

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

**Dear Colleagues,**

Welcome to the December 2022 edition of the NHS England - South East Optometry Commissioning Team's quarterly newsletter.

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### **Record keeping**

During some of our optometric advisers practice visits, it has become apparent that not all records comply with the GOC Standard 8.2.7. This came into force along with the other GOC standards in April 2016, and states that the records must, as a minimum record.... 'Details of all those involved in the optical consultation, including name and signature, or other identification of the author.'

If colleagues help you by doing some pre-screening tests it is therefore important that you consider how you are going to record this (i.e. who did what tests) so that you comply with the GOC Standards. (*South East optometric advisers*)

If you have any queries regarding this issue, please contact the South East Optometry Team and one of our optometric advisers will get back to you.

### **New optician profiles launch**

In November we circulated information about the [NHS website](#) which will launch new optician profiles during the week starting 12 December 2022. A new NHS sight test service finder will replace the current optician service finder.

A new domiciliary service finder will also be launched in early 2023, to help people who cannot visit a high street optician. The new profiles and finders are part of research to continuously improve the [NHS website](#).

Your contact information will be transferred onto your new profile automatically, during the week starting 12 December 2022. You do not need to do anything.

## **How optician profiles are changing**

The new optician profiles will:

- improve how we meet the needs of patients
- support mobile and tablet devices
- meet modern accessibility standards

The new profiles will display your organisation name, address and contact information. They will indicate if you provide NHS sight tests, domiciliary services, or both. Information currently edited using the NHS website profile editor will no longer show on the profile. This includes service descriptions, opening times and staff information. This will avoid information being duplicated across the [NHS website](#) and your website.

## **What happens next**

Once the new optician profiles are live, your login details for the [NHS website](#) profile editor and the NHS Profile Manager will be removed. If you have any queries about the launch of your new profile, email [nhswebsite.servicedesk@nhs.net](mailto:nhswebsite.servicedesk@nhs.net). [NHS website](#) will contact you with more information nearer the time.

## **Applying for a new NHSmail or Egress account**

This service is managed by National Administration Service (NAS). GOS contractors with up to 10 practices can apply for NHSmail via the online portal below and be managed centrally through the NAS; a dedicated team that perform local administrator functions. For more information on how to set up a new NHS mail account please go to:

<https://support.nhs.net/knowledge-base/registering-optometrists/>

GOS practices affiliated to GOS contractors holding more than 10 contracts (including their franchisees and joint venture practices) might not be able to set up a new NHSmail account.

However, you need to be able to send emails and documents securely, particularly letters to GPs and colleagues working in secondary care. You can apply to set up an Egress account: [GOS contractors can apply for an NHS Egress account | NHSBSA](#)

## User account changes to NHSmail

NHSmail users in optometry practices are strongly advised to regularly log in to their accounts. NHS Digital will be making changes to the NHSmail account lifecycle from early December 2022 to address the security risk to the platform caused by inactive accounts. Both the 'active' and 'inactive' periods are being reduced to 30 days and accounts that remain unused during this period will become eligible for deletion after 60 days. During this time, users have a further 30 days to get their account restored before it is deleted permanently.

If you are going on long term leave, please ask the shared mailbox owner to mark your account as disabled - this stops them being deleted for 18 months. When you return you must ask for it to be re-enabled. If you are having issues with your NHS mail account, there is help available through a dedicated optometry FAQ: [NHSmail frequently asked questions \(FAQs\) for users managed by the National Administration Service \(NAS\) – NHSmail Support](#)

## Free CPD sessions for dispensing opticians

The NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) is offering dispensing opticians in England one free point towards their Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Dispensing opticians can sign up to one of three free CPD sessions, run by the NHSBSA's clinical advisors this November and December.

Each virtual session will cover the appropriate use of re-test codes and the frequency of sight test recalls. For more information and to book a place on one of the online sessions, visit NHSBSA webpage: [Free CPD events for dispensing opticians - November and December 2022 | NHSBSA](#)

There are two sessions remaining in December:

- **Monday 5 December at 12:30pm**
- **Tuesday 13 December at 8:30am**

## 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.

### 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 Optometry Commissioning Team

e: [england.southeastoptometry@nhs.net](mailto:england.southeastoptometry@nhs.net) | w: [www.england.nhs.uk](http://www.england.nhs.uk)