



▶ IOP REFERRAL REFINEMENT



▶ NHS ENGLAND AND SBS



▶ LEARNING
DISABILITIES

Issue 7 o September 2013

Devon LOC

DEVON LOCAL OPTICAL COMMITTEE

GATEKEEPERS OF EYE CARE

Chair's Introduction

What is strategy? Strategy is a plan of action or policy designed to achieve a major or overall aim.

In a recent article for GP Online, Katrina Venerus (Managing Director, LOCSU) said that "while waiting times in Accident and Emergency Units in England are at a nine-year high, only 30% of Local Optical Committees in England have been commissioned to provide a minor eye conditions service or primary eye care acute referral scheme (PEARS). If more eye health services become available locally, CCGs will be able to deliver increasing savings and patients will benefit from more convenient local services". To view the full article click [here](#)

It is the strategy of the Devon LOC to develop local pathways for community care including Minor Eye Conditions and Glaucoma. The current pathway for patients with acute and chronic eye problems dictates that unless GPs are able and comfortable in treating the condition, patients are routinely referred to secondary care for an outpatient appointment. GP surgeries are not usually equipped to undertake a detailed eye examination. These appointments are

costly and usually inconvenient for the local population.

The purpose of a Minor Eye Conditions Service examination is to address the needs of a patient presenting with an acute eye condition, for example, ocular symptoms which require urgent if not immediate attention. The aim of the scheme is to maintain as many patients as possible in the primary care setting, thus avoiding unnecessary referrals to acute hospital services.

The key outcomes for the CCGs for primary care are to ensure people are treated in the most appropriate setting and avoiding unnecessary trips to hospital. I think these are exciting times where the LOC can work together with CCGs and local Hospital Eye Services to plan and commission high quality eye care services close to where patients live.

Charles Bill
Chairman, Devon LOC

LOC Committee

Chair: Charles Bill

Vice Chair: Peter Noakes

Secretary: Fiona Hiscox

Treasurer: Daniel Tabb

Committee Members:

Paul Bradford

Mark Bushby

Louise Frost

Max Halford

Eiohn Hayes

Ian Holten

Richard Hoyland

Nicki Pullen

Jacqueline Sandford

Successful North Devon Launch Event of IOP Referral Refinement

The LOC have successfully negotiated a new IOP Referral Refinement Scheme for the North Devon Area. The launch event took place on Monday 23rd September where more than 20 people attended plus representation from North Devon District Hospital and the Local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group.



The IOP Referral Refinement Scheme will officially start on the 1st October 2013 at which time all the practices in the North Devon area will be part of the scheme. The IOP Referral Refinement Scheme gives an improved patient experience, produces cost savings to the Clinical Commissioning Group, reduces referrals to the Hospital Eye Service and increases the capacity in hospital eye clinics helping to ensure that follow up care of patients with established glaucoma does not suffer.

The LOC would like to thank all those who attended the launch event including Karl Whittaker (Consultant Ophthalmologist) and the CCG who very kindly hosted the event at their offices in South Molton.

Learning Disabilities

Devon LOC has been made aware of concerns from patients and carers regarding the local provision of community eye care for people with Learning Disabilities (PwLD). It may be that some primary care Optometrists are not comfortable or familiar in assessing PwLD which may be distressing and confusing for the patients.

them to be comfortable in that environment and may also require several visits in order for the practitioner to perform a full examination. They have developed an enhanced pathway for adults and people with learning disabilities which is designed to enable this group of patients to access NHS sight testing services in the same way as the wider population.

Optometrists should be aware of their duty under the GOS regulations not to discriminate against any sector of the community. Additionally, The Equality act 2010 requires individuals not to discriminate directly or indirectly, against people by virtue of their disability. Service providers need to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the services they provide are accessible to disabled people. The GOS regulations require that any reason for refusal to see a GOS patient is recorded and must not be based on discrimination.

Devon LOC will be including a PwLD paid enhanced scheme in discussions with the CCGs.

However, at present there is no funding for this pathway, so in the interim, it would be useful to have an up to date list of practitioners who are comfortable accommodating people with moderate to severe learning disabilities or who are happy for other practitioners to refer cases to them and /or may be interested in participating in the enhanced scheme in the future.

Please can any interested practitioners (performers or contractors) contact Jonathan Drew

For further information click [here](#).

However, LOCSU's clinical advisory group have recognised that people with moderate to severe learning disabilities often require familiarisation visits to the optical practice to enable

The Devon LOC Study Day is taking place on Friday 22nd November 2013 with registration at 8.45am. The Study Day will take place at the Buckfast Conference Centre in Buckfastleigh. For further information and booking click [here](#).



On 1st April 2013, NHS England took over responsibility for commissioning the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). Local Healthwatch agencies now provide a local information and signposting service. The relevant contact details are listed below:

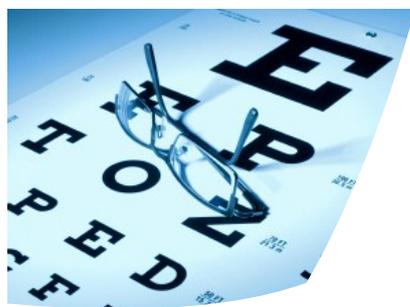
- Healthwatch Cornwall: 0800 0381 281
- Healthwatch Isles of Scilly: 01726 423 037
- Healthwatch Devon: 0800 520 0640
- Healthwatch Torbay: 0800 0520 029
- Healthwatch Plymouth: 01752 202407

The more complex issues for resolution should be directed to the National Call Centre set up by NHS England: 0300 311 22 33

Future MP Visits for Devon LOC

The LOC have another 3 MPs over the next two months:

1. Hugo Swire—11th October 2013
2. Geoffrey Cox—25th October 2013
3. Mel Stride—14th November 2013



Local Information

SBS Information

- The SBS Contact information was updated in September 2013—click [here](#) for further information.
- Reporting a serious incident requiring investigation (SIRI) or a Significant Event (SEA) to the Devon Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Area Team. Click [here](#) for further information and guidance.



Exciting new opportunity for partnership working

Action for Blind People, part of the RNIB group, based in Exeter have secured Big Lottery Funding for an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer, who will be joining team from November 4th 2013. For several sessions a week they will be located at the WEEU and also spend time in outreach eye clinics.

Action are hopeful that this also represents a terrific opportunity to work with optometrists in the community to offer critical early reach support and signposting to services for people significantly impacted by losing their sight. The ECLO can refer on to Living with Sight Loss Courses, offer support with benefits and mobility and refer on to other specialist services. Action is committed to working with local statutory, private and third sector partners to improve outcomes for blind and visually impaired clients

If you would like to explore the possibility of working with Action by "hosting" the ECLO in your business for a session a week, please call Emma Tay, Action's Area Operations Manager on 01392 458073 or 07850216307

To find out more about Action for Blind People see our website www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

LOC Details

Jonathan Drew (Business Manager)
Devon Local Optical Committee

Deer Park Business Centre
Haldon Hill
Kennford
Exeter
EX6 7XX

www.devonloc.co.uk



01392 834026 (10am—3pm)



jdrew@devonloc.co.uk



Follow [DevonLOC](#) on twitter



Like [Devon LOC](#) on Facebook



WOPEC is self taught training on the following areas: Cataract, Glaucoma, PEARS, Low Vision, Learning Disabilities. To get your unique code for course access and instructions please email Jonathan Drew stating which codes you would like.