

South East Optometry Commissioning Team Newsletter - August 2021

SEOCT 03/21

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the August 2021 edition of the Optometry Team's quarterly newsletter. This quarterly newsletter includes articles from the South East Eye Care Pathway Improvement Programme, South East Optometry Commissioning Team, our Clinical Advisers, PCSE, and Guide Dogs - new programmes for children and young people with sight loss.

Reporting Changes Affecting Your GOS Contract

There is a contractual obligation to inform us via the NHS Business Services Authority, whether by email to nhsbsa.pao-contractadmin@nhs.net or post (see attached contact sheet), of any change affecting your GOS contract as listed below:

- Change of days or hours that you provide GOS
- Change of contact details, including email, telephone number/fax number of the contractor
- Relocation of premises or adding additional premises*
- Change of Registered Office for corporate bodies
- Notification of changes of Director/Secretary/CEO in a corporate body
- Changes to the contractor status e.g. individual (sole trader) / partnership / corporate body
- Changes in partnerships or limited liability partnerships, which includes changes to the members of the partnership or death in service of a partner
- Change of bank details / authorised signatories
- Termination of GOS contract

*If you are relocating premises, please contact us before the moving date, giving us plenty of notice to arrange a practice visit. In preparation for issuing a contract variation, all new premises must be inspected by NHS England prior to continuing to provide GOS. Contract variations will be issued to practices that are fully compliant with the Equality Act i.e. a patient in a wheelchair needs to be able to enter the practice and be able to access the testing room. The QIO checklist covers all aspects of the contract and will assist you in preparing for the practice inspection. The checklist can be found at www.qualityinoptometry.co.uk

You must notify NHS England South East Optometry Team by email to england.southeastoptometry@nhs.net of the following changes:

- Changes in regular performers
- 24-hour retirements (OMP contractors only)
- Planned or unplanned closures
- Suspension of GOS services, such as suspension for refurbishment or holiday
- Notification within 7 days of a change to your personal circumstances, such as a GOC investigation, conviction, charge of an offence, or insolvency

Please remember, it is important to notify a change in any of the above two sections. In some cases, the failure to do so could result in a contract breach notice being issued.

The South East Eye Care Pathway Improvement Programme

The SE regional Eye Care programme covers six ICS geographies namely Frimley, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire, Surrey Heartlands, Kent and Medway, Sussex, and Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The regional programme is tasked to respond to NHSEI national guidance relating to Eye Care Recovery and the transformation of care pathways which includes subspecialties within this field of care.

Our aims:

- People will be able to consistently access quality eye care services in a timely way, as close to home as possible, to prevent and reduce harm resulting from the impact of sight loss.
- We will support systems to recover and to reduce backlogs through improved theatre and whole pathway productivity.
- People suffering from visual issues will be supported, treated and managed based on best practice pathways which promote self-management where appropriate, and offer physical and psychological support based on the individual.
- We will reduce the impact of health inequalities.

Our key progress to date: Set up to implementation



Governance and structures:

- National guidance on High Volume Low Complexity (HVLC) pathways published
- Appointment of clinical lead & Regional [EyeCare](#) team established
- Good progress made to establish system eyecare leads in 5 out of 6 systems
- Development of SE overarching programme plan
- Agreement to appointment a SE optometry clinical lead

Engagement with key stakeholders: Understanding the current state

- HVLC Programme launch event for Eyecare held on 29 May 2021
- Engagement with ICS Leads underway to establish local progress and appointment of clinical leads
- Listening exercises underway with each ICS and understanding areas where support is required
- Forum established with LOC and
- Equality Impact Assessment for [EyeCare](#) programme commenced

Moving forward

- All ICSs to deliver complete plans as far as possible to Vantage to produce single regional plan
- SE theatre productivity dashboard available to all trust providers with training programme
- Developing plans with Health Education England on funded workforce modelling initiative for end to end pathways
- 5. Regional programme of learning events relating to hot topic in development.

Our next steps and how to get involved

- Recruitment of an Optometry Clinical Lead (Band 8d, 1 PA per week).
- Eye Care Board meeting 10th August
- Meetings with LOC and LEHN Chairs
- Working with ICS teams to develop plans to address priorities

You can access all latest national updates on the FutureNHS collaboration site (just sign up and join the Eye Care Hub workspace) <https://future.nhs.uk/>
Please contact us for more details or to discuss how you can be involved via england.southeasteyecare@nhs.net

Patient Signatures on GOS Forms

The existing temporary measure to help limit the transmission of COVID-19 by suspending the need for patients to sign ophthalmic forms is extended until 31 August 2021. This means that “COVID 19” should continue to be entered in place of a patient signature on all GOS forms until 31 August 2021. To avoid claims being rejected, remember to select whether the signatory would be the patient, patient’s parent or patient’s carer or guardian if signatures were being captured and record their name and address if it is not the patient who would be signing.

Making Reasonable Adjustments - Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010 you must make reasonable adjustments to enable people with a protected characteristic to access your services. The protected characteristics include age and disability. You therefore need to consider how you provide services to people who are unable to access fixed equipment – for example people who are in a wheelchair, or people who are unable to reach the slit lamp.

Examples of reasonable adjustments would include having a hand held tonometer to use if you need to measure the intra-ocular pressure on someone who is unable to reach the chin rest of a fixed piece of equipment, and having alternative methods of examining the internal and external eye of someone who is unable to reach the slit lamp.

It is not appropriate to direct patients to domiciliary services if you do not have the equipment to examine them. You cannot submit a GOS1 for payment until you have completed the sight test.

The following link outlines PHE guidance for making reasonable adjustments for people with learning disabilities:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eye-care-and-people-with-learning-disabilities/eye-care-and-people-with-learning-disabilities-making-reasonable-adjustments#adjustments-at-an-individual-level> Public Health England. Guidance: *Eye care and people with learning disabilities: making reasonable adjustments* (Published 27 January 2020)

How to Avoid PPV Reclaims

The NHS Business Services Authority has been conducting post-payment verification services for NHS England and NHS Improvement. Significant reclaims have been made, so we thought it would be helpful to highlight some common areas where these may occur so that you can ensure that you only claim for what is appropriate.

Date of last sight test. It is important that this is entered on both the GOS1 and the patient record and both are the same date. If the last sight test was in the same practice, make sure the dates correspond. This not only helps to justify why a sight test is needed, but also helps justify clinical decision making as to whether changes found since the last sight test are clinically significant (e.g. to justify an early recall or referral). If the actual date is not known, estimate the month and year. You should make sure that the information that is entered on the GOS forms and the record is consistent throughout!

Clinical reason for early sight test. If an early sight test is undertaken, the clinical reason for this should be clear from the record (as well as a code being put on the back of the GOS1 if it is shorter than the MoU frequencies – it also helps if the code used is included on the patient record). If the patient has simply broken their spectacles, or fancies a new pair, and is having no problems, this

does not necessitate an early sight test. If you see a patient and decide it is clinically necessary to recall them early, you should put a note of this on the record (including reasons) to help the follow-on practitioner understand your reasoning, as otherwise it puts the follow-on practitioner in a difficult position when the patient returns as requested.

Small prescriptions and small changes in prescription. If a small prescription or small change in prescription is found, you should carefully consider whether this will make a difference to the patient's symptoms. Factors to be considered would include: whether the patient wears existing specs with a similar small prescription (if not, then there is unlikely to be a clinical reason for changing them as they are unlikely to be of clinical benefit); whether there is a significant change in VA with the new prescription; and whether the change is reasonable bearing in mind the patient's clinical circumstances and their symptoms (e.g. an increase in minus is unlikely to help reading in a presbyopic patient and a 0.50 DS change will have less impact in a patient with 6/36 best acuity than in someone with better acuity). Remember, that if it is less than 2 years since the patient's last pair, they are not eligible for a GOS3 to be issued unless there is a clinical change in prescription. If the patient is new to the practice, and brings their old spectacles with them, you should measure and record the prescription of their old spectacles to ascertain whether or not there is a clinically significant change in prescription. If they do not bring their specs with them, you may decide to postpone the decision as to whether (or what) to prescribe until they bring their specs into the practice, or you ascertain what they were prescribed by contacting the previous practice. This can be helpful in avoiding you giving them exactly the same as the specs that they are unhappy with!

GOS3. Ensure that, if the patient needs reading spectacles, this is noted in the 'reading' area of the prescription, not in the distance area.

GOS4. It is important to give a full reason for the repair or replacement on the patient record, so that this can be justified if questioned. Remember, for adults, the reason for the request must at least map onto the conditions that would be considered.

If you have any queries on this, or need advice on specific situations, you can contact our Clinical Advisers at: england.southeastoptometry@nhs.net

PCSE: CET Claim Window

The CET Claims window is open from 1 July to 31 October. All CET claims need to be submitted via the PCSE Online portal – the online process is quick and easy.

How to submit a CET Claim:

As a reminder, Performers need to log into PCSE online and create and sign their CET claim first then the contractor signatory signs and submits the Performer's CET claim. If you need any help you can refer to our quick and easy guide on the CET claim submission process, which can be accessed [here](#), or watch our short [YouTube video](#).

If you have forgotten your PCSE Online log in, just click on 'forgotten password' on the [log in page](#) and you will be sent a password reset by email.

If you need any help accessing PCSE Online you can get in touch with the team at pcse.optomengagement@nhs.net

PCSE: Online GOS Claiming

Any contractor who has yet to migrate to electronic submissions will receive full support from PCSE: [Ophthalmic Payments - Primary Care Support England](#)

There is a series of You Tube videos that walkthrough submitting different types of GOS forms via PCSE Online: [Katrina Explains PCSE Online for Ophthalmic Payments - YouTube](#)

Help with patient GOS eligibility queries

If you have questions about help with patient entitlement to receive GOS or any other health costs you can call the Help with Health Costs helpline on **0300 330 1343**, the phone is usually answered immediately and they will advise you on all aspects of entitlement.

Domiciliary

There has been a recent concern (last 3 months) in the north of England about a domiciliary contractor using aggressive behaviour in the way they have approached care homes to have their residents tested. They have been cold calling at people's house and attending sheltered accommodation trying to apply pressure to let them test all their residents. There are also reports of the misuse of NHS lanyards giving the impression of being from the NHS.

These incidents are being investigated by the NHSE Central Team to see if this is a local isolated case, or if there are similar activities happening elsewhere.

If you have been made aware of similar incidents, please email ENGLAND.southeastoptometry@nhs.net

Guide Dogs - My Time to Play

This is an exciting new programme for 0-4 year olds with sight loss. The programme is designed to provide the kind of early intervention with very young children that can have a positive lifetime impact, as well as provide information, support, and networking opportunities for parents.

The programme is run by our habilitation specialists, and focuses on five key areas of the child's development:

- Concept development
- Sensory skills
- Fine and gross motor skills
- Self-help and independence
- Communication skills.

This free service will help children with sight loss aged from birth to four to develop a broad range of skills through play in a group setting, with each of the seven sessions based around a sensory story and including songs, movement, and related activities. The programme is currently online only, but some regions including Kent, East Sussex and West Sussex will be offering in-person sessions from the autumn.

More information on the programme can be found on our website, alongside a range of complementary resources. The link is as follows: <https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/getting-support/help-for-children-and-families/early-years-development-and-habilitation/>.

If you know of someone who might benefit from this service, please ask them to call us on 0800 781 1444 to sign up. Alternatively, please feel free to copy this email to any relevant members of your network who you think might be interested in this new service.

For a limited time, Guide Dogs are offering iPads to children with a vision impairment aged 3-18, while secondary school-age children may choose an iPhone instead. The devices have excellent accessibility features built-in, and online guides and tutorials will be provided to help them get started and to ensure that they know how to stay safe online. The devices will be completely free of charge, with the only requirement being proof of vision impairment.

You can find more details of Tech for All, including how to apply, at www.guidedogs.org.uk/techforall. If you require further information or would like to know more about our services for adults, children and young people please do get in touch.

Sarah Spencer, Services Marketing Officer

Please note that my working days are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday (am).

Mobile: 07785 649405 Guide Line: 0800 781 1444

Every hour, another person in the UK goes blind. When someone loses their sight, the charity Guide Dogs is here to make sure they don't lose their freedom as well.

Sending Post to NHS England Offices

The NHSEI South East Optometry Team remind you not to post any correspondence, but to email us: ENGLAND.southeastoptometry@nhs.net Our details can be found in the attached South East Region contact Information.

NHS England and NHS Improvement South East Eye Health Information for Professionals

We have updated our NHSEI SE Eye Health Information for Professionals webpages:

Hampshire/IOW:

[NHS England and NHS Improvement South East » Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Eye Health Information](#)

Kent, Surrey and Sussex:

[NHS England and NHS Improvement South East » Kent Surrey Sussex Eye Health Information](#)

We are working towards including a webpage for the Thames Valley area.

Best wishes,

**South East Optometry Commissioning Team
NHS England and NHS Improvement - South East Region**

e: england.southeastoptometry@nhs.net

w: www.england.nhs.uk and www.improvement.nhs.uk