

## LOC HOT BRIEF

Confidential to Optical Contractors & Performers • October 2014 • Issue 33

### Private & Confidential

Dear Colleagues

LOC Hot Briefs contain guidance and advice from the Optical Confederation and LOCSU on important issues relevant to all ophthalmic contractors and performers, which we would like LOCs to be aware of or to take action on.

Any LOC requiring advice/support on any aspect of their work should contact LOCSU on 020 7549 2051 or email [info@locsu.co.uk](mailto:info@locsu.co.uk).

### Contents

1. Post Payment Verification Activity in Merseyside
2. Update on the Transformation of Primary Care Support Services
3. New GOS 18 forms confirmed
4. Prioritising quality personalised individual eye care in residential/care settings

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## 1. Post Payment Verification Activity in Merseyside

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The Optical Confederation has become aware of heightened Post Payment Verification (PPV) activity in recent months by the Merseyside Internal Audit Agency (MIAA) an NHS Agency working on behalf of the NHS England Merseyside Area Team.

The MIAA seems to be targeting practices which are perceived to be outliers from GOS sight test and voucher data in terms of regularly prescribing small prescription changes, testing in advance of recall dates and regular supplements.

The approach seems to be - from the data and information held by the Area Team - to select a sample of record cards, identify a number where the reason for early recall, small prescription change or supplements is not as clearly recorded as it might be, and to extrapolate from this a very high fee and voucher value reclaim estimate.

The problem is that these are based on simple statistical extrapolations without any recourse to the optometrists who made the clinical decisions and inevitably leads auditors to overestimate possible errors. The significant figure reclaimed can be extremely intimidating for practice owners and frontline clinicians.

The Optical Confederation's recommendation is that any contractor that is contacted by MIAA should seek representative body advice rather than to go to a local legal advisor who may have little understanding of clinical practice and GOS legislation.

Your representative body contacts are:

Katie Docker ([kdocker@abdo.org.uk](mailto:kdocker@abdo.org.uk)) for ABDO members  
Gerda Goldinger ([gerdagoldinger@aop.org.uk](mailto:gerdagoldinger@aop.org.uk)) for AOP members  
Rajan Verma ([Rajan@fodo.com](mailto:Rajan@fodo.com)) for FODO members.

We are not aware of any similar PPV activity outside of Merseyside; however, LOCs are asked to remain vigilant and to notify LOCSU if any concerns come to light.

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## **2. Update on the Transformation of Primary Care Support Services**

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NHS England announced in July 2014 its decision to launch a procurement process to select a future supplier for Primary Care Support Services (PCS) services that can deliver the best efficiency, safety and value. It is anticipated that the procurement will go live shortly and that the new provider in place by April 2015.

PCS services include the processing of GOS claims and applications to the national performers list among its list of activities. LOCSU and the Optical Confederation have been invited to participate in the national stakeholder group NHS England has established to ensure that the customers of the PCS Services have a voice in the transformation programme and can participate in discussions around the selection of a new supplier.

An interim management team is being put in place to oversee the transition period from now until the new provider is in place and further updates will be provided in due course. In the meantime services will largely continue as now and primary care practitioners should continue their existing processes and relationships with the local NHS England PCS teams. It is possible that there may be some local office moves in some parts of as current leases expire and we will notify LOCs as soon as any such information emerges.

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## **3. New GOS 18 forms confirmed**

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The Department of Health has this week confirmed that distribution centres have the new GOS 18 forms and are using them to fulfil orders to contractors.

The design of the form was undertaken by a working group consisting of the representative bodies of the Optical Confederation, the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, the College of Optometrists and the Department of Health. Users will receive copies when they next apply for a stock. The new form is intended to be easier to use and provides more specific advice to GPs about the nature of the referral and what should happen to the patient.

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#### **4. Prioritising quality personalised individual eye care in residential/care settings**

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Following the recent publication of the revised domiciliary eye care Code of Practice, the Domiciliary Committee has produced the attached letter for care home staff. It highlights areas in the Code where carers can play an important role in ensuring that everyone enjoys the same high quality of personalised eye care.

The Code can be downloaded at:

<http://www.opticalconfederation.org.uk/downloads/domiciliary/domiciliary-code-of-practice-2014-final.pdf>

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