

Frequently Asked Questions

National Veterinary Prescription System

Animal Keepers

General Queries

The National Veterinary Prescription System (NVPS) is a Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) built Veterinary Prescription Application. All administered, dispensed and prescribed veterinary medicinal products including medicated feed and antiparasitics, for food producing animals and all horses, must be recorded on the system.

The NVPS is currently operational on a voluntary basis but is scheduled for release to all vets in **December 2022**. The system only applies to prescriptions generated for food producing animals and all horses. Companion animal prescriptions on the NVPS is not currently scheduled to commence prior to 2027.

Primarily the NVPS is being introduced for several reasons such as:

- *Providing animal keepers with a much greater choice on where they may obtain their veterinary medicinal products (VMPs) – the introduction of the NVPS will ensure that all affected non-dispensed digital scripts, available for dispensing from all outlets across the country*
- *Potentially reducing the administrative burdens for those prescribing, dispensing, and purchasing VMPs*
- *Potentially simplifying record keeping for those purchasing VMPs*
- *Providing greater regulatory oversight on those parties involved in the general prescribing/dispensing/use of VMPs. Greater oversight will ultimately protect those parties who are meeting their regulatory functions.*
- *Providing a deeper understanding of the current processes being used to prescribe, dispense, and treat food producing animals and the VMPs being used - to allow for better evidence informed policy development to assist Ireland address both the growing antimicrobial and antiparasitic resistance issues. Other national policy development will also be greatly enhanced with the available data*
- *Tightening the controls Ireland has with our entire food production process from a farming perspective. Potential international trade partners will fully welcome the additional oversight capabilities available to Irish authorities which will provide enhanced confidence in Irish exported live animals, including equines, and agri-food products”*

Any queries can be forwarded to nvps@agriculture.gov.ie.

Frequently Asked Questions

National Veterinary Prescription System

Animal Keepers

Q. How do I register for NVPS or update my details?

A. Animal keepers do not need to register for the NVPS. However, all animal keepers should ensure their phone and email address are correct and up to date on the Departments Corporate Customer System (CCS) system. You can log onto Agfood.ie to check your details or contact your local Regional Veterinary Office (RVO) who will update your details for you.

Q. Is the animal keeper's information secured under Data Protection Guidelines?

A. The Department have undertaken a Data Protection Impact Assessment for all elements of the National Veterinary Prescription System. Data Protection and security is of the utmost importance for the Department.

Q. How do I register with a vet practice?

A. Your chosen veterinary practice will arrange the necessary NVPS association between you. Your vet will be set up on the system and will arrange for you to receive a text message SMS asking permission to use your customer details. Simply reply "DAFM Y" and the vet Practice will have been granted access to your animal keeper details on NVPS. This SMS process is only required once per veterinary practice. Providing the Practice with this information will simplify the prescription generation process.

Q. Can I register with more than 1 vet practice?

A. Yes, you can register with as many veterinary practices as you require.

Q. Can I still get a paper copy of my prescription?

A. Paper prescriptions for food producing animals and all horses are currently being phased out over a short transition period, prior to December 2022. Electronic prescribing will replace the traditional triplicate prescription book. The NVPS app is already available for use since January 2022. You can receive a paper copy of your dispensed script from your vet or dispensing outlet.

Frequently Asked Questions

National Veterinary Prescription System

Animal Keepers

Q. What if I don't have a mobile phone? How can I get my prescription?

A. Paper prescriptions are currently being phased out over a short transition period, prior to December 2022. If you do not have a mobile phone, we recommend you use an agent or close relative's mobile phone to receive the text messages on your behalf. There is also an option for your veterinary Practice to print off the relevant SMS text message.

Q. How do I get a copy of my prescriptions if they are not emailed to me?

A. You will have a copy of your dispensed prescription emailed to you (if there is a valid email address listed for you with the Department). You can also receive a printed copy of all dispensed prescriptions from your vet or dispensing outlet.

Q. Will the NVPS increase the level of farm inspections?

A. Currently the Department inspects farms and Veterinary Practices on a risk assessment basis, this will continue post implementation of the NVPS.

Q. Do all veterinary medications prescribed and dispensed need to be added to the NVPS app?

A. All veterinary medicinal products administered, prescribed, and dispensed will need to be submitted onto the NVPS.

Q. Can a comparable medicine be dispensed instead of the brand prescribed by the Veterinary Practice (VP)?

A. Yes, so long as the active substances in the Veterinary Medicinal Product (VMP) dispensed are identical in strength and indications for use as the product prescribed by the Veterinary Practitioner or Veterinary Practice (VP).

Frequently Asked Questions

National Veterinary Prescription System

Animal Keepers

Q. Does my Veterinary Practice (VP) have to prescribe a comparable Veterinary Medicinal Product (VMP) each time?

A. No. Under the NVPS, the Veterinary Practice VP will prescribe specified products, with the active substances detailed. The dispenser will have the option to choose the medication to dispense which may be the listed product or a comparable product. The dispenser must ensure that any comparable product is identical in terms of active substances, strength, and indications for use, when compared to the Veterinary Medicinal Products (VMP) prescribed.

Q. What is the validity period of a prescription for a Veterinary Medicinal Product (VMP) other than an antimicrobial?

A. This is currently being finalised by the Department. It is expected that antiparasitic veterinary medicinal product prescriptions may be valid for a period ranging to 12 months. More definitive details will follow shortly.

Q. If a Veterinary Practitioner (VP) administers a Veterinary Medicinal Product (VMP) to an animal does this need to be recorded on the NVPS system?

A. Yes, all Veterinary Medicinal Products (VMP) whether they are administered at the time or not; need to be recorded on the NVPS. This is to ensure Ireland can provide information on the prescribing of all medicines in line with the Regulations.

Q. What Veterinary Medicinal Product (VMP) can I have on farm?

A. There can be a small quantity of Veterinary Medicinal Products (VMP) on farm, if essential to protect animal health and welfare. Prescription Only Medicines (POM) can only be present if a Vet deems them necessary. It is a matter for your Vet to justify the VMP they have prescribed for your animals. In the case of antimicrobial Veterinary VMP (which are all POMs) a Vet can only prescribe a small quantity to be kept on farm where there may be an essential need for the administration to an individual animal or restricted number of animals when the risk for infection, or an infectious disease is very high, or its consequences are likely to be severe. Contact your Vet for further detail.

Frequently Asked Questions

National Veterinary Prescription System

Animal Keepers

Q. Who can prescribe antiparasitics in Ireland?

A. The only person allowed to prescribe a Veterinary Medicinal Product (VMP) in Ireland is a registered Vet.

Q. Where can keepers get antiparasitics for food-producing animals from January 2022?

A. Farmers can purchase antiparasitics for food-producing animals from a Vet, a pharmacist, a Co-Op or a Licensed Merchant's premises, upon presentation of a valid prescription.

Q. How long will a prescription for antiparasitics for food-producing animals be valid?

A. Under the new Regulation, from 2022, your Vet will need to write you a prescription for you to get antiparasitics for food-producing animals. The maximum length of validity of a prescription for these products will be 12 months.

Q. Can a keeper buy antiparasitics for food-producing animals from a Suitably Qualified Person (SQP) in Northern Ireland (NI) and use them in the Republic?

A. No. EU Regulation states that any prescriptions written by anyone other than a Vet, i.e. an SQP, shall be valid only in that Member State and shall exclude prescriptions of antimicrobial medicinal products and any other VMP where a diagnosis by a Vet is necessary.

Q. Can I get a prescription for my animal and get it dispensed in NI?

A. Yes. From 2022 all prescriptions will be recognised throughout the EU, this means you can get your prescription dispensed in any EU Member State. Likewise, a valid prescription from another Member State can be dispensed in Ireland. All dispensing agents registered with the Department can dispense a VMP prescribed in Ireland.

Frequently Asked Questions

National Veterinary Prescription System

Animal Keepers

Q. Are dispensers allowed to 'change' scripts – after consultation with Vet – or is a new script required?

A. The NVPS may allow an amendment to be made to a prescription following consultation between the prescribing Vet and the dispenser (usually involves an amendment to a dose rate as opposed to change of active substance prescribed-similar to human medicines). No Dispenser will have access to change the scripts.

Q. How long will a prescription for antimicrobials be valid?

A. Prescriptions for antimicrobial VMPs are valid for 5 days from date of issue. (Article 105 (10) of EU Regulation 2019/6) This means a prescription must be filled within 5 days. This only applies to antimicrobials, the length of validity of a prescription for all other VMPs will be a maximum of 12 months.

Q. How will the new Regulations impact the prophylactic use (preventive treatment) of antimicrobials?

A. From January 2022 antimicrobials are only allowed for prophylaxis in “exceptional cases” for an individual animal or restricted number of animals when the risk of infection is very high, and consequences are likely to be severe.

Q. How will the new Regulations impact the metaphylactic use (control treatment) of antimicrobials?

A. From January 2022 a prescription for antimicrobials for metaphylaxis may only be issued after diagnosis of infection, when the risk of spread of an infection is high and when no other appropriate alternatives are available.