

To: Scottish community optometry sector
stakeholders

17 June 2025

Update on planned changes to General Ophthalmic Services

Dear colleagues,

Further to the publication of the [NHS Scotland Operational Improvement Plan](#) and circular [PCA\(O\)2025\(02\)](#), it had been the Scottish Government's intention to fully introduce changes to General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) from 1 August 2025 that will support Independent Prescriber (IP) optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners (OMP) via higher remuneration to manage patients with specified acute anterior eye conditions.

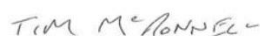
It has since become apparent that, in order to fully introduce these changes, there is a need to make legislative amendments to the NHS (General Ophthalmic Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (in addition to the already planned changes to the [GOS Statement](#)). The intention is to lay the necessary legislation before the Scottish Parliament towards the end of this year.

However, as an interim measure, we will make changes to the GOS Statement from 1 August 2025 that will support aspects of this policy to be delivered before the amended legislation is in force. This will enable IP optometrists and OMPs to claim higher 'specialist' supplementary eye examination fees (£93.93 for the first appointment; £45.96 for follow-up appointments) in specified circumstances when patients self-present to them. Intra-referral of these patients will be made possible at a later date once the amended legislation is in force. More detailed information will be provided in due course.

There is also an opportunity for community optometry practice staff and Health Boards to find out more information by signing up to in-person and online information events that are scheduled between now and 2 July 2025. A copy of a recent communication to the Scottish optometry sector regarding these events is provided with this letter.

As always, my thanks to you for your continued support and engagement.

Your sincerely,



Tim McDonnell
Director of Primary Care

ANNEX

Scottish Optometry Sector Events

Dear Scottish optometry sector colleagues,

Later this year the Scottish Government will be making some significant changes to General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) in Scotland, including:

- As set out in Scottish Government circular [PCA\(O\)2025\(02\)](#), introducing a new tier of GOS 'specialist' supplementary eye examination fees;
- Changes to the primary eye examination fee structure and supplementary eye examination reason codes.

It's important that optometry professional and practice staff are both aware of and take note of these changes prior to their introduction. As part of a suite of planned engagement with the sector about these changes, the Scottish Government is running five in-person events across the country in June and an online event in early July that will be recorded for subsequent viewing.

These events, which include presentations from Scottish Government, NHS National Services Scotland (NSS), NHS Education for Scotland and Higher Education Institutions, will provide an opportunity to hear about and ask questions on:

- The aforementioned GOS changes;
- New payment claim forms for GOS and NHS optical vouchers;
- An update on the new Master's (with Independent Prescribing) optometry undergraduate degree course in Scotland.

These events are open to optometry practice staff and Health Boards only (including those providing or supporting the provision of GOS in a domiciliary or day care setting) – other health care professionals (including those working in the hospital eye service, General Practice and community pharmacy) will be updated on relevant changes separately. Optometrists and dispensing opticians are encouraged to consider counting attendance at one of these events as one [self-directed CPD](#) point.

All attendees will be given the opportunity after each event to provide feedback if they wish to, including indicating whether they give their permission for this feedback to be shared anonymously with the other event presenters.

Attendee numbers at the events are limited and will be allocated on a 'first come first served' basis. As such, we would kindly ask that practices and individuals take this into account when deciding whether to sign up to an in-person or online event (each event will cover the same material), noting that the online event will be recorded and this recording will be viewable afterwards.

Further information on the in-person and online events, including how to sign up for them, are provided below.

In-person events

The dates, times and locations of each in-person event are as follows:

- Wednesday 18 June, 1815 arrival for a 1845 start and finishing at 2030 – Inverness: [University of the Highlands and Islands \(UHI\) House](#) (Auditorium) – 50 places available
- Thursday 19 June, 1830 arrival for a 1900 start and finishing at 2045 – Stirling: Stirling Court Hotel ([Blair Atholl Suite Main Room](#)) - 100 places available
- Monday 23 June, 1830 arrival for a 1900 start and finishing at 2045 – Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, [South Hall Complex, Pollock Estate](#) (South Hall) - 100 places available
- Tuesday 24 June, 1830 arrival for a 1900 start and finishing at 2045 – Glasgow: University of Strathclyde, [Technology & Innovation Centre](#) (Auditorium A) - 130 places available
- Monday 30 June, 1830 arrival for a 1900 start and finishing at 2045 – Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen, [Foresterhill Campus](#) (Suttie Lecture Theatre) - 100 places available

Refreshments (tea, coffee and water) will be provided but food will not be provided. Limited parking spaces at each venue will be available but we cannot guarantee a parking space on the day.

To sign up to one of these in-person events please do so by opening the following link and then providing the relevant information requested: [Link to in-person event sign-up](#).

Online event

The online event will take place on Microsoft Teams between 1900 and 2045 on Wednesday 2 July, and for technical reasons is restricted to a maximum of 950 attendees.

To sign up to this online event please do so by opening the following link and then providing the relevant information requested: [Link to online event sign-up](#).

In signing up to the online event, you are giving your permission for the event to be recorded and to the recording being made available afterwards for others to view.

Cancelling your sign-up

As mentioned previously, spaces for each of these events will be strictly allocated on a 'first come first served' basis. If you sign up to an event but subsequently cannot attend, please can you cancel your sign up as soon as possible (via [this link](#) for the in person events; via [your sign up confirmation for the online event](#)) so that your space can be made available for someone else.

For those who wish to attend an event but find that it is fully booked, you are advised to check again at a later date in case a space has subsequently become free. Alternatively, you will be able to watch the recording of the online event after it has taken place.

Further questions

If you have any questions about the above information please contact us via email at eyecare@gov.scot.

**Primary Care Optometry Team
Scottish Government**