



optometryscotland

Community Optometry: A Sustainable Solution for Eye Care Myopia Management in Scotland Optometry Scotland Position Statement

Myopia is an increasingly common condition, particularly in children and young people. While it is typically corrected with glasses or contact lenses, there is growing recognition of the importance of managing its progression over time, and it is receiving increasing attention across the UK and internationally.

Optometry Scotland recognises myopia management as an emerging area of clinical practice and public health interest.

The Scottish Context

In Scotland, a well-established community optometry model underpins the delivery of eye health services. NHS-funded eye examinations provide a strong foundation for the early identification and ongoing monitoring of myopia. NHS optical vouchers allow for the provision of spectacles for all children under 16 and for those aged 16 to 18 in full time education.

Community optometrists are already supporting patients and families to understand myopia and how it may change over time. In some cases, practices are also offering approaches designed to help manage progression.

There is already variation in how myopia management is delivered across Scotland, reflecting differences in practice capacity, training, and access to equipment.

At present, these approaches are typically delivered privately, outside NHS provision.

Evidence and Clinical Practice

There is a growing body of evidence indicating that certain interventions may help to reduce the rate at which myopia progresses in children.

However:

- outcomes can vary between individuals real-world results may differ from controlled clinical studies
- further research, including Scotland-based evidence, continues to develop

This supports the need for a measured, evidence-led approach to how myopia management is considered within Scotland.

Equity and Access

As awareness of myopia management increases, it is important to consider how access to care is experienced by patients.

Currently, access to interventions aimed at slowing myopia progression is largely dependent on private provision. This has the potential to create variation in access and experience of care,

particularly as demand and awareness grow and could have the potential to lead to health inequalities.

Ensuring equitable access to high-quality eye care remains a key principle within Scotland's health system.

Wider UK and International Context

Across the UK and internationally, there is increasing awareness that myopia could become a long-term public health issue.

Other nations are beginning to explore potential approaches to myopia management within community eye care services. These developments reflect a broader shift towards prevention and early intervention.

Optometry Scotland Position

Optometry Scotland believes that:

- Community optometry is well placed to support the early identification, monitoring and management of myopia
- Myopia management represents an important area for future consideration, aligned with prevention and population health priorities
- Further evaluation and evidence gathering will be important, particularly within a Scottish context
- Any future approach should be evidence-based, equitable, and deliverable within existing systems

At this stage, Optometry Scotland is not proposing a defined service model. However, we consider it important that myopia management remains under active consideration as part of the ongoing development of community eye care in Scotland.

Summary

Myopia management is an evolving area of eye care. While not currently a primary policy focus in Scotland, it represents a growing clinical and public health consideration.

A proportionate and evidence-led approach will help ensure that Scotland remains aligned with emerging best practice, while continuing to deliver high-quality, patient-centred care through community optometry.