

## NHS England - South East Optometry Team Newsletter – September 2022

**Dear Colleagues,**

Welcome to the September 2022 edition of the NHS England - South East Optometry Commissioning Team's quarterly newsletter. We would have usually issued this edition in August, but due to the summer hiatus, we pushed the newsletter back a month.

### **In this edition:**

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### **South East POD (Pharmacy Optometry Dental) delegation to ICBs**

From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022, Integrated Care Boards (ICB) in the South East took on delegated responsibility for POD primary care services. Whilst the overall responsibility for POD services has moved to the ICBs, the NHSE SE POD Teams are continuing to undertake this work in their current roles and remain as NHSE South East employees. Please note, our service remains unchanged as does our contact details: [England.southeastoptometry@nhs.net](mailto:England.southeastoptometry@nhs.net)

For further information on your ICB please visit their respective websites:

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West ICB: [Home | BOB ICB](#)

Surrey Heartlands: [Home - ICS \(surreyheartlands.org\)](#)

Kent and Medway ICB: [Home :: NHS Kent and Medway \(icb.nhs.uk\)](#)

Hampshire IOW: [Integrated Care Board :: Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICS \(hantsiowhealthandcare.org.uk\)](#)

Frimley ICB: [NHS Frimley - Home \(icb.nhs.uk\)](#)

Sussex: [Sussex Health & Care and NHS Sussex \(ics.nhs.uk\)](#)

## When is an eye examination a 'sight test', and why is it important?

*(Dr Susan Blakeney, Optometric Adviser, NHS England - South East)*

We are sure that by now you all realise that when filling in the date of the last sight test on the GOS1 form this relates to the date of the last sight test, not the date of the last GOS sight test. As such, if you recall a patient every two years, and they come in to see you in between this time for a private sight test, they are not entitled to another GOS sight test for another two years unless clinical circumstances dictate otherwise.

I am sure we have all had patients in who are concerned about the health of their eyes, despite you reassuring them that they are likely to be fine. These patients may ask to have an eye examination before they are due for their next sight test and are insistent that they would like you to 'check their eyes', and are happy to pay for this. The difficulty with you doing a private sight test in these circumstances is that it will interfere with the patient's eligibility for GOS services (sight tests and vouchers), and it makes life much simpler if you can therefore avoid doing a private 'sight test', and seek to reassure the patient in an alternative manner.

The sight test is defined in s.36(2) of the Opticians Act, and is roughly defined as a refraction with intent to prescribe an optical appliance (if needed). When you perform a sight test you have a statutory obligation to do other tests (such as an internal and external examination of the patient's eyes), BUT you can do these examinations without having to refract the patient and perform a 'sight test'.

Many of us are used to doing these needs led examinations as part of a Minor Eye Conditions Service (MECS) or CUES (COVID Urgent Eye Service), and the College of Optometrists has updated its Guidance for Professional Practice to now have separate sections on 'The routine eye examination ('sight test')', and 'The needs led examination' to help with this distinction. So, to summarise, you can do an eye examination without a refraction, but you cannot do a refraction (with intent to prescribe) without an eye examination, because this then becomes a sight test which imposes statutory requirements on you to do additional tests.

So – what do you do if your patient, having been seen by you one year ago, presents at your door asking for another eye examination even though you put them down for a two year recall and they are not having any problems with their eyes? One way to manage this is to see the patient, and do everything that is needed to reassure them that their eyes are healthy, but not to refract them. This is then a private eye examination, rather than a sight test, and does not fetter the patient's entitlement to a GOS funded sight test in another year's time. It is up to your professional judgement as to what your private examination includes, but it may include VA and/or pinhole, fundus examination, IOP, visual fields, and whatever other examinations you feel are appropriate. You should make it clear on the clinical record that this is NOT a 'sight test', and that the patient should be recalled two years from the date of their last sight test. Job done.

## **‘What Good Looks Like’ - Record Keeping Assessment Matrix** (Optometric Advisers, NHS England - South East)

“As optometric advisers we see a lot of records, and often get asked what we are looking for in a record. We have therefore put the following guidance together to help contractors and performers know the sort of thing we are looking for when we look at clinical records using the Quality in Optometry template.”



Record keeping  
assessment matrix FIN

We hope this is helpful. If you have any comments, suggestions or questions please email: [England.southeastoptometry@nhs.net](mailto:England.southeastoptometry@nhs.net)

### **Changes that affect your GOS contract**

There is a contractual obligation to inform NHSBSA: [nhsbsa.pao-contractadmin@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsa.pao-contractadmin@nhs.net) 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 and telephone number
- 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
- Contractor status changes 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
- Termination of GOS contract

If you are relocating premises, please contact NHSBSA before the moving date, giving them plenty of notice to arrange a practice visit. In preparation for issuing a contract variation, all new premises must be inspected 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](http://www.qualityinoptometry.co.uk)

If you need to request a change to your bank account, please contact NHSBSA [nhsbsa.pao-contractadmin@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsa.pao-contractadmin@nhs.net). You will be asked to complete a declaration of banking details form, to be signed by all directors, partners or Individuals party to the contract. The South East Optometry Team will apply to Shared Business Services (SBS) for a new financial reference code and, once complete, we will inform PCSE to make future GOS payments to your new bank account. Please be aware that the process can take several weeks. In the interim, please continue to submit your GOS claims as normal and **do not close down your old bank account** until you receive confirmation that we have completed your request.

## Reporting other changes affecting your GOS contract

You must notify NHSE - South East Optometry Team by email 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 breach notice being issued.

## CET Claims

PCSE's CET claims window is now open and will run until Monday 30 November 2022. This year, all CET claims will need to be submitted via the [PCSE Online portal](#). The online process is quick and easy, and will improve the overall service, from claim submission to final payment: [The CET window is now open - Primary Care Support England](#)

The South East Optometry Team cannot answer CET payment related questions, please direct your queries to PCSE's Customer Support Centre: 0333 014 2884.

## NHS General Ophthalmic Services GOS 4 pre-authorisation help

NHSBSA has published guidance to help ophthalmic contractors with GOS 4 pre-authorisation requests to repair or replace a patient's glasses. The article covers what is a GOS 4 voucher, how to check your patient qualifies and how to get pre-authorisation: [Under the Lens: Pre-authorising your GOS 4 vouchers](#)

## 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: **0300 330 1343**.

## NHS England - South East Eye Health Information for Professionals

The NHS England - South East Eye Health Information for Professionals webpage incorporates guidance for our optometry professionals and their teams: [NHS England — South East » South East Region Eye Health](#)

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