

## UPDATE ON OPHTHALMIC SERVICES

### Officer Contact

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### Papers with report

None

## REASON FOR ITEM

To enable the Committee to receive updates and review the work being undertaken with regard to ophthalmic services within the Borough.

## OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMITTEE

- Question the witnesses using the suggested questions/key lines of enquiry
- Ask additional questions as required
- Make recommendations to address issues arising from discussions at the meeting

## INFORMATION

### NHS Ophthalmic Services

NHS optometric eye services are provided by a qualified optometrist registered with the General Ophthalmic Committee in the main operating from within a high street dispensing optician's premises.

The Optometrist may provide mandatory or additional NHS services by virtue of a general ophthalmic service contract (GOS) which obliges them to deliver sight tests, undertake examinations to assess the health of a patient's eyes and to detect abnormalities and diseases that may be present for example glaucoma.

The mandatory service contract governs the provision of services on the high street and the additional services contract governs provision of services in a domiciliary setting.

At the end of the sight test, if clinically indicated the optometrist provides the patient with a prescription which may be taken to any optician of the patient's choice for glasses or contact lenses to be dispensed provided the optician accepts NHS optical vouchers.

Eligibility for a free NHS sight test is as follows;

- Aged under 16
- Aged 16, 17 or 18 and are in full-time education
- Aged 60 or over
- Registered as partially sighted (sight impaired) or blind (severely sight impaired)
- Diagnosed with diabetes or glaucoma

- 40 or over, and your mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter has been diagnosed with glaucoma
- Advised by an ophthalmologist (eye doctor) that you're at risk of glaucoma
- Prisoner on leave from prison receive Income Support
- In receipt of income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (not Contribution-based)
- In receipt of pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- In receipt of income-based Employment and Support Allowance (not Contribution-based)
- Entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate
- Low income and named on a valid HC2 (full help) or HC3 (partial help) certificate

Patients may get help with the cost of glasses or contact lenses if they:

- Are aged under 16, or aged under 19 and in full-time education or
- Are eligible for an NHS complex lens voucher (your optician will advise you on your entitlement)

Some patients may get an NHS optical voucher if they

- Receive income Support or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (not contribution-based)
- Receive Pension Credit Guarantee Credit.
- Receive Income-based Employment and Support Allowance.
- Are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate.
- Are named on a valid NHS certificate for full help with health costs (HC2). People named on an NHS certificate for partial help with health costs (HC3) may also get help.

Patients are asked to show proof of your entitlement to optical vouchers to the optician or a member of their staff.

There are currently eight voucher values. The values are dependent on the strength of your prescription. The stronger the prescription the higher the voucher value.

Those who receive an NHS optical voucher, you are free to take it to any supplier of their choice, providing the supplier accepts NHS optical vouchers. If the glasses or contact lenses cost more than the voucher value, the patient will have to pay the difference.

Enhanced Services are commissioned by the PCT and Public Health teams.

## **Witnesses**

Representatives from the following organisations have been invited to attend the meeting:

- NHS Hillingdon (PCT)
- Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Central & North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)
- The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Hillingdon Community Health

## **SUGGESTED SCRUTINY ACTIVITY**

Members to question representatives from the organisations present on the ophthalmic services provided within the Borough and decide whether to take any further action.

## **BACKGROUND REPORTS**

Information about NHS Ophthalmic Services is available from:

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/category/policy-areas/nhs/primary-care/eye-care-services/>

Information about health costs/vouchers:

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/Documents/2012/HC12-april-2012.pdf>