

# Nationally Contracted Products FAQ

## Copier Paper



**Q**

**What is the aim of Nationally Contracted Products (NCP) and how are the products chosen?**

**A**

The aim of this NCP exercise was to aggregate national demand to deliver optimum efficiencies and a single national price to support the upfront national pricing strategy and provide savings to the NHS.

**Q**

**Which products have been included in this NCP?**

**A**

The following products were included in this NCP exercise:

- 70gsm virgin fibre A4 copier paper
- 80gsm virgin fibre A4 copier paper
- 80gsm recycled A4 copier paper

**Q**

**Were any suppliers delisted as part of this NCP exercise?**

**A**

No suppliers have been delisted, but the following two NPC codes are being delisted:

- WHO119
- WHO120

**Q**

**Why is the virgin fibre paper no longer available?**

**A**

Over the last 18 – 24 months, paper mills have been capping supply of grade C virgin fibre copier paper into the UK market.

In the last 24 months, these factors have led the mills to impose price increases roughly every quarter on the UK market.

Further price increases are expected in July 2018.

NHS Supply Chain has been able to maintain the catalogue sell prices until July but cannot continue beyond this date. This will lead to a considerable increase in prices and therefore cost pressures to the NHS.

**Q**

**Why isn't the recycled copier paper white?**

**A**

The Premier Paper brand is from a mill called Steinbeis and is manufactured using best in class environmental practises which does not allow any harmful bleaching in the manufacturing process.

Additionally Steinbeis paper does not contain Optical Brightening Agents (OBA's) to whiten the paper as OBA's are not biodegradable and do not break down in the environment.

Steinbeis paper is manufactured under the Eco Label Blue Angel which forbids the use of harmful chemicals in the manufacturing process.

**Q**

**Will the recycled copier paper work with all printers?**

**A**

The recycled copier paper can be used in both copier laser and inkjet printers.

This particular paper is the highest selling grade within the Steinbeis portfolio and has been successfully trialled by the Trusted Customer, Northampton General Hospital, who experienced no printer issues with the product change.

The recycled paper is 80gsm, which is the exact same quality as WHO120.

**Q**

**Do any other public sector organisations use this product?**

**A**

Recycled paper has been used in central government departments such as the Cabinet Office, Department for Work and Pensions, and HMRC for over 15 years.

NHS Scotland switched to using the recycled paper in 2011.

Additionally, Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust has run a successful trial and had no printer issues with the product change.

**Q**

**Do I need to change the printer settings?**

**A**

In general no special adjustments are required as most machines are calibrated to work on different mediums. However for optimal performance if the printer offers a recycled paper setting, you should select this as a default as it will aid smooth running.

**Q**

**Will the print quality be affected?**

**A**

No. As digital printing (Laser, Inkjet) are non-impact printing technologies, the print will not be negatively affected by using recycled paper.

Dry toner images generally will cover the surface totally as a layer which means no shine through will appear in common printing process.

**Q**

**Is the paper suitable for colour printing?**

**A**

Yes it is suitable for colour printing.

However it is worth noting the following recommendations:

- A presentation style paper is recommended for solid full colour printing.
- To achieve best print quality in Inkjet printing, colour should be adjusted to the lower brightness of the paper using different settings from the printer driver.

**Q**

**What are the environmental benefits?**

**A**

Switching from virgin to 100% recycled paper will have a positive impact on the environment as it is an ecologically sound alternative.

Here are some examples of sustainability statistics which show the comparative annual savings based on the 3,275,940 reams / 8,150 tonnes of virgin copier paper supplied into the NHS by NHS Supply Chain:

Resource	Resource Saving	Comparative Saving
Wood	24,485,754kgs of wood	16,600 European Spruce pine trees
Water	353,882,894 litres of water	141 Olympic size swimming pools
Energy kwh	63,117,834 kwh of energy	11,517 average family home energy consumption
CO2	5,222,429kgs of Co2	1,024 cars removed from the road a year or a Boeing 747 could fly for 6.87 days non-stop

**Q**

**Will you still have stock of current products available when the Copier Paper NCP is launched on 1 August?**

**A**

- Existing products will be available while stocks last.
- The NCP product will be available to order from 1 August 2018.

**Q**

**Do I need to make any system changes to update standing orders and favourite lists?**

**A**

A global update to standing orders, favourite lists and eDirect requirements will be completed centrally prior to launch to remove old products and replace them with the new agreed products.

**Q**

**Are the NPC codes changing?**

**A**

Yes, the new code for 80gsm recycled copier paper will be WHO264.

**Q**

**Are samples available?**

**A**

Yes, samples will be available. These can be ordered in the usual way.

**Q**

**What supply chain resilience can you guarantee if one of the suppliers has a supply issue?**

**A**

The NCP procurement process includes a range of due diligence activities to ensure there is supply chain resilience and sustainable continuity of supply to NHS customers. Both NHS Supply Chain and the suppliers have increased stock holding and, in the event of any supply issue, direct alternatives will be supplied, at point of order, at no extra cost to the trust.

**Q**

**What will happen if I choose to order directly from the supplier?**

**A**

NHS Improvement has been engaging with trusts directly over the expectation that they will support this national programme. Monitoring of trust spend will be in place through the national price benchmarking tool and, where a trust is not participating in the national savings programme, their actions will have to be justified.

**Q**

**Is there a risk that existing products will be delisted too soon?**

**A**

Delisted stock lines will be listed as “available whilst stock lasts”, any outstanding stock will still be available until stock has been depleted. You can continue to utilise your stocks of the current lines until these have also been depleted.

**Q**

**What impact will this have on any customer commitment discounts and retrospective rebates?**

**A**

In line with the recommendations of the Carter report there is a national strategy to deliver transparent pricing. There are therefore;

- no commitment discounts/ retrospective rebates
- no local commitment discounts/ retrospective rebates
- no facilitated commitment discount schemes

**Q**

**What do trusts do should there be any clinical or other issue with the product allocated to their trust?**

A

In the first instance please contact your Customer Services Advisor.

**Q**

**What if my trust is currently buying a similar product at a cheaper price?**

A

Benchmarking prices using NHSI's national price benchmarking tool PPIB, will highlight where a trust may be paying a cheaper local price. We would ask you to please notify your Account Manager of these instances in order that the situation can be addressed.

**Q**

**What support will be available to trusts during the implementation/conversion period to minimise the impact on current resources?**

A

Support will be available from your [Account Manager](#), and the successful suppliers on the NCP programme can provide you with product training and information if required.

**Q**

**Where can I get more detailed information?**

A

Please visit [www.supplychain.nhs.uk/ncp](http://www.supplychain.nhs.uk/ncp) for the latest information about NCP.

You can also contact your Account Manager or Customer Services Advisor.