



DEVON LOCAL OPTICAL COMMITTEE

GATEKEEPERS OF EYE CARE



Chairman's Introduction

It has been good to see Ophthalmology in the national headlines over the last month which does help our bid for more eye care services in local optician practices. As we are all aware, Ophthalmology is a growth area and is the top outpatient speciality at local hospital eye services.

At the end of March 2016 CCGs were being urged to introduce more high-street eye health services following revelations that hospital ophthalmology services are at bursting point. The call follows the announcement by the UK's leading ophthalmologist that patients are at risk of irreversible sight loss because NHS eye clinics can't cope. Professor Carrie MacEwan, President of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, said follow-up appointments can be "delayed by years", meaning patients don't get treated on time.

Demand for hospital eye clinic appointments and community eye services was also discussed in parliament. The Secretary of State for Health was asked what steps his Department is taking to address the increased demand for eye clinic appointments and hospital eye services.

David Parkins, Chair of the Clinical Council for Eye Health Commissioning said "A strategic approach to delivering more effective primary eye care in the community is overdue in England and the Clinical Council is developing a primary eye care framework, which can manage more patients in primary care settings.

We are in constant discussion with the local CCGs about the same issues and we ensure local eye care is kept on the agenda.

Charles Bill, Chairman

ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION STANDARD

NHS England has introduced a new Accessible Information Standard as a legal requirement for all providers of NHS and adult social care services in England. This includes GOS contractors.

The purpose of the Standard is to ensure that people who have communication needs because of a learning disability or sensory impairment receive information in a suitable format of their choice.

This will be a legal standard from 31st July 2016

For more information from the Optical Confederation click [here](#)

The key part of the requirement include:

1. Ask
2. Record
3. Alert/ Flag
4. Share
5. Act

There is some e-learning available on this from Health Education England—to see this resource click [here](#)

You will, however, be expected to provide materials in alternative formats upon reasonable request. The Optical Confederation will provide further guidance on where to source materials in these formats.

A BREAKTHROUGH STRATEGY FOR OPTICS—LOCAL OPTICAL COMMITTEE SUPPORT UNIT (LOCSU)

"A Breakthrough Strategy for Optics" sets out a distinctly new and up-scaled approach to LOCSU's work. The strategy has been developed by the LOCSU Board, in direct response to various drivers including pressure from the front-line, a shifting landscape in health policy and the political imperative to devolve and reform models of care at a time when innovation and technology emphasises a need to expand the scope of optical practice.

The strategy defines 3 overarching objectives. These are intended to maximise opportunities and minimise threats; whilst continuing to support and enable LOCs to increase the role of community optometrists and opticians in providing primary care services; and to provide excellent support for LOCs and Local Eye Health Networks (LEHNs).

To view the breakthrough strategy for optics click [here](#)

LOCSU's Managing Director Katrina Venerus said: "The new Strategy is not so much about the direction of travel, as our overall objective remains the same, but it is about the speed and scale at which we need to achieve success.

The 2016 Devon LOC Annual General Meeting will take place on **Wednesday 11th May starting at 7pm at the Exeter Court Hotel, Kennford, Exeter**

If you would like to attend please email Jonathan Drew on jdrew@devonloc.co.uk

Royal Devon and Exeter 

NHS Foundation Trust

HOSPITAL PRE-REGISTRATION OPTOMETRIST

The RD&E hospital will be offering 5 Pre-registration Optometry placements for 2016/2017.

Requests must be made by the supervisor and will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Please contact: Louise Frost (Louise.frost1@nhs.net) or Elizabeth Sullivan for further information (Elizabeth.sullivan@nhs.net)

SIGHT LOSS AND DEMENTIA

More vision checks could have a life-changing impact for dementia sufferers an MP has claimed.

And he called on ministers to ensure sight checks were a major part of the Government's dementia strategy.

In a Commons debate, Jim Shannon MP said that sight loss is a challenge that is 'often overlooked' by carers and NHS staff that support people with dementia. He called on public health minister Jane Ellison MP to confirm the Government's eye care strategy for people with dementia.

In a speech to the House of Commons, Shannon noted that it is often assumed that someone with dementia "will not gain any benefit from sight testing and vision correction" because they no longer work, drive or read. But being able to see well can help patients remain active, he continued, and can "play an important role in supporting the well-being of a person living with dementia."

"Good vision can greatly increase a person with dementia's sense of independence, allowing them to continue to participate in daily tasks and activities and maintaining a good quality of life" he said, speaking a week after visiting a community optical practice with the Optical Confederation and LOCSU.

He is keen to promote the role eye health providers can play. "There is a need to raise awareness amongst people with dementia and their carers of the disruptions to vision and eye health that may be concurrent with or arise from dementia. This means emphasising the importance of regular sight tests and eye examinations."

VISION CARE FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE

Vision Care for Homeless People" is a charity set-up to provide eyecare services to homeless and other vulnerable people in an accessible and friendly environment in which they feel safe, welcome and comfortable.

The charity would like to start a service in Exeter City Centre and is seeking expressions of interests of volunteer who would like to be involved in setting this up and providing clinical services to homeless people.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Jonathan Drew at the LOC office—jdrew@devonloc.co.uk or 01392 834026.

For further background information on the charity for homeless people please click [here](#)

NEW GENERAL OPTICAL COUNCIL STANDARDS OF PRACTICE COME INTO EFFECT

The new Standards have replaced the Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants, which previously applied to both fully qualified practitioners and students.

The document sets out the 19 standards that optical professionals must meet. They relate both to a registrant's behaviour and professional performance.

Samantha Peters, GOC Chief Executive and Registrar said: "I am pleased to announce that the new Standards are now in effect. The Standards are designed to support registrants and raise standards by making much clearer our expectations as the regulator.

The new Standards were developed through a comprehensive consultation exercise which included an online survey of all registrants and a series of focus groups with patients and the wider public, optometrists, dispensing opticians, students and fitness to practise decision-makers

To see more information on the standard click [here](#)

FREE ONLINE CET WITH WOPEC

WOPEC provide a wide range of post-graduate taught courses as well as short courses for optometrists and eye care professionals in the UK and Internationally.

Devon LOC have **FREE** activation codes for online courses with WOPEC. These include Cataract, Glaucoma, Low vision, PEARS and Learning Disabilities.

If you would like to undertake any of these short online courses and would like more information please contact Jonathan Drew.



Devon Local Optical Committee: Representing, supporting and communicating with local contractors and performers to ensure, as gatekeepers of eyecare, effective delivery of Ophthalmic Services across the whole of Devon.

Devon Local Optical Committee

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Scan to view
Website (QR)



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Vice Chair: Max Halford (max@devonloc.co.uk)

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Nicola Burke, Mark Bushby, Josie Forte, Eiohn Hayes, Ian Holten, Greg Mann, Peter Noakes and Nicki Pullen

Business Manager: Jonathan Drew (jdrew@devonloc.co.uk)