

East Lancashire Local Optical Committee

Your voice in the NHS

We hope to start a regular news bulletin following our LOC meetings outlining both local and national developments but our main communication with you will be through our website (www.elloc.org)which we hope you will find helpful .Your comments and feedback would be particularly welcome .

OHT/SG Enhanced Service

Contractor practices should have received details of a new Enhanced Service to be Introduced in the area. The development of the service follows extensive and detailed discussions but we have expressed our concerns that only practices with a Humphrey met the required specification. Many practices which could otherwise meet the requirements are effectively excluded. As an LOC however we can never advise practices not to enter into Enhanced Contracts as these are contracts between the individual Contractor and the contracting authority .Set out below, for information, is a copy of the Chairman's response to the PCT setting out the LOC views. If you are a practice which would have met the Specification ,apart from a Humphrey, you may wish to consider advising the PCT so that they are aware of your interest

Please let me know:

- If you have a Humphrey and intend to apply to provide the service
- If you do NOT have a Humphrey but would have wished to provide the service

Regretfully, I write to say how disappointed the LOC is by the decision of the commissioners to insist on the requirement of a Humphrey visual field analyser (VFA) for participation in the OHT/suspect glaucoma monitoring service. This will limit the service to a very small number of practices, significantly reducing the "locality" aspect of the service for the patients and thereby placing a significant burden on those who do participate. The envisaged initial number of patients transferred to this service might be small, but the epidemiology studies discussed suggest a sizeable cohort as the service is developed - even taking the smallest estimate available. Furthermore - to our knowledge - no other community-based optometry OHT/suspect glaucoma monitoring service in the country has such a requirement.

This decision has no evidence base and is being considered for convenience reasons only as far as can be seen. We believe that such a requirement for a stable glaucoma scheme is justifiable, but not for OHT monitoring or suspect glaucoma. This scheme is not monitoring VF defects requiring compatibility with the HES; by definition these patients do not have glaucomatous progressive field defects, so detection is all that is required - and NICE state that supra-threshold VF assessment is sufficient. Development of a community optometry stable glaucoma monitoring service and training of practitioners to facilitate such a scheme will take a very considerable period of time, and to specify the need for a Humphrey VFA for the OHT/suspect glaucoma service with a view to stable glaucoma monitoring at some future time is, we feel, a very arbitrary course of action.

If this is the final decision of the commissioners the LOC will, regrettably, be unable to support them further with this service development, and will advise the contractors it represents regarding the reasons behind this decision. This has not been taken lightly, but has been made after lengthy

discussion involving all the LOC membership. In light of this, I am afraid that access to the various LOCSU documents and LOCSU/WOPEC training discs to support the implementation of the scheme will also not be possible.

If the commissioners wish to reconsider or discuss this further then we would welcome the opportunity to meet.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Future Training/Update Events

We are looking to mount two CET accredited training events in the near future:

- Record Keeping and Referrals (Trevor Warburton)
- Peer Review

We would value feedback on these and any other areas you feel a training/update session would be useful. Although planning for these events is in the early stage it would also be helpful to have some indication as to whether you are likely to attend one or both of the proposed update courses so we can gauge the suitability of venue etc.

Details will appear on the website

Zero Tolerance

We have asked the PCTs to issue guidance on Zero Tolerance and what to do when faced with a violent patient. Call the police is the simple answer but hopefully the PCT ,from experience, may be able offer further advice.

NHS Reform

Your Committee has engaged with Dr Mike Ions (Burnley) and Dr Chris Clayton(Blackburn with Darwen) who are the respective Clinical Commissioning Group leads. Whilst this is early days we would hope to work with the CCGs to develop eye care services in the area as a continuation of the work that has already taken place within the Pennine Lancashire Ophthalmology Development Group presently fronted by the PCTs.

We have also secured membership of the Lancashire wide Eye Care Transformation Board which will be an advisory body on co-ordinating provision of eye care services across the County. The first task of the Board is to develop an Eye Care Strategy and work on this will commence shortly.

Liaison is also taking place between your Committee and medical, dental and pharmaceutical colleagues to ensure we all keep abreast of developments in what is an ever changing world of the NHS !

Future structure of the LOC

As a consequence of the NHS changes and the demise of PCTs next year we are awaiting further information as to the implications for local representative committees .We are also in discussions with colleagues from all the Lancashire LOCs as to how best we should

develop and a structure to meet the new pressures of the competitive “ market” ,the impact of which on contracting for enhanced or additional services has yet to be fully seen.

Future Communication

Final reminder to Contractors and Performers to view the LOC website for regular updates on what is happening both locally and nationally and for anyone to provide me with email address so we can circulate any further information