



## Ophthalmic Services

### General Ophthalmic Services Memorandum

9th November 2022

**To all Optometrists and  
Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners  
providing General Ophthalmic Services**

**This MOS replaces MOS 285**

Updated guidance on examining patients with specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia, and additional guidance on the supply of optical appliances for the management of myopia.

#### **Optometric management of patients with learning difficulties**

All children under 16 years old, and those under 19 in full time education, are eligible for General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) sight tests to investigate and manage conventional visual problems. However specific investigations and treatment associated with learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia, such as ‘vision therapy’ or colorimetry are currently outside the scope of GOS. This applies to both children and to adults who are eligible for GOS.

The following are **not** currently facilitated under GOS as their benefit is not fully evidence based at present.

- Early recall of children or adults for reviews of ‘vision therapy’ in relation to their learning difficulty.
- Glasses, tints etc. prescribed to “treat” learning difficulties.
- Any prescribing and resultant supply of glasses as an outcome of a private examination e.g. as an outcome of a “School Vision Assessment”.

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There is currently insufficient evidence to support this provision under GOS and the above listed elements may only be provided/supplied in a private capacity. Practitioners are reminded of the current guidance on GOS sight test intervals (please refer to MOS 275) and the requirement that appropriate clinical reasons must be given to justify an early retest. The recall period and the prescription issued, including prescribing of any tints or prisms under GOS must be based solely on the tests undertaken during the GOS sight test and associated findings.

The diagnosis, treatment and management of learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, are multidisciplinary stretching across health and education sectors. The College of Optometrists encourages evidence based practice and optometrists are referred to the specific College guidance *click link* [Examining patients with Learning Difficulties](#).

**However, you are reminded that this prescribing and vision therapy is currently undertaken outside the regulatory framework for General Ophthalmic Services and, as such, a GOS voucher cannot be used when supplying glasses or optical appliances for vision therapy.**

### **Myopia Control**

While there are new and emerging approaches to managing myopia, particularly in children, there is not, as yet, sufficient evidence to facilitate these methods under GOS.

Therefore, as with vision therapy above, a GOS voucher **cannot** currently be used in association with glasses or other optical appliances provided for myopia control correction. These glasses or appliances must be provided in a private capacity.

Any recall, out with recommended GOS sight test intervals, for the purpose of monitoring or managing” treatment” of myopia must also be provided in a private capacity.

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Probity processes include monitoring of prescribing patterns and the checking and verification of claims based on record reviews. Where any inappropriate claims in relation to the above categories are identified, recovery of the associated payments will be sought.

The College of Optometrists also offers specific guidance for Optometrists in relation to myopia management *click link* [Childhood Onset Myopia Management](#)

Any queries should be directed to [ophthalmic.services@hscni.net](mailto:ophthalmic.services@hscni.net)

