

Central Mersey Local Optical Committee

Primary Care Optometry Services

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to update you on primary care optometry services in Central Mersey area, as it is important you are aware of the current situation in our 4 CCG areas.

Halton and St Helens

Halton CCG and St Helens CCG are both commissioning the same primary care services.

- Cataract Pre-op Assessment
- Glaucoma repeat reading service (GRR)
- Minor Eye Care Service (MECS)

It is imperative all local performers refer directly into these primary care optometry services, where necessary. Patients registered with a GP in Halton and St Helens, considered suitable for cataract surgery at an eye test must be directed through the Enhanced Cataract Pre-op Assessment pathway. **It is no longer acceptable to refer these patients to the GP or directly to the surgery provider.** So, any non-participating practice should refer to the Cataract Pre-op Assessment service

Equally, patients registered with a GP in Halton and St Helens, considered to have suspect OHT or chronic glaucoma at an eye test must be directed through the Glaucoma Referral Refinement service (GRR) pathway. **It is no longer acceptable to refer Halton CCG or St Helens patients directly to the GP.** Non-participating practices should refer suspect OHT and glaucoma patients into the GRR service.

Also, non-participating practices should refer patients suitable for the Minor Eye Care Service (MECS) should refer patients into the service instead of to the GP or Hospital Eye Service (HES). This could include conditions such as Dry Eye, Blepharitis, Conjunctivitis or PVD. NB any condition that may require emergency treatment, such as acute Glaucoma, retinal detachment or strokes should still be referred direct to HES.

The LOC has also developed an Optometry version of the local Criteria Based Clinical Treatment (CBCT) policy after negotiation with Halton and St Helens CCGs. Local Optometrists and contractors should refer to this policy when considering referral to the community services or HES. The policy document and other resources are available at: www.centralmerseyloc.org/community-services/

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If your practice is not currently contracted with the LOC company, Primary Eye Care Services Ltd, to provide these pathways above and you would like to get involved please contact Lindsey Flynn at info@primaryeyecare.co.uk for further information. Even practices from outside the 2 boroughs who see significant numbers of patients registered with a GP in the areas can join, if they meet the criteria.

Knowsley CCG and Warrington CCG

We have been lobbying Knowsley CCG for many years and continue to make a strong case. Whilst there is no firm commitment to commission services yet, discussions remain positive and we remain hopeful they will soon be available in Knowsley. We have recently established communication with Warrington CCG again and discussions were very positive so we are also hopeful we can move things forward there as well.

For the meantime, we advise referring all patients registered with a GP in Knowsley or Warrington with routine eye conditions that would normal be covered by the community services detailed above to the GP for ongoing referral. Any patients suspected to have more acute conditions should be referred direct to the HES with a copy of the referral sent to the GP as well.

Kind Regards,

Bob Wilkes

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