

NHS Supply Chain Medical Technology Innovation Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)

Customer guide to the DPS call-off process

Introduction

The NHS Supply Chain Medical Technology Innovation Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) provides NHS organisations with a compliant route to access innovative products and technologies that may not yet be available through a national framework agreement.

This guide explains:

- What the DPS is
- How it differs from a framework agreement
- The customer journey and expected timescales
- What information NHS Supply Chain requires
- The governance and approval process
- What happens after an Expression of Interest is submitted

What is the DPS?

The Medical Technology Innovation DPS is a procurement route designed to support the adoption of innovative technologies.

Unlike a traditional framework agreement, it allows new suppliers to join at any time and simplifies the approval process. However, products are not automatically available to purchase upon award to the DPS. Instead, each customer requirement must be supported through an individual call-off process that complies with procurement regulations and DPS contract requirements.

The DPS enables NHS organisations to access innovative technologies while ensuring procurement remains compliant, transparent and fair.

How is the DPS different from a Framework Agreement?

Framework Agreement	Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)
Suppliers are awarded to a framework for defined products and services.	Suppliers are admitted to the DPS and can respond to individual customer requirements.
Customers can purchase directly from awarded suppliers using framework rules.	Each customer requirement requires a separate call-off process.
Pricing is often established through the framework tender.	Pricing is determined through a customer-specific pricing exercise.
Products are generally available to all eligible customers.	Contracts are created specifically for the interested customer(s).
Limited supplier entry during contract life.	New suppliers can join the DPS throughout its duration if they meet requirements.

Because the DPS is governed differently from a framework agreement, additional governance and contractual steps are required before an order can be placed.

The customer journey

Step 1 – Customer submits an Expression of Interest

Customers express an interest in purchasing an innovative product through the NHS Supply Chain DPS website.

What happens next?

The customer will receive immediate email confirmation that their request has been received, once they have submitted on the webpage.

<https://www.supplychain.nhs.uk/programmes/product-innovation-for-customers/dynamic-purchasing-system-dps-for-medical-technology-innovation/>

Step 2 – Statement of Requirements

Once an Expression of Interest has been reviewed, NHS Supply Chain will issue a Statement of Requirements to the Customer - this is normally within five working days.

Why is this needed?

Although some information may have already been supplied through the website, the Statement of Requirements:

- Provides additional information about the DPS call-off process
- Confirms that the customer's organisation wishes to proceed
- Provides an auditable record
- Enables NHS Supply Chain to undertake a pricing exercise on the organisation's behalf

The pricing exercise cannot begin until the completed Statement of Requirements has been received from the customer.

Step 3 – Customer authority to proceed

Once requirements have been confirmed, NHS Supply Chain receives formal authority from the customer to undertake the pricing exercise.

Why is this needed?

As the DPS operates differently from a framework agreement, NHS Supply Chain requires confirmation that:

- The organisation wishes to proceed
- The proposed contract term is acceptable
- The anticipated requirements are understood

Step 4 – Pricing exercise

NHS Supply Chain undertakes a pricing exercise with the relevant DPS supplier(s).

What happens?

The supplier is invited to respond to the customer's requirement, providing:

- Pricing
- Commercial terms
- Any supporting information

Typical timescale

Five working days for NHS Supply Chain to action followed by five working days for the supplier(s) to respond.

Step 5 – Customer review

NHS Supply Chain share the outcome of the pricing exercise with the customer.

Customer options

The customer may:

- Accept the proposed solution
- Request clarification
- Decline to proceed

At this stage customers can review:

- Pricing
- Contract duration
- Terms and conditions
- Any optional contractual clauses

Important note

Submission of an initial Expression of Interest and further Statement of Requirements does not commit the customer's organisation to placing an order.

Customers retain the option to decline participation if the proposed pricing, terms or conditions are not acceptable.

Step 6 – Call-Off Contract

If the customer wishes to proceed, a Call-Off Contract template is shared with the customer to review and completed in line with the guidance notes of the template document. NHS Supply Chain is not able to provide legal advice or support for this contract and the parties to the contract are advised to obtain their own legal advice.

The contract is reviewed and approved by:

- The customer organisation.
- The supplier.

The final draft of the contract should be shared with NHS Supply Chain who will circulate to both parties for signature through 'DocuSign'.

Typical timescale

Dependent on customer and supplier approval processes.

Step 7 – Product set-up and ordering

Where the product will be transacted through NHS Supply Chain systems:

- Internal product codes are created
- Ordering routes are established
- **Customer-specific** visibility is configured where required

This activity often runs concurrently with contract execution.

Outcome

The customer can place orders in accordance with the agreed contract.

Typical indicative timescales

Activity	Typical Timescale
Expression of Interest reviewed and Statement of Requirements issued to Customer	Up to 5 working days
Statement of Requirements completed	Customer dependent
Pricing exercise	10 working days
Customer review of pricing	Customer dependent
Contract preparation and approval	Customer and supplier dependent
Product set-up and ordering arrangements	Concurrent with contract completion

Total timeline

The overall timescale will vary depending on:

- Complexity of the requirement
- Customer response times
- Supplier response times
- Contract approval requirements

Customers with urgent requirements are encouraged to discuss expected timescales with NHS Supply Chain as early as possible.

Frequently asked questions

Does submitting an Expression of Interest commit my organisation?

No.

Submitting an Expression of Interest simply starts the process and allows NHS Supply Chain to understand your requirement.

Why do I need to complete a Statement of Requirements?

The Statement of Requirements:

- Provides governance and audit assurance
- Confirms authority to proceed
- Enables NHS Supply Chain to run a pricing exercise on your behalf
- Captures information not currently gathered through the website process

Can I provide indicative volumes only?

Yes.

Many innovative technologies are new to organisations and future demand may be uncertain. Estimated volumes can be used to support the pricing exercise.

Can contracts include termination clauses?

Yes.

DPS contracts contain optional provisions, including a termination for convenience clause where appropriate.

Why are timescales different from a framework agreement?

Because the DPS requires:

- A customer-specific pricing exercise
- A customer-specific contract
- Individual governance approvals

These additional steps ensure compliance with procurement regulations while maintaining flexibility for innovative products.

What improvements are being made?

Following customer feedback, NHS Supply Chain is implementing:

- Automatic acknowledgement emails following submission of an Expression of Interest.
- Clear confirmation that requests have been received.
- Published process guidance and expected timescales.
- Improved communication regarding next steps.
- Greater transparency of DPS governance and call-off processes.

These improvements aim to improve customer experience, support informed decision-making and provide greater visibility throughout the procurement journey.

Need further support?

If you have questions regarding the DPS process, expected timescales or your specific requirement, please contact the NHS Supply Chain DPS Team at DPSCustomerQueries@supplychain.nhs.uk who will be happy to guide you through the process.