



25 November 2016

Ophthalmic Performers List gets priority

The backlog of Ophthalmic Performer List applications is eventually being given priority Primary Care Support England (PCSE).

In response to the news that the latest recovery plan that had been agreed with Capita early this month had not been fully implemented, optical sector leaders agreed with NHS England that LOCSU would provide intensive onsite support and expertise for the PCSE staff alongside a member of the NHS England Management Team to improve the operational management and oversight of the Performers List work.

Commenting on the support being provided by LOCSU, Katrina Venerus said: "It is an unacceptable situation that newly-qualified optometrists are being prevented from providing NHS sight tests because of administration delays. Through the work that has been undertaken with PCSE this week, the operational management has improved and we have managed to get a significant number of applications approved."

She added: "All outstanding applications from optometrists who qualified in July at have now been identified and are being actively progressed as a priority and we will be starting to focus on optometrists who qualified in September at the start of next week. The College of Optometrists' Education Team have very helpfully written to the September cohort to identify all those waiting for an Ophthalmic Performers List number and we will work from this data."

Venerus said that performer listing is a very simple but overly bureaucratic process and explained that NHS England, with support from members of the National Optometric Advisor Association, have put in place a series of daily panels to get applications approved promptly once the administration steps have been completed.

She stated that it is vital that LOCSU continues this work with PCSE to ensure all outstanding applications are processed as quickly as possible and that the operational processes are reviewed and improved for future cohorts.

Venerus stressed it is important that contractors and performers understand that in parallel to the support being provided, sector leaders continue to hold NHS England and PCSE to account for service failures.

"The Chief Executives of ABDO, AOP and FODO have written formally to the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt, and again to NHS England leaders, including CEO Simon Stevens, earlier this week to express the sector's anger that the backlog has not been resolved by PCSE and to raise

further the issue of compensation for members who have experienced significant business interruption and losses."

