

Eye Health Clinical Programme Group

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Eye Health CPG – Purpose and Priorities

- The mission of the eye health CPG is to provide a holistic approach to transform, integrate and lead on the development of Eye Health services in the county. The CPG aims to ensure patients receive the best experience by prioritising service user involvement and service quality, improving delivery of service and utilising public health intelligence to reduce variation.
- The CPG has identified 3 priority areas,
 - Reducing Inequalities
 - Digital Transformation
 - Investing in our Workforce

Reducing Inequalities

Homeless Eye Care Service

- Run in conjunction with the charity Vision Care for Homeless People (VCHP) and staffed entirely by a volunteer rota of community optometrists and optician support staff from across Gloucestershire.
- The majority of people seen in the clinic have not accessed a sight test for over 10 years. 81% of people seen in clinic needed spectacles which the clinic has been able to provide free of charge.
- 14% of the people seen in clinic have needed an onward referral into secondary care eye care services. The Ophthalmology Department at GHNHSFT have supported the charity in being able to make urgent referrals into the service.

Care of the Elderly (COTE) Ward Eye Care Liaison Officer (ECLO)

- The ICB commissioned the RNIB to provide ECLO support to the COTE wards at Gloucester and Cheltenham. Of the patients seen to date, 27% have needed further support with either provision of spectacles, emotional support, aids and adaptations of onward referral.
- GHNHSFT have made urgent provision to be able to provide spectacles to inpatients or see them in the relevant clinic so that the patients discharge is supported, and they are not discharged without a plan in place for their eye health needs.

Digital Transformation

Community Ophthalmic Link

- High street opticians are often the first port of call for patients experiencing eye care issues. However, community optometrists do not hold a record of the patient in the same way a GP would, even when they make a referral into secondary care, they do not receive information on the outcome of that referral.
- Gloucestershire is the first area in the country to support the community optometrists with access to hospital eye images, data and referral information. The project is managed collaboratively between the ICB, the Ophthalmology department at GHNHSFT and the Local Optical Committee (LOC).
- Only 2 practices in the county do not have access to the system with at least one of these to be connected shortly.
- Optometrists are reporting a reduction in referrals to hospital for patients who can be managed in the community, access to the information improving the care of patients in the community and for those patients who still require a referral, that access to the patient's history is ensuring they are referred to the right place, first time.

Investing in our Workforce

Higher Education for community optometrists

- An important part of realising the ambition to provide more care closer to home is ensuring that we have a highly skilled workforce in the community.
- We are supporting 37 community optometrists with access to qualifications in low vision, medical retina, glaucoma and independent prescribing.
- This will mean we can look for opportunities for shared care with the hospital, meaning more patients can be cared for closer to their homes by appropriately qualified professionals. This is especially important within eye care, as it tends to be an older population and the visually impaired who may find it harder to travel without support.

Raising Awareness for Visual Impairment

- Undertaking vi awareness training for primary care to ensure a better experience for patients with vi when accessing primary care.

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