

Central Mersey Local Optical Committee

Non-participating practices referring patients to Halton and St Helens community services

Patients with a GP registered in Halton CCG or St Helens CCG are eligible for the following community services:

Cataract Pre-op Assessment

Suitable for patients with cataract causing symptoms or significantly reducing the vision. The service will assess the patient for co-morbid eye conditions, discuss the surgical procedure, as well as pros and cons. If the patient meets the criteria for surgery and wishes to proceed they will be referred to their chosen provider. If not, they will be advised to have another eye test after a suitable interval.

Glaucoma repeat reading service (GRR)

Suitable where the IOP is measured at 24mmHg or more with healthy looking optic discs and normal visual fields. Also, suitable where the patient has a suspect early scotoma on a visual field test and the IOP under 30mmHg and anterior chamber is open. These patients should be referred to the GRR service for repeat assessment. If suspicion of Glaucoma is confirmed, they will be referred to the Hospital Eye Service (HES). If not, they will be advised to have another eye test after a suitable interval. The service is not suitable for patients with IOPs 30mmHg or more, disc abnormalities/suspicious disc changes, signs of acute/narrow angle Glaucoma or a large scotoma. In these cases, refer the patient direct to the HES.

Minor Eye Care Service (MECS)

Non-participating practices should refer patients to MECS with signs and symptoms of mild ocular conditions. The patient leaflet indicates what may be appropriate for MECS and includes details of where the patient can access them. If the patient has signs and symptoms indicating more serious or acute conditions, the non-participating practice should refer direct to HES.

The LOC has also developed an Optometry version of the local Criteria Based Clinical Treatment (CBCT) policy after negotiation with the CCGs. Local Optometrists and contractors should refer to this policy when considering referral to the community services or HES.

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Procedure

All practices not accredited to provide the community services should refer all patients eligible for them to a participating practice. Resources to assist with this are available on the Community Optometry Services section of the LOC website www.centralmerseyloc.org/community-services/

1. Lists of providers of each service are available to download on the Community Optometry Services section of the LOC website and will be regularly updated
2. A MECS leaflet, outlining the service, is available to download from the same section of the website. If the patient requires a MECS appointment give them a copy of the MECS leaflet, as well as the list of providers and advise them to ring the practice they have chosen and book a suitable appointment. If the provider is unable to offer an appointment, they will arrange one at an alternative practice
3. For Cataract Pre-op Assessment, GRR, or MECS where you have also examined the patient, you should provide the patient with a referral letter. We advise using the electronic GOS18 form, which is available to download on the Community Optometry Services section of the LOC website. Otherwise, you may wish to use your own letter, but it should include the same elements as the GOS18
4. If using the GOS18, complete all relevant sections in, as usual
5. In the "GP action required" section, tick off "This letter is for INFORMATION ONLY"
6. At the top of the "Additional Information" section, type one of the following, as appropriate:
 - Cataract pre-op assessment
 - Glaucoma Referral Refinement
 - Minor Eye Care Service
7. Type the rest of the information you would usually include and save the document, entitled with the patient's name and practice ID number, to a file on your practice computer.
 - a) Hand one copy to the patient to take to the practice of their choice
 - b) Send the GP a copy of the GOS18
 - c) Retain a printed and/or electronic copy with the patient record card
8. Hand the patient the list of participating practices for the relevant service and advise them to ring the practice they have chosen and book a suitable appointment
9. For MECS, also give the patient a copy of the MECS leaflet, outlining the service
10. If the patient doesn't wish to access the services, send the letter to the GP instead, highlighting in your text that the patient declined. Hand the patient a copy and advise them to book an appointment with the GP, as appropriate, to discuss the next steps