

# i-Health



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## i-Health Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) update – 19 March 2020

NHS England South West (North) covering: -

Bath and North East Somerset, Gloucestershire, Swindon, Wiltshire  
&  
Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire

**Please send this bulletin to your work colleagues.**

If you have any questions then please email us on:

[england.bgs-optom@nhs.net](mailto:england.bgs-optom@nhs.net)

For Bath & North East Somerset, Gloucestershire, Swindon & Wiltshire contractors

Or

[england.optometrysouthwest@nhs.net](mailto:england.optometrysouthwest@nhs.net)

For Bristol, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire contractors

if:

- You don't usually receive these newsletters but would like them emailed directly to you, or
- There is anything you think would be useful as part of the newsletter content.



**Novel  
Coronavirus  
(COVID-19)  
SOP**

### **Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) standard operating procedure Primary care optical settings – stay updated**

NHS England and Improvement have produced a new guidance webpage that contains all COVID-19 resources for primary care, including the optical SOP.

This link will take you to the Primary Care page which has useful information about the virus, prevention and infection control:

- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/>

This link will take you to the current SOP, at the time of writing this it is version 1.1 – please note this is being updated on a regular basis:

- <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/optical-setting/>



**Minimise the risk to you and your patients**

**COVID-19: Useful ways to help minimise the risk to you and your patients**





We believe that seeing patients in practice counts as healthcare contact and is therefore not affected by the recent announcements that social contact should be reduced. However, there are reasonable steps you can take to minimise the risk of contracting or spreading the virus.

For more information please go to the College of Optometrists:

- <https://www.college-optometrists.org/the-college/media-hub/news-listing/coronavirus-2019-advice-for-optometrists.html>

As well as using normal infection control procedures, and regular and scrupulous hand hygiene, there are things you can do to minimise the risk to you and your patients:

- Consider postponing routine appointments to later in the year, particularly for patients in vulnerable groups. This will reduce the need to travel, and for them to have close contact with people in waiting rooms
- Ask patients to contact the practice by phone before they come in, to see if they really need to come in
- Phone patients who have appointments on the day of the appointment to confirm that the patient is well and not exhibiting relevant symptoms (new, continuous cough and/or a high temperature)
- Space chairs out in the waiting area to help patients maintain a reasonable distance between each other
- Regularly wipe door handles and other surfaces that may have been contaminated with body fluids with a suitable disinfectant, such as an alcohol wipe. All surfaces must be clean before they are disinfected.
- Avoid direct ophthalmoscopy where possible – use a SL-BIO method instead where you can or consider if fundal imaging is an acceptable alternative.
- Avoid touching patients where possible. For example, when using SL-BIO, ask the patient to open their eyes wide when they are looking down, so you can examine the inferior fundus without having to lift their upper lids.
- Consider using a cough guard on your slit lamp if possible.
- Sanitise frames before patients try them on. This can be done using a suitable disinfectant, such as an alcohol wipe or soap and water. All surfaces must be clean before they are disinfected.
- Do not use Alger brushes or Blephex, as they may generate aerosols
- If you need to remove a rust ring, use a needle instead.
- Consider posting contact lenses or spectacles to patients, rather than asking them to collect them
- For domiciliary practitioner should wash their hands on entering and leaving the property.

 <p><b>Force Majeure Notification of unplanned event</b></p>	<p><b>Force Majeure - Notification of unplanned event due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)</b></p> <p>During these uncertain times some of you may find that you are forced to close or reduce your hours due to several different issues relating to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)</p> <p>It is good professional practice and encouraged by the Optical Confederation that the contractor has a duty to inform the commissioner of any adverse events that is likely to impact the delivery of the contract.</p> <p>Under the GOS contract adverse events are dealt with in the force majeure provisions of the mandatory (premises) and additional (mobile) services model GOS contracts.</p> <p>If you find that you are in this situation of having to close or reduce your hours, then please can you fill out the form below and return as soon as possible to our generic email address <a href="mailto:england.bgswh-optom@nhs.net">england.bgswh-optom@nhs.net</a> This will mean that we can help support you and your patients and the overall system.</p>  <p>Force majeure - Notification of an unp</p>
 <p><b>Display Posters</b></p>	<p><b>Have you displayed these posters on your practice door?</b></p> <p>The poster is designed to help protect your staff, reduce the risk of spreading the virus and ensure business continuity. All other primary care (pharmacy, dental and GP) settings have been asked to display the poster, so the public should be familiar with it.</p> <p>Click here for the : <a href="#">Optical practice poster</a></p> <p>Click here for the: <a href="#">Poster pack for England</a></p>
 <p><b>PPE</b></p>	<p><b>PPE – Hand gel</b></p> <p>At present please order your PPE through your normal supply chains. We are aware that some of you are experiencing difficulties and that your normal supply chain of hand gel is running low. At this present time the guidance is that soap and water is a more effective way to wash your hands so please use this method. Ophthalmic practices are currently deemed lower risk than staff on the front line working in trusts so this is why supplies are being sent to them at the moment. I hope you can all understand these reasonings.</p>

## Useful Contact Details

### NHS England South West (North) Ophthalmic Services Contract Management Team:

Melissa Kendall-Milnes	Assistant Contracts Manager	07730381340
Sharon Greaves	Contracts Manager	07900715295
Tracey Howes	Primary Care Support	07730380479

Email address for enquiries:

Bath & North East Somerset, Gloucestershire, Swindon & Wiltshire: [england.bgs-sw-optom@nhs.net](mailto:england.bgs-sw-optom@nhs.net)  
Bristol, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire: [england.optometrysouthwest@nhs.net](mailto:england.optometrysouthwest@nhs.net)

Postal address:

NHS England South West, Jenner House, Langley Park, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1GG

Webpage - Please let us know of anything that you would like to see on there.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/info-professional/eye-health/south-west-north-eye-health-information/>

**PCSE (Primary Care Support England)** has the responsibility for the delivery of NHS England primary care support services.

For Opticians PCSE provide:

- **Ophthalmic Payments** - Administrating monthly payments of GOS forms, processing Continuing Education and Training (CET) payments, deducting local Optical Committee levies.
- **Performers List** - Administering entry and changes to Performers Lists on behalf of NHS England
- **Supplies** - Providing NHS stationery, pre-printed forms, needles and syringes via PCSE Online.

### Contact details for PCSE

Web: <https://pcse.england.nhs.uk/organisations/opticians/>  
PO Box: Primary Care Support England, PO Box 350, Darlington, DL1 9QN  
Phone: 0333 014 2884  
Enquiry Form: <https://pcse.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/>

### Local Optical Committee (LOC)

#### Avon LOC – BaNES, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire

Website: [www.avonloc.co.uk](http://www.avonloc.co.uk) Chair: [chair@avonloc.co.uk](mailto:chair@avonloc.co.uk) Secretary [secretary@avonloc.co.uk](mailto:secretary@avonloc.co.uk).  
BaNES queries contact Andrew Edwards at [bath@avonloc.co.uk](mailto:bath@avonloc.co.uk)

#### Wiltshire LOC – Swindon and Wiltshire

Website: <https://www.wiltshireloc.org.uk/> Chair: [chair@wiltshireloc.org.uk](mailto:chair@wiltshireloc.org.uk)

#### Gloucestershire LOC

Website: <http://www.glosloc.co.uk/> Secretary: [Adrianstreet@glosloc.co.uk](mailto:Adrianstreet@glosloc.co.uk)