

Optometry Bulletin

This bulletin is being sent to all General Ophthalmic Service Contractors across the South West. If you have any questions or wish to provide feedback, please e-mail our generic email account: england.optometricsouthwest@nhs.net

March 2019

1. General Ophthalmic Services Eye Examinations

Following our newsletter, (Christmas 2018), relating to the frequency of eye examinations and what can and cannot be claimed under the GOS, we would like remind you that GOS sight testing is intended to be provided for adults on a routine two-year basis. There are valid reasons why an adult could require a sight test at a shorter interval, it's the responsibility of the optometrist performing the sight test to clearly record the reason (and early sight test code as per national guidance below). Children may be seen more frequently based on their age and clinical needs which again must be recorded.

Here is a quick reference guide: http://www.opticalconfederation.org.uk/downloads/Vouchers-at-a-Glance_June2018_Final.pdf

Here is the Department of Health

guidance: <https://fodo.com/downloads/GOS/Frequency%20of%20Sight%20Tests/Frequency%20of%20Sight%20Tests%20-%20Department%20of%20Health%20letter.pdf>

Here is the College of Optometrists Routine Eye Exam and frequency of sight test

guidance: <https://guidance.college-optometrists.org/guidance-contents/knowledge-skills-and-performance-domain/the-routine-eye-examination/#open:68,69,70>

2. Ensuring that the patient is entitled to an NHS GOS sight test (point of service checks)

It is always better to make enquiries as to the patient's eligibility for GOS before they arrive for their appointment. This can eliminate embarrassing conversations at the reception desk especially if the conversation could be overheard by other patients. Under GDPR this of course should never actually happen. Sometimes it not until the patient has undergone pre-screening and is called into the consulting room that it is established that the patient is not eligible for a GOS sight test.

It is appreciated that this issue has potentially increased with the onset of on-line appointment bookings, centralised telephone call/booking centres and walk in patients being generated from 'A' board advertising etc. Please ensure that as far as possible the patient and the practice know exactly what sort of test they will be having and whether it will be covered by the GOS.

With the increasing number of enhanced services in many areas it is even more important to establish what help from the NHS is available and many patients are becoming increasingly confused. For example, in an area with a Minor Eye Condition (MECS) scheme or an Acute Community Eyecare Scheme (ACES) or a glaucoma scheme of post operation cataract scheme a

patient may be able to access these schemes under the NHS via the CCG's enhanced services, but they may not be able to access the GOS part of the NHS.

3. Confirming eligibility for GOS (GOS forms 1, 3 and 6.) Evidence not seen roundel

Please remember you should not be putting a cross in the 'evidence not seen' roundel unless you have made a reasonable attempt to confirm the entitlement being claimed by the patient. You *must* ask the patient for evidence of their eligibility for the benefit being claimed. If the patient is unable to produce the evidence, then at that point you may put a cross in the 'evidence not seen roundel'.

4. Newly qualified optometrists

Just a reminder that as soon as a pre-registered optometry student becomes fully qualified and obtains a full 01- GOC number then from that day they are no longer pre-registered and do not have a supervisor.

There have been some instances where a supervisor has continued to sign GOS application forms on behalf of the now X pre-registered student. This should not be happening, and the X student should not undertake any GOS work until they have been accepted onto NHS England's Ophthalmic Performers List and have received their own OPL number.

The process of obtaining an OPL number will take up to 12 weeks. The student Optometrist may apply, in advance of their GOC registration, for an OPL number on the assumption that they will hopefully pass their OCSE's.

5. GOS 1 and 3 forms completion

We are aware that some practices are completing the voucher type boxes on the GOS 1 and 3 forms as per the following examples: -

A+A/E.

A+B/E

B+B/F

C+C/G

This may be because the specific practice software prints the forms in this way. To a qualified person it is usually possible to find out what has been prescribed by looking at the pricing details on the GOS 3 voucher form, but non-optimally qualified administration staff may well find it difficult to work out exactly what has been prescribed. (single visions or bi/multi-focals).

It becomes even more confusing when tints and prisms are also prescribed. If your practice operates this sort of system please can you ensure that you delete the non-applicable letters before submitting the forms for payment.

6. Avoidance of Doubt Letter - Examining Clinically Challenging Patients

The attached letter was circulated to all practices, by email at the end of February. We have attached another copy just in case you missed seeing this.

Notes regarding the attached letter:

1. As many patients may not be able to co-operate and/or results could be very variable it may be difficult to get any form of accurate auto refraction reading. It would therefore be expected that manual retinoscopy procedure would be undertaken. This would also apply to the testing children. Children may also require a cycloplegic examination.
2. Its appreciated that a patient with some early cataract formation will also show a reasonable red reflex on retinoscopy.

7. Quality in Optometry verification visits 2019

We are currently arranging further QiO verification visits to be carried out over the Spring / Summer. We will be in touch with the practices that will be receiving a visit following discussion with the LOCs.

We would like to highlight the items below that we have found at these visits:

- Safeguarding – see our web site for your practice’s local authority safeguarding contacts. These should be readily to hand in case of an emergency / incident. Often practices are not sure who to contact.
- Patient records and drugs should be locked away. Please ensure that yours are.
- Safety alerts – receiving from NHSE? Please check the practice is on the NHSE mailing list to receive alerts by sending an email to alerts.scwcsu@nhs.net The alerts team will then confirm.
- Disability access – if the practice has limited disability access it needs to show that consideration has been made to accommodate disabled patients. It could be that the practice is within an old building which has been approved in the past. Please check possibilities of improving access.

8. Translation & Interpretation Procurement

Please find attached a letter for all practices requesting feedback for the procurement of Translation and Interpretation for:

- Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire;
- Somerset;
- Devon;
- Cornwall.

Also attached is a briefing note which provides details for the procurement.

9. Reminders - *As mentioned in previous newsletters:*

- Please remember to inform pcse.performerslists@nhs.net of performers leaving/joining practices, together with their performer’s list number.
- **Notice of Contract Termination**
Please remember to give NHS England 3 months’ formal notice in writing if you wish to close your practice.
- **Contract application**
Please remember to give NHS England 3 months’ notice if you wish to start a new business or take over an existing one. Application forms are available on our website <https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/info-professional/eye-health/south-west/>
- **Changes to Contract Details / GOS Hours/ Premises/ Directors or Performers**
Please remember to let us know of any changes to your premises, i.e. relocations, and anything else requiring a contract variation, should be notified to us as far as possible in advance via our generic email account england.optometricsouthwest@nhs.net

- **NHS Services Near You (was NHS Choices)**

If patients are looking for an optician, you will need to ensure that your contact details are up to date. The email address to register for editing rights for your practice is below, together with the web link so that you can check that your practice details are correct:

nhswebsite.servicedesk@nhs.net

<https://www.nhs.uk/about-us/manage-provider-profiles/>

10. Annual complaints review

It is a contractual requirement that an annual complaints review is carried out each year by every practice. An annual complaints form will need to be completed, covering the period from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019 and should list any written NHS complaints received.

Asda, Boots, Scrivens and Vision Express have told us that their Head Offices will be completing on the practices' behalf.

The Annual complaints review form will be circulated shortly.

11. Website for South West (South) opticians

Please use the link <https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/info-professional/eye-health/south-west/> to find Contract Application forms; contact details of LOCs in the South West; links for NHS Choices; how to apply for an NHS.net email account; the last Optometry Bulletin; contact details for Performers list and PCSE (stationery, payment queries and submissions); and Safeguarding links for concerns with adults or children.

The Optometry Team contact details are:

NHS England South West (South) Eye Health Team, Peninsula House, Kingsmill Road, Tamar View Industrial Estate, Saltash, PL12 6LE Generic email account: england.optometricsouthwest@nhs.net Web site: https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/info-professional/eye-health/south-west/		
Janet Newport	Contract Manager	0113 824 8777
Sally Dutton	Primary Care Support	0113 824 8797
Kath Hughes	Administration Support	0113 824 8784
Ian Schofield	Optometric Advisor	0113 825 5085
David MacVeigh	Optometric Advisor	Contact via Kath or Sally

Your Local Optical Committee contact details are:

Devon LOC Email Contacts	
Max Halford	max@devonloc.co.uk
Jonathan Drew	jdrew@devonloc.co.uk
Cornwall LOC Email Contact	
Jon Eva	kernowekoptom@gmail.com
Avon LOC Email Contact	
Amar Shah	chair@avonloc.co.uk
Somerset LOC Email Contacts	
Charles Greenwood	charles@jclconsulting.co.uk southwest@jclconsulting.co.uk

Best wishes

NHS England South West (South) Eye Health Team