* against the prescription will need to be updated with an exemption letter before a claim notification can be sent.

Do I need to perform another RTEC request when I am redeeming an owing?

If you have already carried out an exemption check for the prescription during the dispensing process then there is no requirement to carry out a check again. However, your own SOPs may advise differently and these should be followed in the first instance.

My patient was 16 when the prescription was dispensed but had turned 17 when they collected. Do I need to do another check?

An exemption check will not be carried out for age-exempt patients. Whilst there is no requirement to carry out a check again, you may wish to carry out a manual check prior to handing out the prescription, using the **[F12 – Exemption Check]** button in ETP Manager. We recommend that you refer to your own SOPs in the first instance.

My patient was 59 when the prescription was dispensed but had turned 60 when they collected. Do I need to carry out another check?

Whilst there is no requirement to carry out a check again, please note that you will not be able to perform an exemption check for age-exempt patients.

Do I still need to print the token if the prescription is marked as RTEC: Exempt?

No, this is not required if you are only printing the token for exemption declaration purposes. You may still wish to print the token if you are using it for other tasks..

Do I still need to print the token if the prescription is marked as RTEC: Not Known?

It is recommended to print the dispensing token and obtain the patient's declaration and signature to confirm if an exemption exists for the patient.

The RTEC response is RTEC: Exempt. Can I see what the patient's exemption is?

No. NHSBSA do not return the exemption category, only if they are exempt.

How can I perform a check on EPS R1 scripts?

Exemption checking is not in scope for R1 prescriptions.

Why do I need to check the exemption on other prescriptions for the same patient?

The exemption check is done on a "real time" basis and may change between prescriptions. Hence, it is carried out for every prescription.

What changes will I see in the ETP Claims report?

Where RTEC: Exempt was returned, the exemption will be displayed as RTEC: Exempt. These prescriptions will fall under the exempt figures.

Who should I contact if the RTEC response for a prescription is incorrect?

In this scenario, RTEC: Exempt was returned for a patient who is not exempt, or RTEC: Not Known was returned for a patient who is in fact exempt. It is important that the patient's details held by the NHSBSA are up to date and match the details held by their GP. Keep in mind that these certificates may have expired – which is why RTEC: Not Known may be returned. Pharmacists should check with patients if the certificate has expired – if it has, the patient is expected to pay and the pharmacist can provide an FP57 to claim back costs incurred.

If patients need to update their details with the NHSBSA, they can contact:

- For medical and maternity exemption certificates, and prescription prepayment certificates – call on 0300 330 1341

- For NHS tax credit exemption certificates – call on 0300 330 1347
- For HC2 certificates – call on 0300 330 1343

My RTEC system does not display the specific exemption type. Is that right?

Yes, this is how RTEC is expected to work. When you use RTEC, your ProScript Connect should confirm an RTEC exemption is present (or RTEC: Exempt) or determine RTEC: Not Known so that your team can use the usual process. You won't be able to determine which specific exemption category is present.

Do I need to submit EPS tokens for prescriptions with an RTEC exemption?

No. The ProScript Connect can apply the RTEC information onto the EPS prescription and therefore those tokens won't need to be sent to NHSBSA.

Our system performs the RTEC check earlier during the dispensing process and RTEC: Exempt was already confirmed on the prescription. Is there a need to check again later if there is a slight gap between dispensing and supply?

No. There is no requirement to check a prescription twice if RTEC: Exempt already applied to the prescription. You may inform the patient that an RTEC check has already been performed earlier during the dispensing process which has stamped the prescription RTEC: Exempt and therefore a penalty notice cannot apply.

Might a patient receive a penalty notice charge if their prescription was marked RTEC: Exempt at the original time of the RTEC check?

No. Those prescriptions if stamped as RTEC: Exempt by the ProScript Connect do not require investigation.

My system performs the RTEC check during the dispensing process and originally ProScript Connect found RTEC: Not Known, but the patient now explains they have a new exempt status since (e.g. have just purchased a relevant certificate or they have reached 60 years old). What should I do?

There is an ability to re-perform the RTEC check with an override so that the patient can re-confirm their status in a rare scenario such as this, although performing two checks for each prescription is not required, a patient can ask for a second check. The override option is intended for infrequent scenarios such as when patients may have originally been confirmed 'unknown' and have since become exempt.

The patient says that RTEC should be identifying an NHSBSA exemption but RTEC is not finding an exemption?

This can occur if the exemption may no longer be in place or if there is a mismatch between databases e.g. if the patient's address at the GP practice and their address within NHSBSA records is different or if there is a name mismatch. The NHSBSA's RTEC patient-facing and pharmacy materials explain for patients to make use of RTEC for NHSBSA exemption categories, patients need to ensure that their address at the GP practice and held by the NHSBSA is aligned. To benefit from using RTEC, patients who move address must contact their GP practice to correct their address information and contact NHSBSA to correct their address information.

What is the process for patients to update their new or correct address/name records held by the NHSBSA?

If patients arrive at your pharmacy expecting RTEC to confirm their BSA exemption but RTEC: Not Known is returned on ProScript Connect, you may ask patients whether they have moved address and if so, whether both the GP practice and NHSBSA have updated their records following the patient's request. Additionally you may check whether their name is correct in both places and matching. A mismatch of names could also prevent a positive RTEC confirmation.

Can patients also check information relating to their own exemption?

Patients may refer to NHSBSA patient checker tool to view some information about their exemption category. Whilst using the tool, patients will enter the postcode held by the NHSBSA into the tool to access their information.

Before RTEC, visibility of maternity exemption status had assisted clinical decision making, but maternity exemption is not visible with RTEC. How is this addressed?

Community Pharmacy Patient Safety Group (CPPSG) have highlighted that RTEC will not provide the specific exemption status to the pharmacy, as explained earlier, a check will provide either 'unknown' or 'exempt'. In the past, some pharmacy teams may have used patients' maternity declaration to help identify some of those patient which were pregnant or breastfeeding. While this was not the only or a guaranteed source of information, it may have sometimes assisted in clinical decision making relating to this group of patients.

What happens if If the RTEC response is showing as Exempt, but the patient pays the prescription charge?

If the RTEC response is showing as Exempt, but the patient pays the prescription charge, the contractor may collect the charge(s) and complete a re-check form containing the prescription details for BSA to make the adjustment (only if the claim was submitted as being exempt).

Revision History

Version Number	Date	Revision Details	Author(s)
1.0	18 August 2020		Joanne Hibbert-Gorst
2.0	19 July 2023	Updated and added extra information	Joanne Hibbert-Gorst

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