



i-Health Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) update – 28 April 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.bgswoptom@nhs.net

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

Or

england.optometricsouthwest@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.



**COVID-19
SOP**

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/>

The Optical settings option on this page will take you to the current SOP. Please note this is being updated on a regular basis:

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

Further useful information can be found on the LOCSU website where a FAQs document on updated OFNC Guidance on Changes to Primary Eye Care in England is available:

- <https://www.locsu.co.uk/updated-ofnc-guidance-on-changes-to-primary-eye-care-in-england-2/>



Definition of OPEN

Definition of OPEN – GOS Payment Funding

Following our email communication out to all our contractors on the 9 April 2020 asking for confirmation of your opening hours and service being provided we received several queries on what being **OPEN** means during this crisis.

For clarity we have summarised below the definition and criteria for being open together with closed and open with amended hours.

If there are any further changes to your business status in the following days or weeks, please inform your area team by emailing us at england.bgswh-optom@nhs.net

1. Open

Practices who choose to remain open to deliver essential and/or urgent / emergency eye care services will be expected to have appropriate clinicians available to provide those services during the hours of GOS service provision stipulated in their contract.

You do not need to be physically present in the practice. Government advice is that all unnecessary travel should be avoided and person to person interaction (even if social distancing) minimised to help reduce risk for patients, staff and the wide public. 'Open' in these circumstances means providing essential eye care in accordance with College of Optometrists and government Covid-19 guidance. These services could be provided from home locations wherever possible.

The key to being 'open' is that patients must be able to contact the practice during normal opening hours, but this can be by phone or email – for instance you could divert your practice landline to an alternative number, or provide an answerphone message asking patients to contact a mobile phone or to send you an email. Calls and emails should be managed promptly and efficiently in line with the importance of providing an essential service.

Appropriate clinicians should be available to deliver face-to-face services where clinically necessary, subject to confirming the patient and other household members have no COVID-19 symptoms and following College of Optometrists guidance including on the use of PPE. Face-to-face consultations should take place at the patient's normal practice unless: there are reasons preventing this in a particular case (such as lack of PPE), or in the particular circumstances another location is requested by the patient.

2. Closed

If your practice is completely closed and you are not providing any essential eye care (e.g. remotely). You will not receive GOS support payments for the duration of the closure, but you will be able to claim general Government business support for which you are eligible, such as business grants and payments under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme

3. Open but with amended hours

If you are open but have amended your hours and not providing services situated in your contract, then you will not receive the GOS support payments.



GOS Payments

GOS Payment for 'Open' practices

If you have informed us that you are 'open' we regard this confirmation of status as your acceptance and agreement to the above service provision requirements. You will have received a letter last Friday stating your calculated monthly payment.

In return for the provision of these services, NHS England & Improvement will provide monthly payments based on the average monthly value of GOS claims for the period March 2019 through February 2020. This will include voucher claims. Where your actual GOS claims during the crisis exceed this level, you will be paid the additional claims in the usual way.

This financial support is effective from March 2020, with average monthly payments commencing in May 2020 until further notice (payments are made retrospectively).

Your May 2020 payment will also contain an adjustment to top up any GOS claims you submitted for March 2020 to the value of your average monthly claims.

Please note that all electronic claims have been included in the average monthly payment calculations, and to minimise disruption to your financial planning, payments will be made on your normal scheduled date.

Please contact us if you have any questions relating to your average monthly payment calculation: england.bgsw-optom@nhs.net

This is a grant payment, not a loan. It will be subject to a reduction for variable costs associated with service delivery, which will be agreed with the OFNC. We will provide more information about this process as soon as we can.



Recording Activity during COVID-19

Recording Activity during the COVID-19 Period




For those contractors who have elected to remain 'open' the NHS National Optometry Team are asking those contractors to please keep a log of activity related to any consultations and patient interactions so that we can track and evaluate activity levels throughout this period and make sure patients are not putting off their eyecare.




To assist with recording this activity we have created a template for your use.



COVID-19 Activity Record.docx

We are in the process of setting up an online survey link where you will be able to upload your activity enabling evaluation post-COVID-19 which will help with future emergency planning. Details of the survey link will follow shortly.

 <p>CoVID-19 Urgent Eyecare Service (CUES)</p>	<p>CoVID-19 Urgent Eyecare Service (CUES)</p> <p>NHS England, LOCSU and the Clinical Council for Eye Health Commissioning have developed a new framework for urgent primary eye care during the crisis, the COVID-19 Urgent Eye Care Service (CUES). This will be commissioned through CCGs. NHS England regional teams will work with CCGs, LOCs and optical practices to ensure the availability of appropriate levels of eye care across England.</p> <p>The specification is as followed:</p>  <p>20200417 FINAL CUES Service specific</p> <p>Please let us know if you are interested in delivering this service and we will help facilitate this to the CCGs.</p>
 <p>PPE & Clinical Waste</p>	<p>PPE</p> <p>Public Health England (PHE) released guidance on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which now includes the optical workforce who are providing face to face appointments for essential and urgent care where clinically necessary. The new guidance recommends that clinicians should assess the risk of infection to themselves and their patients. If they consider there is an infection risk, then for the direct care or assessment (within 2 metres) of a patient who is not a possible or confirmed COVID-19 case they should wear gloves and an apron and consider wearing a surgical mask and eye or face protection.</p> <p>NHS England is working hard to acquire PPE for optical practices through the NHS supply chain and we will update you as soon as we know more.</p> <p>Clinical Waste</p> <p>It is recommended that all optical contractors contact their own clinical waste provider for the most up to date information regarding clinical waste and guidance regarding the storing and removal of used PPE, including the use of ORANGE Bags. NHS England and Improvement is currently seeking up to date guidance for contractors on Clinical Waste in an optical setting and we will let you know more once we have that information.</p>

 <p>Electronic Claims</p>	<p>Electronic Claims</p> <p>NHS England anticipates that GOS activity will fall to circa 15% of normal activity. During the crisis, we are therefore asking all contractors to undertake the registration process and submit GOS claims electronically via PCSE Online https://secure.pcse.england.nhs.uk, or your Practice Management System's eGOS solution if you have one.</p> <p>Electronic submission will allow claims to be processed without contact, maximising safety for staff involved enabling all parts of the system to adhere to the government's social distancing recommendations. 'COVID-19' can be entered in the patient signature box for electronic claims submitted during the crisis.</p> <p>The PCSE Online system is free of charge and very easy to use. It provides you with a quicker and easier method of submitting GOS claims, together with a host of other benefits including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no rejected claims, as real time validation flags any errors before submission • easier monthly payment reconciliation via detailed online statements • reduction in costs as you will no longer need to post forms <p>The set up process is simple, so if you haven't already registered please contact the ophthalmic engagement team at pcse.optomengagement@nhs.net who will help you get online quickly.</p>
 <p>Redeployment</p>	<p>Redeployment to Support the Clinical Delivery Plan for COVID-19</p> <p>On the 12 April guidance was issued on the deploying of clinical and on-clinical optical workforce to support the NHS clinical delivery plan for COVID-19.</p> <p>The aim is to utilise the clinical optical workforce to free up other roles within the health and social care system and help maintain the delivery of other non-coronavirus related essential services. Contribution in these other roles would be done on a voluntary basis and would be outside of the workforce individual's scope as an optometrist or dispensing opticians, unless it is in the provision of eye care.</p> <p>If you are interested in volunteering, then please register your interest via the GoodSam App https://www.goodsamapp.org/nhs</p> <p>A copy of the published redeployment guidance can be found here.</p>
 <p>Email Communication</p>	<p>Email Communication</p> <p>Can we please ask if you are emailing your local area team with an update or any queries you include the following information in your email so we can clearly and quickly identify your details: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ODS (TP) code 2. Practice Name 3. Practice Address



Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to let you know we are meeting with your LOCs on a weekly basis so they can feedback to us your queries and concerns and we can update them on the changing developments during this crisis.

We wish to say a big thank you to the LOCs and all our contractors for the amazing way you have been adapting your businesses to meet the needs of your patients during this very difficult and challenging time.

Thank you.

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-optom@nhs.net
Bristol, North Somerset & South Gloucestershire: 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 Chair: chair@avonloc.co.uk Secretary secretary@avonloc.co.uk.
BaNES queries contact Andrew Edwards at bath@avonloc.co.uk

Wiltshire LOC – Swindon and Wiltshire

Website: <https://www.wiltshireloc.org.uk/> Chair: chair@wiltshireloc.org.uk

Gloucestershire LOC

Website: <http://www.glosloc.co.uk/> Chair: chair@glosloc.co.uk