
NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership

NHS Wales No PO No Pay (No Purchase Order No Payment) Policy

*To be adopted by Each Health Board, Special
Health Authority and Trust in NHS Wales*

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1 Introduction/Overview

The P2P - the Procure to Pay process – encompasses the end-to-end process from sourcing goods and services through to delivery and receipt of goods and payment to the supplier. A No PO No Pay policy is where invoices arriving in the system without an order number (unless on the approved exception list – see Appendix 1) are placed on hold and a weekly communication is emailed to the supplier who is instructed to seek an order number from the relevant department and manager that was supplied before payment is made. The aim is to drive up compliance with the Standing Financial Instructions as well as the standard order management process.

2 Policy Statement

The implementation of a national policy of 'No Purchase Order No Pay' is to be an essential and fundamental building block from which the efficiency and effectiveness of the P2P process can be developed.

3 Aims/Purpose

To ensure:

- That all goods and services are ordered appropriately and are supported by official Purchase Orders in line with LHB, Trust and Special Health Authority Standing Financial Instructions.
- Efficient processes are put in place so that goods are delivered when required.
- Costs are controlled by:
 - Ensuring all non-pay expenditure incurred by the organisation is valid and appropriately authorised in advance of the goods/services being received.
 - Minimising transactional costs associated with payment for goods.
 - Paying supplier invoices within deadlines set by Welsh Government.
 - Maximising financial incentives for early payment offered by suppliers.
 - Reducing the risk of late payment interest and fees being charged by suppliers.

4 Objectives

This policy seeks to ensure that NHS Wales only pays for goods, services and works which have been properly ordered and authorised in accordance with the NHS Wales Procurement rules and Standing Financial Instructions. It also ensures invoices received by the NWSSP Accounts Payable teams can be processed efficiently to minimise delay in payments to suppliers and contractors. Invoices received by the NWSSP Accounts Payable Team without a valid PO number will severely delay payment to the suppliers. Successful adoption of this policy will lead to the following benefits:

- Better control environment – the correct level of authorisation of purchase orders, in advance of expenditure being incurred.
- Catalogue compliance will be improved leading to less off catalogue purchasing and lead to revenue savings.
- More comprehensive procurement intelligence being captured through the system about what and where goods and services are purchased allowing for better sourcing decisions.
- Costs will be more accurately accrued by the system reducing management accounting and Accounts Payable (AP) team workload.
- Public Sector Payment Policy compliance will improve because processing times reduce.
- Early payment discounts can be maximised.
- Overall processing costs in NWSSP P2P will reduce, releasing resources for NHS Wales.
- Suppliers will be paid on time thus supporting the wider economy.
- Less late payment interest and fees will be charged.
- Supplies of goods / services will not be disrupted or stopped due to late payment of invoices.

5 Scope

This policy is relevant to the following groups of staff within NHS Wales Health Boards, Special Health Authorities, Trusts and NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership:

- **Requisitioners**
Those staff that process requisitions for goods and services in departments and directorates within NHS Wales.
- **Approvers/Budget Holders**
Those staff that approve requisitions for goods and services in departments and directorates within NHS Wales.

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- **Staff that Receive Goods/Services**
Those staff that indicate within the Oracle or other ordering systems that the goods/services ordered have been received.
 - **Procurement Staff**
All NWSSP Procurement staff in the Procurement Directorate.
 - **Accounts Payable Staff**
All NWSSP Accounts Payable staff involved in the invoice payment process.
 - **Finance Departments**
All staff involved in financial management.

6 Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 All Staff with Responsibility for Ordering

It is the responsibility of all staff, designated under the local scheme of delegation, that order goods and services to ensure that a Purchase Order number is provided to a supplier in advance of the goods or services being supplied. If the goods/services being ordered are on the Exception list, then all staff must ensure they are aware of the correct payment authorisation process for those goods/services.

6.2 Requisitioners

All staff that raise requisitions for goods and services must ensure a Purchase Order number is provided to a supplier in advance of the goods or services being supplied. If the goods/services being ordered are on the Exception list, then all staff must ensure they are aware of the correct payment authorisation process for those goods/services.

6.3 Requisition Approvers/Budget Holders

All managers and budget holders designated to approve requisitions for goods and services must ensure a Purchase Order number is provided to a supplier in advance of the goods or services being supplied. It is their responsibility to ensure the person raising the order has sufficient information to be able to do so, and knowledge of when the goods / services are received to be able to update the system accordingly. If the goods/services being ordered are on the Exception list, then all managers and budget holders must ensure their staff are

aware of the correct payment authorisation process for those goods/services. These invoices will come in requiring Authorisation and be put on an Awaiting Authorisation hold. Any invoice not classed as an exception and does not quote a valid PO number will be subject to a non-compliance escalation procedure.

6.4 Staff who 'Receipt' Goods and Services

All staff that work in central stores, receipt and distribution points and local departments where goods are delivered, or services are received have responsibility for recording the goods/services as being received. They must ensure that the Purchase Order is marked as 'received' as soon as possible within the Oracle system within 2 working days following delivery of goods or provision of the service.

6.5 Procurement Services Staff

All staff working within NWSSP Procurement Services will engage with Health Board/Trust/SHA accountable Budget Holders to ensure that this policy is adopted and adhered to by all HB/Trust/SHA staff and that local operational procedures for supporting the No PO No Pay Policy are observed at all times. Procurement Services will ensure training and awareness of the Policy with Key HB/Trust/SHA stakeholders.

6.6 Accounts Payable Staff

All staff that process the payment of invoices within NWSSP Accounts payable must ensure that no invoice is paid (unless it is identified as an exception in Appendix 1) if a Purchase Order number is not quoted on the invoice. All invoices received with no Purchase Order number must be recorded within the Oracle system and the supplier notified in accordance with the communications shown in Section 8. The invoice will be placed on a No PO No Pay hold and marked as disputed.

6.7 Finance Staff

The Finance P2P Lead in each Organisation must promote this policy to finance staff, requisitioners, approvers, budget holders & receptors within their Organisations.

Finance staff must ensure there are processes in place to capture data on invoices received but unpaid, that have no Purchase Order, so that expenditure can be accrued if necessary.

7 Operation of the Policy

7.1 How does No PO No Pay Work?

No PO No Pay policy operates by requiring all invoices submitted by suppliers to contain an official PO number. In all but agreed exceptional circumstances the PO number will be:

- Generated from NHS Wales Oracle Ordering system or
- Generated from other local ordering systems e.g. pharmacy; and
- Given to the supplier or contractor BEFORE making any commitment to spend NHS Wales's monies.

There are a number of categories of expenditure that are excluded from the policy which are shown in Appendix 1.

Any invoice received by the Accounts Payable Team that is not on the exception list and does not quote a valid PO number will incur processing and approval delays which could result in severe delays to supplier payment. Exceptions will be reviewed and amended from time to time and users notified of the amendments accordingly.

7.2 What constitutes a Valid PO?

An exercise will be undertaken to remind suppliers of the NHS Wales No PO No Pay Policy and reinforce that they must not, under any circumstances, accept any verbal or written order from NHS staff unless a valid PO number is given or there is an agreed exception as set out in Appendix 1.

Any invoice received that does not quote a valid PO number will be placed on hold until a valid PO number is provided.

7.3 What is a Valid PO number?

Valid PO numbers are generated from NHS Wales ordering systems as follows:-

- Oracle Financial and Procurement System
 - Oracle is the standard financial system used by NHS LHBs/Trusts/SHAs in Wales.
- Oracle via Basware

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- This is an electronic exchange linked to Oracle for the electronic transmission of purchase orders.
 - Oracle EBS via GHX
 - This is an electronic exchange linked to Oracle for the electronic transmission of purchase orders.
 - The Pharmacy system used for generating pharmaceutical orders.

7.4 Submission of invoice

The Purchase Order will confirm which address invoices need to be submitted for payment. Some invoices will be submitted through the electronic exchanges or via the OCR process.

7.5 Public Sector Payment Policy

Provided a supplier has quoted a valid Purchase Order number which has been obtained in advance of supply, NHS Wales commits to paying invoices in line with the Public Sector Payment Policy i.e. within 30 days from the later of the receipt of goods or services or receipt of a valid invoice [not the invoice date].

All NHS Wales organisations are required by Welsh Government to be at least 95% compliant with this policy. Compliance is reported quarterly to Welsh Government, and annually in the Organisation's annual financial accounts.

7.6 Notification to Supplier of No PO on Invoice

If a supplier sends an Invoice without a Purchase Order number quoted and it does not sit within the agreed exception list, Accounts Payable will email the supplier weekly to inform them that their invoice has been placed on hold and that the supplier must contact the Health Organisation and request a Purchase Order number to be given to them. The supplier will be reminded of outstanding invoices awaiting confirmation of a Purchase Order every time the No PO No Pay report is run.

8 Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with this policy results in non-compliance with the Organisation's Standing Financial Instructions. The method of dealing with non-compliance will be for each organisation to determine but may include:

- Retraining of member of staff
- Escalation to senior management
- Escalation to Audit Committee (or equivalent)
- Escalation to Board

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- Removal of access rights to the Oracle system

9 Training

Training resources aimed at the key staff affected by this policy have been developed and iProcurement training can be provided upon request from the NWSSP e-Enablement team.

10 Implementation

The No PO No Pay policy was implemented across NHS Wales on the 1st September 2018. In accordance with clause 12 below, the latest formal review of the Policy has been undertaken in June 2024 and the proposed changes/amendments to it will be adopted by all NHS Wales Organisations

11 Audit

The application of this policy will be subject to internal audit review as part of the NWSSP Accounts Payable audits.

12 Review

This policy was implemented in September 2018, reviewed in September 2023 with further amendments in June 2024 and is due for further review in June 2027.

APPENDIX 1

All Wales Exceptions to the No PO No Pay Policy

The following items are exceptions and do not require a valid PO number. This includes a number of areas where local ordering systems are in place with appropriate authorisation control processes that do not require an Oracle PO to be raised.

	ALL WALES EXCEPTIONS
Barrister Fees	Yes
Blue Badges	Yes
Bunkered Fuel & Fuel Cards	Yes
Capital Construction contracts (where approval outside of Oracle)	SBU only
CHC - FNC	Yes
CHC/Nursing Home Payments	Yes
Collaborative Fees (GPs)	Yes
Estates (Grammes/Studio 3 Feed)	BCU & WAST only
Eye Tests	Yes
Fleet vehicles (Chevin Feed)	WAST only
GP Loads (Drugs)	Yes
Grants	Yes
HMRC	Yes
Hospital Car service	Yes
Lease Car repairs	Yes
Local Government/Authorities including Business Rates	Yes
Losses & Compensation including Redress	Yes
NHS Organisations excluding NHS Supply Chain	Yes
Nurse agency	Yes
Orthotics	Yes
Patient reimbursements including patients travelling	Yes
Petty Cash	Yes
Pharmacy (including home deliveries ordered through pharmacy system)	Yes
Primary Care contracts OOHRs	Yes
Primary care Low vision - HESP forms	Yes
Public Finance initiative	Yes
Purchase/Procurement Card	Yes
Telephone Landline - Line Rental, Call Charges & Maintenance	Yes
Telephone - Mobile Phone Charges	Yes
Salary deductions	Yes
Salary Sacrifice Schemes	Yes

Same day couriers	Yes
Tax, NI & Superannuation	Yes
Taxi Patient transport	WAST & NWSSP only
TV & Music Licences	Yes
Utilities (Gas, Electricity, Water and Oil heating)	Yes
Work Permits/Certificate of Sponsorship	Yes