

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL OPTICAL COMMITTEE

Chair: Adam Holliday
Deputy Chair: Roma Malik

Bi-Monthly Meeting

Nottinghamshire Local Optical Committee
Bi-Monthly Meeting
Tuesday 20th July 2021
Virtual Meeting – via Zoom

Present: Roma Malik **Deputy Chair**
Indy (Indervir) Atwal **Treasurer**
Andrew Spybey
David Cartwright
David Bennett
John Yeomans
Mo Aslam

In Attendance: Sam Stretton **Administrator**
Anthony Harvey
Sonia Jethwa

Roma Malik welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. **Apologies for Absence**

Adam Holliday Chair, Sameen Qayyum and Richard Rawlinson Optical Lead at LOCSU

3. **Minutes of previous meeting – 16th March 2021 - Matters arising**

NHS X

David Bennett asked David Cartwright if the service specifications for the seven regions had been published yet, especially the one of the Midlands.

David Cartwright advised that the service specification for the Midlands had just gone out or is about to go out. It is expected that there will be further progress with this following the tender process in September. Nottinghamshire however will not be taking this up until 2022.

Eye Health Strategy Board

David Bennett again asked David Cartwright if he could provide more details on the Clinical Council for Eye Health Commission paper that was released yesterday on the Low Vision working group survey findings and recommendations.

David Cartwright was not aware that the paper had been published / circulated yesterday and had therefore not seen it.

David Cartwright felt that the provision for low vision in Nottinghamshire was not fit for purpose and expects that nobody knows where to refer patients to. Michael Conroy Chief Executive of MySight, is producing a paper for the Eye Health Strategy Board for September, outlining ideally what he would like to do. David went on to say that there are positive conversations taking place around getting more ECLO's into secondary care. This will be part funded jointly by the RNIB, CCG and the Trusts. Michael is also proposing a similar single point of access model to what is in place in Manchester. A discussion took place around patients being registered as visually impaired and the delay in the registration process, due to ophthalmologists only being able to do this.

David Bennett asked if there was any update in regards to the cataract pathway. Roma Malik advised that there was nothing new to report at the moment, however it is felt by the working group that this is something that can be implemented quite quickly. Concerns had been raised in regard to training and also standardising the type of questions that are asked. The eReferral system would make a good platform for the pathway when it goes live as mandatory fields could be set out to ensure that patients met the referral criteria. David asked how this would be funded. Unfortunately Roma was not able to advise on this as the working group had not yet been provided with this information. David Cartwright advised that another meeting is taking place next week and it is hoped that the pathway is given the go ahead to move forward. Those present then discussed the fee structure for the pathway and how this would be negotiated or would it be a case of being told what it is. It is hoped that the commissioners will discuss fees with the LOC, who are best placed to advise on both the time it takes to see these patients and also the cost to the practice in doing so. David Cartwright suggested that at next week's pathways meeting, perhaps the question should be asked as to whether we accept the Derby model which is actually the same as the LOCSU model. Then we can see what is expected of both the pre-cataract and post cataract pathway. At this stage the LOC could meet again to discuss a realistic fee structure. All those present agreed this was a good approach to take.

4. Committee Co-option of Dispensing Optician Representative

Tony Harvey has been attending LOC meetings as a guest and had indicated that he would like to become more involved with the committee and the work it undertakes. Due to a vacancy becoming available, Sam Stretton emailed the committee and asked if they would consider co-opting Tony. Everyone was happy with this and Tony was formally co-opted at tonight's meeting.

5. Eye Health Strategy Board / Training Update

This was mostly covered under matters arising.

David Cartwright did advise however that one of the items being discussed by the Prevention and Awareness group was Children's Screening. The idea was to give an information leaflet to parents of 4-5 years olds to encourage them to take their child to an Opticians for a sight test. The intension is still to do this and leaflets will be handed out from September 2021. This is not an idea approach, but Public Health are not looking into a screening programme currently. Those present discussed the Thomson screening software, which will be promoted as part of National Eye Health Week.

David went on to say that at the moment there is a lot of pressure in the system to reduce the number of patients and referrals into secondary care. Hence the focus on the cataract pathway and also the glaucoma pathway, however David advised that he has not heard a lot about the latter. Roma advised that at the last meeting when the glaucoma pathway and hubs were discussed, a list was drawn up as to what and when things could be implemented. This also included equipment that would be required and also staffing, both of which would require funding which appeared to be an issue at this stage. Those present then discussed the training monies that had become available. David suggested some form of training from a referral point of view, with a view to reducing the number of inappropriate referrals that go into secondary care. Adam Holliday ran some educational events for community optometrists previously on good and bad referrals, which he has been asked to do again. David has also asked secondary care to be involved in regard to what they feel are good and bad referrals. Those present discussed this and it was felt that this should be primary care driven and not secondary care driven. Referrals are generated from GOS sight tests and it is up to us as a peer group to decide what information needs to go onto a referral. Roma felt running two events would be a good idea, one from a primary care perspective and the other from a secondary care perspective. The lack of feedback on referrals was also discussed and this was something that optometrists would like to receive when they have referred one of their patients. It is hoped that the eReferral system will address this when in place.

6. National Eye Health Week – 20th September to 26th September 2021

David Cartwright declared an interest as Chair of the Eye Care Trust that runs this.

David has previously spoken to both Adam Holliday and Roma Malik about sourcing a small group from the LOC, to talk to other health care professionals about eye health week and promoting the work undertaken by community optometrists and optical practices.

Sam Stretton asked David if he could share more information when it became available so this could be uploaded onto the LOC website.

7. QMC Waiting Times for Various Specialities

David Bennett asked for this to be put on the agenda as he would like the LOC to lead on this and obtain ophthalmology waiting time data on a monthly basis if possible. Having this information would make conversations easier with both colleagues in secondary care and patients seen in practice, in regard to how long they can expect to wait for an appointment. The length of wait is not an issue, it's the lack of communication to primary care that is the issue. Andrew Spybey went on to say that in Nottinghamshire Health Harmonie appear to have access to all the waiting times in secondary care.

Following discussion it was agreed that the LOC would write to the commissioners asking for this information to be provided as this would help improve patient management and expectations.

8. Any Other Business

Woodthorpe Hospital

In his absence, Adam Holliday asked Sam Stretton to raise this. He would like to know if the committee feel that a communication should be sent to all practices in regard to completing post-operative cataract paperwork handed to them for completion by patients who have had surgery at the Woodthorpe Hospital. Those present agreed that a communication should be sent advising practices that they are not required to do this and therefore shouldn't until such time that a protocol has been agreed and put in place. It was also suggested that this was raised with the CCG.

Date and times of future meetings:

Bi-Monthly Meeting – Tuesday 21st September 2021 at 7.00pm
Bi-Monthly Meeting – Tuesday 23rd November 2021 at 7.00pm
Bi-Monthly Meeting – Tuesday 25th January 2022 at 7.00pm
Bi-Monthly Meeting – Tuesday 22nd March 2022 at 7.00pm
AGM – Tuesday 10th May 2022 at 7.00pm