

Healthcare Temporary GTIN Allocation for Suppliers

V1.0

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GS1NZ

This document is to be used by Suppliers who may need to use Temporary GTINs in order to be able to populate their items to the National Product Catalogue for use by New Zealand's DHB National Catalogue (DHB NC)

Background - What are temporary GTINs?

One of the data attributes required by the DHB National Catalogue is GTIN (Global Trade Item Number). The GS1 standards state that it is the responsibility of the brand owner to allocate this unique number to their products. The brand owner is the organisation that owns the trade item specifications and may be the manufacturer or supplier that manufactures the item in any country and sells it under its own brand.

When the DHB National Catalogue project was initiated, NZ distributors started the process of contacting their suppliers to request the brand owner GTIN. In some instances, they were advised that they either didn't have one or they would not supply one to their NZ customer. This put NZ based companies in an awkward position, where they were required to supply a GTIN for the imported product, but could not source this or arrange for the brand owner to assign them to the products they sold into the District Health Boards (DHBs).

As a result, the time it took to complete on boarding was slowed as GS1 had a process in place whereby the NZ supplier had to provide their supplier with a formal letter requesting the brand owner GTIN and then provide evidence that they were not going to provide it.

An interim process was put in place in consultation with Health Benefits Ltd, whereby GS1 New Zealand allocated the product a temporary GTIN from its own pool of numbers starting with 9422, to identify these products within the DHB National Catalogue. This resulted in local suppliers (not the brand owners) allocating GTINs to products they distributed. This change in approach was due to Health Benefits Ltd requiring the on boarding process to be completed faster.

The proviso was that suppliers kept requesting the brand owner allocate a GTIN themselves and once advised, replace the temporary GTIN with the brand owner GTIN in their catalogue.

Why is it important to migrate away from them?

The ideal from a GS1 standards point of view is to have one globally unique identification number for each product that is allocated by the brand owner. Allocation by a local supplier is not best practice.

The potential implications of temporary GTINs within the DHB National Catalogue are;

- the same product could have multiple temporary GTINs allocated to it due to multiple local distributors selling the same product into the DHBs
- Visibility around who is supplying which product from a procurement point of view is reduced.
- Integrity of the brand details can be negatively effected

What are the implications for NZ suppliers?

NZ suppliers will need to allocate time and resource to;

- contact their brand owners and request they provide the brand owner GTIN
- remove the temporary GTINs and re-enter all the data using the brand owner GTINs

Temporary GTIN Allocation – Procedure

The supplier needs to contact the GS1 NZ Implementation Specialist to notify them when obtaining a permanent GTIN from a Brand Owner is proving to be difficult.

GS1 NZ will assess the circumstances that the supplier is experiencing and will assist the supplier accordingly.

GS1 NZ will assist the supplier by contacting the GS1 Member Organization that the Brand Owner may be a member of to help facilitate obtaining the GTINs

If the Brand Owner is not currently a member of GS1, then the supplier who has the relationship with the Brand Owner are to contact them to explain why they require a GTIN for the items that they purchase from the Brand Owner.

Sample letter/email to use when contacting the brand owner - Appendix A

There are some situations where the supplier cannot obtain a GTIN from the Brand Owner and may need to use a Temporary GTIN

Situations/Examples where Temporary GTINs will be required

1. Brand owner does not provide the GTIN to the supplier – an example of this is a brand owner that provides only the GS1 Company Prefix to their distributor and expects the distributor to provide the rest of the GTIN. As the distributor is not the Brand Owner they cannot assign a GTIN to the product – hence the need for the supplier/distributor in NZ to use a Temporary GTIN in order to be able to load the item to the DHB NC
2. Brand owner uses HIBC codes - HIBCC is the Health Industry Business Communications Council, the primary standard-setting and educational organization for bar coding in the world of healthcare. Founded in 1983 by a consortium of national trade associations specifically to develop an approach to labeling that would fulfill the unique requirements of our industry. The Health Industry Bar Code (HIBC) Standard is the result of that effort. The HIBC is accepted by the FDA as the Unique Device Identifier. Brand owners using HIBCs may state that they do not need to provide a GTIN as the HIBC meets their needs and requirements. In this case, a NZ supplier will need to use a Temporary GTIN as they are not the brand own but need to include the item in the DHB NC
3. Brand owner refuses to provide or use GTINs – even after the supplier has requested this
4. DHB NC Supplier is delayed by the Brand Owner – due to mitigating circumstances such as:
 - Brand Owner will provide GTINs to meet the FDA-UDI requirements but that may not occur for 1-2 years depending on the types of products the Brand Owner provides
 - Brand Owner will provide GTINs however Brand Owner is going through a major system upgrade or replacement and wants to complete that project before moving onto the GTIN project.
 - Brand Owner will provide GTINs however Brand Owner is going through a major internal review of systems and processes and wants to complete this before moving onto the GTIN project

In these circumstances the DHB NC Supplier may choose not to provide item information until the Brand Owner can supply the GTIN, or a DHB NC supplier may choose to use a temporary GTIN because the delay is going to be a significant time frame.

When the supplier and GS1 NZ have exhausted all options to obtain the permanent GTIN from the Brand Owner, the supplier on consultation with the Implementation Specialist may decide that using a Temporary GTIN is the only way that the supplier to the DHB NC can include the item in the supplier catalogue.

The GS1 implementation specialist will maintain records of any communication with the Brand Owner that indicates that they are unwilling or unable to provide permanent GTINs for the supplier. This communication is maintained in the file saved to applicant Suppliers National Product Catalogue – Publisher (GS1net) Folder under Working Files

The following steps are to be used if the supplier is given the approval to go ahead with Temporary GTINs

1. Supplier is given the “Healthcare Temporary GTIN Application Form vx.x” (located on Shared Drive: S:\- Products, Solutions and Services\1. National Product Catalogue (GS1net) Service\4. User Guides and Cookbook\ - DHBNC specific\Temporary GTIN allocation) This is an Excel file.
2. The supplier then completes the form (aka. Product Vault Template) with their product details, the applicant’s details and the brand owner’s details.
3. Once the form has been completed this is then emailed to GS1NZ support at gs1net@gs1nz.org
4. The GS1 Implementation Specialist will then follow the internal process for allocating temporary GTINs and notify the supplier when this has been completed.
5. The supplier will then use these temporary GTINs to complete the Data Requirements for the items to be added to the DHB NC

Appendix A

Letter to use to contact a Brand Owner in order to obtain GTINs

Owing to timezones/languages etc, an email may be easier.

Company

Via email:

Dear Name [from Supplier **Company XXX**]

New Zealand

District Health Board National Catalogue

Company YYY is involved in a significant New Zealand healthcare initiative that requires providing accurate product information for use by all New Zealand public hospitals for purchasing. The initiative is known in New Zealand as the ***District Health Board National Catalogue*** (DHBNC) project and is administered by an organisation named **healthAlliance** (hA), in conjunction with New Zealand public hospitals.

The DHBNC is being used in New Zealand as a single product catalogue for all purchasing of all pharmaceuticals, medical devices and healthcare consumables used in New Zealand's public healthcare sector.

The catalogue uses GS1 global standards and is part of a global system known as the Global Data Synchronisation Network (GDSN) that is currently operating in many countries worldwide.

Company YYY has been requested by hA to supply product information for the use in the DHBNC to enable New Zealand hospitals to purchase their products. As such **Company YYY** is requesting your urgent assistance.

The DHBNC requires all products be identified using a *GS1 Global Trade Item Number* (GTIN). GTIN is sometimes referred to as a UPC, APN, EAN or TUN. Therefore, **Company YYY** is requesting you supply a list of all GTINs you currently supply us for all levels of packaging (i.e. consumer units, cartons etc).

Important Notes

- This request does not require **Company XXX** to physically 'barcode' any products.
- If **Company XXXs** products have HIBC identification numbers and/or barcodes assigned to them, a GTIN is still required.
- If **Company XXX** has product information in another GDSN compliant data pool, please advise us as this will simplify the DHBNC process in New Zealand.

Next steps

1. If **Company XXX** is a member of **GS1**, it is very likely that GTINs have been assigned to products already. In this situation, please provide this information in the following format.

GTIN	Internal Product Identifier	Product Description

2. If your organisation is not a member of **GS1**, you will need to:

- Contact GS1 in your country to discuss how to obtain GTINs¹.
- Allocate GTINs to your products and advise **Company YYY** as outlined above.

Thank you very much for your assistance in this matter. Please feel free to contact me should you require more information or require additional assistance.

Kind Regards,

[@Contact Name]

Company YYY

¹ Refer – <http://www.gs1.org/contact>

@ Name

@ Title

@ Email etc.

The GS1 System, including GS1net, is a set of global standards for identification, data capture (bar coding & radio frequency ID), electronic messaging (EDI & XML) and data synchronisation in New Zealand. It is administered by GS1 New Zealand, and is a not-for-profit membership-based organisation. GS1 New Zealand is one of 110 equivalent GS1 organisations located in various countries around the world. GS1 New Zealand is the only organisation authorised by GS1 Global Office to allocate and administer GS1 bar code numbers (Global Trade Item Numbers) in New Zealand.