



Medical  
Research  
Council

# Staff Bulletin 595

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## Pensions Update

### **BenPal**

Mercer has undertaken a relaunch of its secure service platform, BenPal, and written to those members who did not register for online access when the site was launched originally in 2020.

Mercer has sent letters on Scheme headed paper, which provide details of how to activate a BenPal account. The deadline for activation is 23 December 2021.

The BenPal website will provide individual member access to the data held by Mercer using secure connectivity. Additional functionality is in the process of being developed, which will make the site more interactive.

The existing website at [www.mrcps.co.uk](http://www.mrcps.co.uk) will continue to be available for general information about the Scheme.

### **Pledge to combat pension scams**

The Trustee Board of the MRC Pension Scheme, in conjunction with Mercer, has already signed up to the initiative launched by the Pensions Regulator to combat pension scams, which is in addition to the stringent written requirements already in place when dealing with transfer-out requests.

New government regulations, which are due to come into effect from tomorrow, will introduce legal restrictions on the right to transfer pension benefits and require Trustee Boards and Scheme Administrators to pause or stop a transfer altogether if there are causes for concern, which are categorized under the new regulations as red and amber warning signs.

Members should be extremely wary of any unsolicited approach to transfer benefits out of the MRC Pension Scheme.

### **AVC statements**

Annual AVC statements have now been issued by Mercer and were posted to home addresses earlier this month.

**Jim Clerkin FPMI**  
**Director of MRC Group Pensions**