

Optometric primary care services

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Objectives

To understand;

- The benefits for PCTs in commissioning optometric services
- What is an Optometrist?
- How is Optometry funded?
- The Eye examination or “Sight Test”
- The Future of Optometric Services in the UK

Demographics

- **>65s will increase by 24% by 2020**
- **All will require visual correction**
- **Visual impairment affects predominately older people**
- **Approx half of >65s have impaired vision in one or both eyes.**
- **The incidence of visual impairment will rise by c35% by 2020.**

Objectives

Gordon Brown, keynote speech, Jan 7th 2008

“One of the main challenges that the NHS faces in the coming decades is that of providing high quality, cost effective services for increasing numbers of older people”

Lord Darzi

- Choice, convenience, models of care

Who are Optometrists?

- Independent self-regulated profession
- Practice under an ethical framework and code of conduct
- Regulated by General Optical Council (GOC)
 - Mandatory CET, indemnity
 - Revalidation
- Used to be called “Ophthalmic Opticians”
- Restricted function “testing of sight”
- Able to offer additional eyecare and services

Who are Optometrists?

- **Mode of Practice:**
 - **Independent**
 - **Multiple Companies**
 - National
 - Local/Regional
 - **Mobile Providers**
 - Domiciliary services
 - **Franchises**
 - Sub-set of national multiples
 - **Hospital Optometry**

Other Staff members

- **Dispensing Opticians**
 - Also registered with GOC
 - Supply Spectacles to Rx
- **Dispensing Assistants**
 - Supply Spectacles BUT under supervision of Optometrist
- **Clinical Assistants**
 - Perform delegated tests under supervision of an Optometrist

How is Optometry Funded ?

- All fees are “Item of Service” based
- Optometrists get no NHS support for
 - Equipment
 - IT
 - Practice running costs
 - Clinical governance
- Most patient encounters are “Sight Tests”
 - General Ophthalmic Services (NHS Sight Test)
 - Private eye examinations
- Some additional service provision (local) eg
 - Cataract refinement & referral
 - Diabetic retinopathy screening

How is Optometry Funded ?

- **Sight Tests:-**
 - 70% NHS (<16, >60, Low income, Diabetes/Glaucoma)
 - £19.32
 - 30% private
 - £free - £45... avg £21
- **Cost about £40-£60 to the practice!!!**
- **Spectacle sales subsidise Sight Tests**
- **NHS tests often represent 80% of workload but <20% of profit**

How is Optometry Funded ?

- Optometry does not like the cross subsidy
- Caused by progressive underfunding of NHS Sight Tests by many governments
- Optometrists becoming less willing to add extras to ST for no fee
- NHS ONLY funds a Sight Test
- Additional procedures need funding properly, not by adding to cross subsidy

So what is a “Sight Test”?

- **Protected function (only performed by Doctors and Optometrists)**
- **Only Optometric “Item of Service” funded by National Government**
- **Regulated by:-**
 - **Opticians Act**
 - **“Sight Test Regulations”**
 - **GOS Regulations (for NHS Tests)**

What's in a Sight Test?

- Ensures best possible vision
- Eye health
- General health

Internal examination of the eye

Glaucoma detection

What does a Sight Test detect?

- Prescription of Spectacles
- Eye disease/conditions eg
 - Cataract
 - Glaucoma
- Some Systemic Diseases eg
 - Hypertension
 - Diabetes
 - Neurological problems
 - Tumors/Stroke

Possible Outcomes

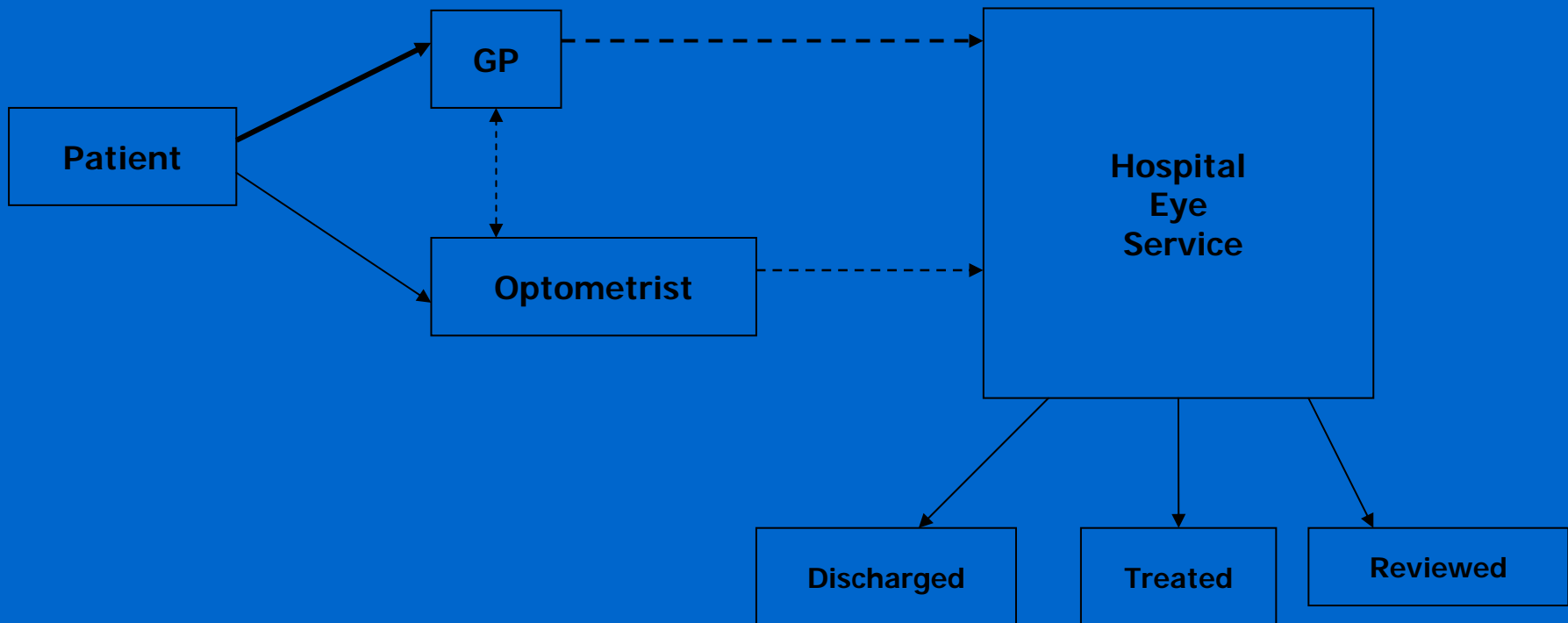
- **No Correction needed**
- **Correction needed... Rx MUST be issued**
 - **Changed/New Rx**
 - **No Change**
- **Referral to GP or Hospital**
- **Treatment by Optometrist (private)**
 - **Dry eye**
 - **Exercises**

The future of Optometric Services in the UK

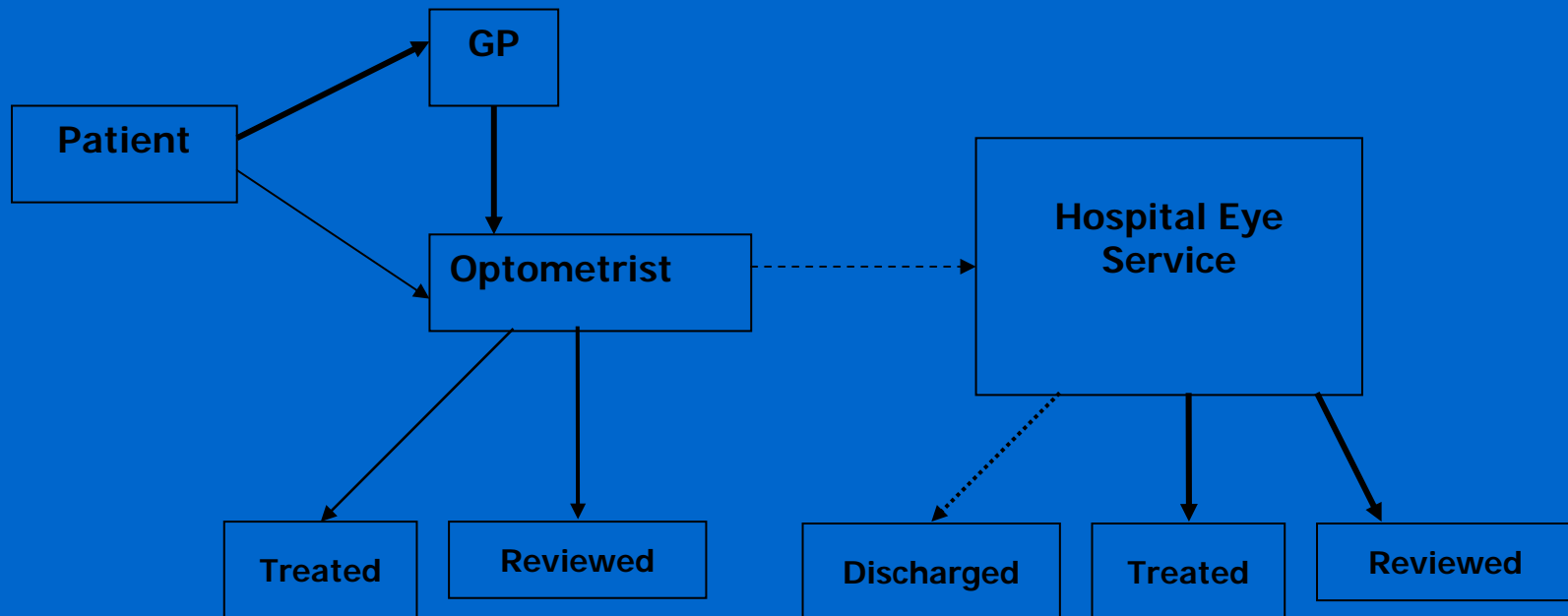
- **Wales and Scotland now have additional NHS services available**
 - “Needs Driven” not “Fixed Menu”
 - Symptom Led
 - Primary Eye Care Triage
 - Allow Follow up/Treatment
- **Independent Prescribing likely during 2008**

Referral Refinement and Disease Co-Management by Community Optometrists

Current Pathway



Referral Refinement



Red Eye

- **75% of patients currently go to GP first**
- **GPs have limited expertise and resources**
- **95% admit they usually prescribe antibiotic drops no matter what**
- **Only 50% actually have bacterial infection**

Red Eye

- Allergy, virus, or dry eye
- Little differential diagnosis
- Some go to the optometrist in desperation
- This would be a private examination.

Glaucoma

- **Accounts for:**
 - 20% of new referrals
 - 30% of follow-ups
- **Manchester survey found that 40% of referrals are false positives**
- **Repeat tests improve detection**

Glaucoma

- **Manchester scheme has reduced false positives to 0%**
- **Studies show good potential correlation in decision making between ophthalmologists and optometrists.**

Acute conditions, e.g. Flashes & floaters, Wet AMD

What optometry can offer:

- Expertise
- Equipment
- Established protocol
- More appropriate referral.

Typical cases where optometry can make a difference

Blepharitis

Papilloedema

Acute glaucoma

AMD

Cataract

- **Cataract assessment scheme**
- **Many schemes nationally**
- **Enhanced examination**
- **More discussion with patient**

Cataract

Reduced number of referrals

+

Higher percentage of patients listed

=

- **More appropriate referrals**
- **More convenience for patients**
- **Reduced anxiety for patients**
- **Better use of Hospital Eye Service.**

The Business Case

- **Wales-only 20% required referral and 96% accurate diagnosis**
- **Reduce Referrals to HES by 30%**
- **Reduce follow-ups by 30%**
- **Reduce GP appointments**

The Business Case

- **Ensure effective treatment**
- **Ensure rapid access**
- **Potentially save Several £100,000s**
- **Assist with 18 Weeks**
- **Reduce waiting times.**

How to set up local schemes

- **GOS framework**
- **Commissioning toolkit**
- **Key contacts**

GOS Review 2007

- **National framework for commissioning primary ophthalmic services**
- **Essential services, which all PCTs must commission**
- **Additional services, which all PCTs must commission, but not all practices provide**
- **Enhanced services, which PCTs can choose to commission**
- **Commissioning toolkit**

Commissioning toolkit

- **Designed to provide PCTs with practical advice on commissioning community based eyecare services**
- **Draws from evidence in pilot pathways**

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_063978

Key contacts

- **Local Optical Committee.**
 - Set up to advise on matters relating to optometry, eyecare services, PCTs
 - Will be able to access details of schemes that are up and running elsewhere, through central support unit.

Reference

General Ophthalmic Services Review January 2007

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_063984

Commissioning Toolkit

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_063978

Practice based commissioning

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Policyandguidance/Organisationpolicy/Commissioning/Practice-basedcommissioning/FAQonly/DH_065204

Eye Care Wales

www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/home.cfm?OrgID=562

Optometry Scotland

www.optometryscotland.org.uk/

Q & A