



# Tape Validation Service Non EMIS Help Guide Using Special Delivery

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Every effort is made to ensure that your Egton documentation is up to date, but our commitment to constantly improve our software and systems means that there may have been changes since this document was produced

#### Associated documentation

QA027EG Accounts

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## 1 Introduction

Thank you for purchasing the Tape Validation Service from Egton.

Your backup is one of the most important areas of your clinical system. Although it does not relate directly to the day-to-day running of your practice, it does ensure that any lost data can be restored in the event of a system failure or catastrophe such as fire, flooding or vandalism. These occurrences are rare but it is better to have a successful backup that is never required, than to have a system failure or practice emergency and lose vital patient information.

The following information has been provided to help you maintain a smooth validation service by knowing exactly what you need to do in order for Egton to validate your backup tapes successfully. Please follow the instructions for preparing your tape carefully and ensure you have included all the requested information. Failure to do so may result in a delay in Egton validating your tape, or in some cases we may not be able to complete the validation at all.

We have also included some general advice and information regarding the ongoing maintenance and day-to-day upkeep of your backup tapes and drive, as well as providing answers to those questions we are most frequently contacted about.

In the event that you have a query that has not been addressed in this guide, please refer to the contact information at the back of this document.

## 2 The validation process

Below is a brief overview of Egton's Tape Validation Service, outlining what happens to your tape, once it is received by our Tape Validation Service team.

- n Your tape is placed into one of the tape drives on our servers to check that the data can be read and restored on a different drive and server other than your own. Whilst a tape may read and write correctly on its own backup tape drive, it may fail when loaded onto an alternative drive. This may mean that if your existing drive was destroyed, the data could not be restored on your replacement drive.
- n The integrity of your tape is then checked by running a piece of software specifically designed for the Tape Validation Service to do just that. This program then produces a report quoting figures that are specific to your surgery, thus checking the contents of your database.
- n If dummy patient details have been provided, we will access this record and provide details to you as further evidence of a valid, working system.
- n Once all of the above tests have been completed and the information has been collated, we compress all of your data and write this to optical media – either CD or DVD-ROM, dependent on the size of your database.
- n Your original tape is returned to you along with your optical disc (CD or DVD-ROM), report and screenshot via a traceable Special Delivery service.

## 3 Preparing your tape for validation

### 3.1 Tape selection

First, select the tape you will be sending to Egton for validation. This should be the backup tape from the day before yesterday, providing that backup was successful according to your system.

There have been a number of occasions where blank or brand new tapes still in their packaging have been sent into Egton for validation. Please take care to select the correct tape.

### 3.2 Setting up a dummy patient record

Before you send your tape to Egton for validation you will need to ensure a dummy patient has been created in your database. This enables us to access your clinical records securely without breaching the Data Protection Act.

Once you have added your dummy patient, please complete the Dummy Patient Form with the details.

If you already have a dummy or test patient set up in your database, there is no need to create another entry. Simply complete the form using your existing dummy patient details.

### 3.3 Label the tape

Please ensure you clearly label your backup tape with your correct customer reference number. Tapes that are not labelled cannot be validated for data protection reasons and suffer the risk of being lost.

### 3.4 Sending your tape to Egton

Once you have selected your tape and ensured that a dummy patient has been created, place it in the protective jiffy bag then into the silver 'postage paid on delivery' provided with all the other required documentation.

Take this package to the Post Office, ensuring that you have the accompanying letter (enclosed in your Introduction Pack) with you, should you encounter any problems. The silver special delivery envelope ensures next-day delivery, so make sure you use this at least one day before your scheduled validation date.

## **4 IMPORTANT required information**

### **4.1 Backup dates**

It is vital that you include details of your last backup, in the format dd/mm/yy.

Egton needs this in order to complete a full and thorough fault diagnosis should an error be found. Each time you complete a system backup, information is written to a log file. If an error is identified by Egton, we will ask you to contact your system supplier / hardware supplier so that they can look for any obvious errors or discrepancies that may be causing problem tapes.

### **4.2 Dummy patient data**

Please ensure you supply Egton with dummy patient information on each occasion you send in a tape. This information is required so that we can ensure patient data can be accessed on your database when it is read by another server. If a dummy patient record is not supplied, Egton cannot access your database, as we would be in breach of the data protection act.

### **4.3 Valid contact email address**

Please ensure you have notified us of the correct email address for the person responsible for your backup on a day-to-day basis. If this contact changes, please ensure Egton is updated with the new details. This is the only method Egton will use to contact you for updates or queries, and automated system reminders of your next backup date.

### **4.4 Practice compliments slip and customer reference number**

Please ensure that a current compliments slip containing your practice details is enclosed with your tape on every occasion a tape is submitted. Your compliments slip should clearly state your customer reference number, as should your backup tape.

## 5 Looking after your tapes and drive

The following is general information and advice about maintaining your tape drive and backup tapes to minimise the risk of problems occurring:

n **Allocate backup responsibility**

It is advisable to nominate a sole member of staff (and a deputy in their absence) who will be responsible for checking, changing and storing the backup tapes. This should avoid any confusion about whether the tape has been changed.

n **Use a daily backup log**

Use a paper backup log to keep a daily record of your backups and their status. This will ensure accurate records and good backup procedure as well as highlighting any faults as they occur.

n **Use the manufacturers recommended tapes**

It is recommended that you only use tapes that have been recommended by your drive manufacturer.

n **Tape rotation**

It is essential that tapes are used in rotation and the same tape is not used consecutively. Should an error occur and the same tape has been used, all data may be lost up until the last successful backup when a different tape was used. It is a good idea to have 2 sets of 'weeknight' tapes, alternated on a weekly basis. One set can then be kept on-site in a data-safe whilst the other is secured off-site preferably in an alternate Health Service building.

n **Backup history**

Check your backup history regularly. When correctly filled out, the backup log will provide informative details regarding backup performance. For example, a gradual increase in failures over time could suggest a deterioration of backup tapes; a tape failing on a weekly basis indicates a fault with that specific tape.

n **Clean the tape drive**

The main cause of backup failure is a build up of contaminants within the drive. It is therefore important to follow the correct procedures for regular use of the cleaning cartridge:

**DDS Tape Drives:** Hewlett Packard Surestore 2000, 6000, DAT8, DAT24 and DAT40 drives (this information can be found on the drive itself) should be cleaned at least once a week, and after every backup failure. If building work is being carried out use the cleaning tape every day both morning and evening.

**DLT & Ultrium Tape Drives:** The cleaning cartridge should be used once a month and when the indicator 'clean' light is on.

**NEVER** use swabs or other cleaning materials to clean your tape drive heads as these may damage the device. Write the date and your initials on the label of the cleaning cartridge box every time it is used.

n **Never leave a tape in the backup unit**

**Tape wear and tear is another common cause of backup failure. Never leave a backup tape or cleaning cartridge in the tape backup unit when it is not in use. Once your backup is complete, remove the tape as soon as possible and store it securely. Do not insert the replacement tape until as late as possible. This will maximise the life of the tape and reduce the amount of dust entering the tape drive mechanism.**

n **Storage**

**It is recommended that on-site tapes are stored in a “Data Safe”. This should protect them against fire, dust, humidity, magnetic fields and static. Please note that a “Fire Safe” is not the same thing and does not afford the same degree of protection. Tapes taken off-site should ideally be kept securely in another Health Service Building, as should the optical media copy (CD/DVD) that will be returned to you with your backup tape once validation has been completed.**

n **Tape Lifetime**

**Due to the crucial nature of patient data, all backup tapes must be replaced at regular intervals.**

**DDS Tape Drives: Tapes should be kept for no longer than a MAXIMUM of 6 months.**

**DLT & Ultrium Tape Drives: Tapes should be kept for no longer than a MAXIMUM of 18 months.**

## 6 General Do's and Don'ts

- ✘ DON'T force the tape into the tape mechanism.
- ✘ DON'T attempt to clean the tape or tape guides inside the cartridge.
- ✘ DON'T treat the cartridges roughly.
- ✘ DON'T stick extra labels onto the tape – this could cause the cartridge to jam in the tape drive.
- ✔ DO store cartridges safely in their plastic tape case when not in use.
- ✔ DO check your backup history; a gradual increase in backup failures over time suggests deterioration of backup tapes.
- ✔ DO allocate responsibility for the backup process at your practice.
- ✔ DO store copies of your database securely off-site at another Health Service building.

## 7 Frequently Asked Questions

Below you will find answers to the questions we are most frequently asked over the phone. We have tried to make this guide as comprehensive as possible, however if the information you need is not contained within this document, please do not hesitate to contact the TVS Customer Service Team on 0845 125 5525.

**Q.** *Why do we need to set up a dummy patient record?*

**A.** Dummy patients are required to enable the TVS Team to check the data during validation without breaching the Data Protection Act and Patient Confidentiality.

**Q.** *What is on the CD/DVD you have sent me with my validated tape?*

**A.** This is a copy of your database transferred onto optical media for safe keeping.

**Q.** *What do I do with the CD/DVD you have sent me with my validated tape?*

**A.** This needs to be locked away in a data safe, preferably away from the surgery in another Health Service building. This may be used in the event of an emergency or disaster.

**Q.** *Can I re-use my validated tape?*

**A.** Tapes can be re-used provided they are in good condition and have displayed no errors or faults when being validated.

**Q.** *What happens if there is an error or fault with my tape?*

**A.** If an error is detected the tape will be returned to you with either a red warning sticker on the tape box advising not to reuse the tape again or a yellow caution sticker highlighting the fact the tape has failed. We will also include a letter explaining the problem and asking for another tape to be submitted. If it has failed due to a know error that can be fixed we will escalate the issue for fixing before we request a replacement tape. If your tape it returned with the red warning sticker on we strongly advise that this tape be taken out of rotation and replaced immediately as continued use could have adverse effects on your backup drive and the reliability of all your backup tapes.

**Q.** *When is my next validation due?*

**A.** Validation dates are issued when the contract is taken out. Reminders are sent back with each validation, and a reminder email is automatically sent to the email address you provided us with 5 days before your next tape is due into Egton. Dates can also be confirmed by calling TVS Customer Service Team with your customer reference number on 0845 125 5525.

**Q.** *How do I renew the contract?*

**A.** Your TVS contract will be automatically renewed (unless you request otherwise). A month before the renewal date you should receive a letter stating the dates for the next years' contract. If this does not happen, please contact the Egton Sales Team on 0845 1 245 245.

***How do I upgrade the number of validations I have per year?***

**A.** Send a signed fax on your practices' letter-headed paper stating your customer reference number and the number of validations you would like to upgrade to, to 0845 1 245 246. We will do the rest.

**Q.** ***How do I send my next tape into Egton?***

**A.** You should package your tape safely in the protective jiffy bag provided and then into the silver 'postage paid on delivery' envelope that was sent back with your last validated tape.

**Q.** ***Which tape should I send in for validation?***

**A.** You should send the tape immediately prior to your last backup, i.e. the day before yesterday (providing this was successfully backed-up). This is so that you have your most recent backup on hand should it be needed.

**Q.** ***Why haven't I received an envelope and sticker?***

**A.** Every care is taken to return an envelope and special delivery sticker with your last validated tape. These are often misplaced, especially if your validations are months apart. Please take care to store this somewhere safe. Additional envelopes and stickers can be obtained by contacting Egton Customer Services on 0845 125 5525.

**Q.** ***I have missed my validation date; can I still send my tape in?***

**A.** If your tape is less than 3 weeks late (15 working days), yes you can still send your tape in to Egton however it may not be returned within the standard 5 days. This is because it will be fitted in around those tapes that were sent in on time. We are sorry, but tapes received after the 3-week limit cannot be validated and payment is not refunded under the Terms and Conditions of the contract.

## 8 Useful contact details

### **Egton**

**Stafford House**

**Unit 2 Leathley Road Industrial Estate**

**Leeds**

**West Yorkshire**

**LS10 1BG**

**Fax: 0845 1 245 246**

**Web: [www.egton.net](http://www.egton.net)**

**email: [mail@egton.net](mailto:mail@egton.net)**

### **Egton Customer Services**

**Tel: 0845 125 5525**

**email: [EgtonCustService@egton.net](mailto:EgtonCustService@egton.net)**

### **Egton Sales**

**Tel: 0845 1 245 245**

**email: [EgtonSalesTeam@egton.net](mailto:EgtonSalesTeam@egton.net)**

**email: [EgtonSalesAdmin@egton.net](mailto:EgtonSalesAdmin@egton.net)**