



Department
of Health

22 March 2016

**GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES: NHS SIGHT TEST FEE, INCREASES TO
NHS OPTICAL VOUCHER VALUES, PAYMENTS FOR CONTINUING
EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND PRE-REGISTRATION SUPERVISORS GRANT**

Summary

I am writing to notify you of:

- 1) the NHS sight test fee and NHS domiciliary fees for 2016/17
- 2) increases in optical voucher values from 1 April 2016
- 3) increases in the Hospital Eye Service charges from 1 April 2016
- 4) continuing education and training payment for 2015, payable in 2016
- 5) grant payable to supervisors of pre-registration trainees from 1 April 2016; and
- 6) a change in arrangements for claiming the Special Facial Characteristics supplement in Primary Care from 1 April 2016

Please could you bring this information to the attention of all staff dealing with General Ophthalmic Services, the Hospital Eye Service, Optometrists and Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners.

1. NHS sight test fee/NHS domiciliary fee

The NHS sight test fee and NHS domiciliary fees remains unchanged for 2016/17 and payments should continue to be made in accordance with the General Ophthalmic Services Contracts (Payments) Directions 2015, issued on 5 August 2015.

2. NHS Optical Voucher Values

Please pay suppliers the increased voucher values in respect of all vouchers presented by patients on or after 1 April 2016.

Please note that the Statutory Instrument (SI) has been laid and is available at www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi under SI number 325 (2016) for those of you who wish to hold a copy.

Details of the new optical voucher values are in Annex A and B:

Annex A: Revised optical voucher values and supplements.
Annex B: Revised voucher values for repair and replacement.

3. Hospital Eye Service

Maximum Charge

From 1 April 2016, the Hospital Eye Service maximum charges will be:

£70.00 for single vision lenses; and
£113.80 in any other case.

Charge for Contact Lenses

From 1 April 2016 the charge for contact lenses will be £57.00 per contact lens supplied.

The NHS (Charges for Optical Appliances) Directions 2016

The National Health Service (Charges for Optical Appliances) Directions 2016 are also attached.

4. Payments for Continuing Education and Training

Following consultations with representatives of the professions, the Secretary of State has agreed that payments should be made in respect of continuing education and training undertaken by optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners without another medical appointment (i.e. who do no other remunerative work but the testing of sight). The payment for 2015 is £540. Payments will be made in respect of claims made by optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners relating to CET training undertaken during the year from 1 January to 31 December 2015. This year the period during which optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners may make their claims will be 1 July – 31 October 2016.

Payments should be made in accordance with The General Ophthalmic Services Contracts (Continuing Education and Training Allowance) Payment Directions 2016 and the attached guidance (Annex C).

A claim form is also available on the website and may be downloaded for completion and submission to Area Teams.

Area Teams (or their support agency) are asked to provide optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners listed with them with a copy of the note at Annex C and a copy of the claim form. They may wish to do this at the same time as sending out payment advice rather than making a separate mailing.

5. Pre-registration Training for Optometrists

From 1 April 2016 the allowance paid to supervisors of pre-registration trainees will increase to £3,479. Claims from trainers taking on pre-registration trainees on or after 1 April 2016 should be paid at this new rate.

6. Special Facial Characteristics

Where a patient's facial characteristics requires a frame to be custom made, or specially adapted, a Special Facial Characteristics supplement (SFC) may, from the 1st April 2016, be claimed by GOS contractors in Primary Care.

Prior to 1 April 2016, this supplement was restricted to Hospital Eye Service Departments. This change is being introduced to make arrangements more convenient for patients and to reduce pressure on secondary care.

The GOS forms have not yet been amended to reflect the new supplement and we would therefore advise contractors to tick the Small Glasses Supplement box and annotate the form with 'SFC', until such time as new forms are available.

This supplement, payable from 1 April 2016 is £64.20.

Yours sincerely,

Derek Busby
Dental & Eye Care Services

Annex A

| Voucher Values and Supplements from 1 April 2015 Type of optical appliance | Old value | New value |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| A. Glasses with single vision lenses of a spherical power of not more than 6 dioptres with a cylindrical power of not more than 2 dioptres. | £38.70 | £39.10 |
| B. Glasses with single vision lenses- (a) of a spherical power of more than 6 dioptres but less than 10 dioptres with a cylindrical power of not more than 6 dioptres; (b) of a spherical power of less than 10 dioptres with a cylindrical power of more than 2 dioptres but not more than 6 dioptres. | £58.70 | £59.30 |
| C. Glasses with single vision lenses of a spherical power of 10 or more dioptres but not more than 14 dioptres with a cylindrical power of not more than 6 dioptres. | £86.00 | £86.90 |
| D. Glasses with single vision lenses- (a) of a spherical power of more than 14 dioptres with any cylindrical power; (b) of a cylindrical power of more than 6 dioptres with any spherical power. | £194.10 | £196.00 |
| E. Glasses with bifocal lenses of a spherical power of not more than 6 dioptres with a cylindrical power of not more than 2 dioptres. | £66.80 | £67.50 |
| F. Glasses with bifocal lenses- (a) of a spherical power of more than 6 dioptres but less than 10 dioptres with a cylindrical power of not more than 6 dioptres; (b) of a spherical power of less than 10 dioptres with a cylindrical power of more than 2 dioptres but not more than 6 dioptres. | £84.80 | £85.60 |
| G. Glasses with bifocal lenses of a spherical power of 10 or more dioptres but not more than 14 dioptres with a cylindrical power of not more than 6 dioptres; | £110.10 | £111.20 |
| H. Glasses with prism-controlled bifocal lenses of any power or with bifocal lenses- (a) of a spherical power of more than 14 dioptres with any cylindrical power; (b) with a cylindrical power of more than 6 dioptres with any spherical power. | £213.40 | £215.50 |
| I (HES) Glasses not falling within any of paragraphs 1 to 8 for which a prescription is given in consequence of a testing of sight by an NHS Trust. | £198.80 | £200.80 |
| J Contact lenses for which a prescription is given in consequences of a sight test by an NHS trust or NHS foundation trust. | £56.40 | £57.00 |

| | Old value | New value |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Complex Lens Voucher | | |
| Single Vision | £14.50 | £14.60 |
| Bifocal | £37.00 | £37.40 |
| Tints/photochromic Lens Supplement (per lens) | | |
| Single Vision | £4.30 | £4.40 |
| Bifocal | £4.80 | £4.90 |
| Prism (per lens) | | |
| Single Vision | £12.50 | £12.60 |
| Bifocal | £15.20 | £15.40 |
| Small Glasses Supplement | £63.60 | £64.20 |
| Supplement for Special Facial Characteristics | £63.60 | £64.20 |

Annex B

Repair or Replacement Values from 1 April 2016

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| One lens | 12.15 | 22.25 | 36.05 | 90.60 | 26.35 | 35.40 | 48.20 | 100.35 | 93.00 |
| Two lenses | 24.30 | 44.50 | 72.10 | 181.20 | 52.70 | 70.80 | 96.40 | 200.70 | 186.00 |
| Front of frame | 12.45 | 12.45 | 12.45 | 12.45 | 12.45 | 12.45 | 12.45 | 12.45 | 12.45 |
| Side of frame | 7.35 | 7.35 | 7.35 | 7.35 | 7.35 | 7.35 | 7.35 | 7.35 | 7.35 |
| Whole frame | 14.80 | 14.80 | 14.80 | 14.80 | 14.80 | 14.80 | 14.80 | 14.80 | 14.80 |

Note:

1. Where the small glasses supplement or special facial characteristics supplement applies, the amount payable for repair of:

the front of the frame is £57.00
the side of the frame is £30.80
the whole of the frame is £64.20

2. Where more than one repair is made to an optical appliance, the total paid must not exceed the aggregate of the amounts for replacing two lenses in the above schedule, and repairs to the part of the frame must not exceed £14.80.

Replacement - Contact lenses

If only one of a pair of contact lenses is replaced the voucher value is £57.00. These provisions for contact lenses only apply to clinically necessary contact lenses prescribed by the HES or NHS Trust.

Annex C

General Ophthalmic Services - payments for continuing education and training

The Department of Health has agreed with the optical profession and the British Medical Association that a payment should be made in respect of loss of earnings associated with continuing education and training.

The payment

The payment in respect of CET undertaken between 1 January to 31 December 2015 is £540 and will be payable in 2016. The payment is due in respect of -

(a) optometrists; and

(b) ophthalmic medical practitioners, who conduct only sight tests and have no other remunerated medical employment (such as hospital work or general practice),

who were on the ophthalmic performers list for at least six months between 1 January to 31 December 2015 and have maintained their professional registration. The payment is for having undertaken appropriate continuing education and training.

Claims must be made in writing to the appropriate Area Team (or where the Area Team uses a support agency to the agency) and be made by contractors whether the contractor is claiming for him/herself or for a performer.

For contractors on a Performers List who are claiming a payment in respect of CET they personally have undertaken, the claim should be made to an Area Team (or support agency) in whose area they have a contract and with which they undertake the most work (if they have contracts with more than one Area Team).

When contractors claim for a performer, the claim should normally be made by and paid to the contractor for whom the performer works. Where a performer is employed by two or more contractors, the CET allowance should be claimed by and paid to the contractor whom the performer nominates for the purpose of payment of the CET allowance. The contractor shall make the claim to the Area Team which manages that performer's Performers' List arrangements.

A separate claim shall be made for each performer in respect of whom an allowance is payable and only one claim shall be made for each performer.

Payments must be made to contractors. Arrangements for payments to individual performers are a matter for agreement between contractors and performers and not a matter for the NHS. In cases where the contractor has provided or made available to the performer in paid time, or under an alternative arrangement agreed between them, sufficient CET to enable the performer to meet the statutory requirements for compulsory CET (in the case of an optometrist subject to the requirements of the GOC) then the payment may be retained by the contractor. However if the contractor

has not provided or made available to the practitioner sufficient CET to enable them to meet the statutory requirements for compulsory CET, the payment is due to the performer.

For ophthalmic medical practitioners the payment may only be made to practitioners who have no other medical appointment i.e. who do no other remunerative work than the testing of sight.

A claim may only be paid in respect of somebody who has maintained their professional registration during 2015. Performers who are no longer registered or on the performers list at the time of making the claim, for example because of retirement, must produce evidence to show they were registered and on the performers list during the relevant period in support of their claim.

Performers are not required to produce direct evidence of undertaking CET as a compulsory part of the claim or pre-condition of payment as this is already a condition of continuing registration. However, Area Teams may conduct sample or selective checks if they deem it necessary to test the probity of NHS payments after they have been made.

The claim form may be downloaded by Area Teams for issue to contractors on their lists. Contractors or performers may also, if they wish, download the form for submission to their Area Teams.

This year the period for making claims runs from 1 July to 31 October 2016.