

# Eye Health

in homecare settings

Some basic information and a fact-finding request

**Tom Mackley**

Chair of the Local Eye Health Network for L&SC

# Local Eye Health Network (LEHN)

- Clinical network providing leadership in all aspect of eye health
  - Primary care optical practices
  - Local optical committees
  - Secondary care provider organisations
  - Commissioners
  - Voluntary sector
  - Sight loss support services
  - Educational bodies
  - *Anyone with an interest in improving eye health*

# General Ophthalmic Services (GOS)

- **The NHS Sight Test**
- Not everyone is eligible, but **all over 60s and those registered partially sighted / blind**
- Patient needs to be due for routine examination, or having new sight problems
  
- **NHS Optical Vouchers**
- Help with the cost of spectacles for specific groups
  - Income Support
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
  - Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
  - Universal Credit and meet the criteria
  - a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate
  - a valid NHS certificate for full help with health costs (HC2)

# GOS Mobile sight testing / domiciliary / home visits

## Eligibility:

- **At home**
  - If unable to leave home unaccompanied because of physical or mental illness or disability
- **At a residential or care home**
  - If a resident and unable to leave the home unaccompanied because of physical or mental illness or disability
- **At a day Centre**
  - If cannot get a sight test at an optician's practice because of physical or mental illness or disability or have difficulties communicating health needs unaided.
- Ref: <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/opticians/free-nhs-eye-tests-and-optical-vouchers/>

# GOS benefits and limitations

- Provides a large amount of eye care in England
- Scope of practice is limited
  - Determining if the patient needs spectacles
  - **Detecting** injury or disease and to refer for medical attention where indicated.
  - Does **not** fund further investigation and management of eye conditions  
... even though optometrists are able to manage many low-level conditions.
  - Eg red eye, dry eye, ocular allergy, lash removal, foreign body removal.

# MECS & CUES

## Minor Eye Conditions Service Covid / Community Urgent Eyecare Service

- Widely available in L&SC optical practices (many, not all)
- Sore, red, watery, gritty, dry, eyes.
- Minor injuries, abrasions, foreign bodies, in-turned eyelashes.
- Sudden changes in vision, eg flashes & floaters
- Less commonly available via domiciliary services, *I believe*

# What more could we do?

## Working with homecare providers:

- Fleetwood PCN – local optical lead & N-Vision
- Care staff training
  - Help understand effects of Cataract, Glaucoma, Macular degeneration, Stroke.
  - Understanding ‘minor’ issues such as dry eye and how to facilitate self-care.
- Record and understand a individual’s basic eye health status.
- Knowing if a patient is registered SI or SSI.
- Labelling spectacles

# Cataract





# Macular Degeneration



Normal Vision



The same scene affected by  
age-related macular  
degeneration

# Glaucoma



(Photo by CHOMA M. DUBOGA)

es

# What more could we do?

## Working with primary care Frailty & Falls teams :

- Primary care optometrists are not well integrated into other services
- Evidence for connection between poor sight and falls
- Evidence for connection between poor sight and dementia
- Guidance documents and training materials exist for optometrists
- Importance needs highlighting, understanding needs to be improved
- Frailty and Falls teams link to optical practices

# What more could we do?

## Supporting patients with sight loss

- Are sight loss support services reaching patients in care settings?
- Are you aware of the services available that you might help people access?
- The LEHN produces a directory of sight loss services
- We have some fantastic voluntary organisations in L&SC

## What I would like to know from the Forum...

- Are your clients able to access domiciliary sight testing services when they need to them?
- Do care home residents get a meaningful choice of provider?
- Can they continue to see their existing optician?
- Are the optical businesses that come to your settings able to offer management of red eye, dry eye, ingrowing lashes, etc?  
(NHS service / privately)
  
- **What more can we do?**
- Training & support documents about eye health for care teams?
- Working more closely with primary care, eg Falls prevention?
- Raise awareness of sight loss resources?
- *Something else?*



**Lancashire and  
South Cumbria**  
Integrated Care Board

**tom.mackley@nhs.net**

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**Web** [lancashireandsouthcumbria.icb.nhs.uk](http://lancashireandsouthcumbria.icb.nhs.uk) | **Facebook** [\\_LSCICB](https://www.facebook.com/_LSCICB) | **Twitter** [@LSCICB](https://twitter.com/_LSCICB)