

Freedom of Information Act (Scotland)

The Optometry Scotland Approved Scheme

Welcome to the Publication Scheme for The Village Optician as required by the Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002.

Introduction

This Publication scheme is a complete guide to the information routinely made available to the public by The Village Optician, and describes the General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) we provide. GOS means the sight tests carried out by optometrists for eligible groups of the population paid for by NHS Scotland. Details of eligibility are available from the practice. This Publication Scheme will be reviewed at regular intervals and we will monitor its effectiveness.

How much does it cost?

The publications are free unless otherwise indicated (see class 7 below).

How is the information made available?

The information within each Class is available in hard copy from the practice: Any member of staff will be able to help, but in case of difficulty ask to speak to Gillian Scott. Or information can be printed from www.thevillageoptician.co.uk.

If you have queries about our scheme please contact: Gillian Scott who has overall responsibility for the scheme, and can be contacted at: 27B Montgomery Street, East Kilbride G74 4JS

Your Rights to Information

- The Freedom of Information Act (Scotland) 2002 is designed to promote openness and accountability. The obligation is on individual optometrists covered by the Act.
- This scheme uses the model publication scheme prepared by Optometry Scotland and approved by the Scottish Information Commissioner. Optometry Scotland speaks for the optical profession as a whole in Scotland and is actively supported by all the peer group and professional organisations representing optometrists and dispensing opticians in Scotland and throughout the UK. In formulating the model publication scheme Optometry Scotland took into account the views of optometrists with detailed day to day knowledge of the workings of optical practices and about information that is not patient confidential. Their input was central to the development work.
- Section 23 (3) of the Act states that in adopting and reviewing its publication scheme the GOS provider (the authority) must have regard to the public interest in:
 - (a) allowing public access to information held by it and in particular to information which:
 - (i) relates to the provision of services by it, the cost to it of providing them or the standards attained by services so provided; or
 - (ii) consists of facts, or analyses, on the basis of which decisions of importance to the public have been made by it;
 - (b) the publication of reasons for decisions made by it.

- From January 1st 2005 the Act will oblige optometrists to respond to requests about the NHS related information that they hold, and it will create a right of access to that information subject to certain exemptions listed in the Act.
- Environmental information regulations enable similar access to environmental information as under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. These regulations also come into effect in January 2005.
- Under the Data Protection Act 1998, you are also entitled to access your clinical records or any other personal information held about you and you can contact the practice to do this.

Our responsibility

All members of staff who have contact with customers or patients will be made aware of their responsibilities under the Act, where members of the public can access the publication scheme and the information it may refer to.

Feedback

If you have any comments about the operation of the Publication Scheme, or how we have dealt with your request for information from the scheme, please write to:

Gillian Scott, The Village Optician, 27B Montgomery Street, East Kilbride G74 4JS

Classes of Information

All NHS information at The Village Optician is held, retained and destroyed within NHS guidelines. Our commitment to publish information excludes any information that can be legitimately withheld under the exemptions set out in the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. Some individual classes are subject to exemptions, the main reasons being the protection of commercial interests and personal information under the Data Protection Act 1998. This Scheme has been written in accordance with those exemptions. Although a document may be within a class of information, parts of it may fall under an exemption and be withheld. However, information considered to be exempt from the publication scheme can still be requested from January 2005.

The information in this Scheme is grouped into the following classes:

1) Who we are

- Our practice background which can be obtained by contacting the practice directly
- Details of all the Opticians and Optometrists employed in our practice can be obtained by contacting the practice directly.
- Alternatively, details of all opticians and optometrists registered in the UK are available from the General Optical Council Tel: 0207 580 3898. Or online at: www.optical.org/en/utilities/online-registers.cfm

2) Our services

The Village Optician provides free NHS eye tests for those who are eligible. You may also be entitled to vouchers that can be used against the purchase of glasses or contact lenses if you require them. To find out if you are eligible for assistance please ask for details in any of our practices or visit:

www.psd.scot.nhs.uk/opticians/free-eye-tests-for-all.html

Appointments for eye tests can be booked over the phone, or by dropping into the practice. The address and phone number of our practice is:
The Village Optician, 27B Montgomery Street, East Kilbride G74 4JS
01355-244723

Additionally we provide specified eyecare services arranged and funded under locally agreed protocols - Low Vision Assessment (Lanarkshire Low Vision Project)

Opening times can vary, so please call to confirm.

We work within the regulations as laid down by the General Optical Council, the Terms of Service for General Ophthalmic Services, and the requirements of clinical governance. Our optometrists and dispensing opticians are expected to be conversant with the peer group guidance issued by the College of Optometrists and Association of British Dispensing Opticians respectively, and to attain sufficient annual credits to comply with the voluntary scheme for Continuing Education and Training.

3) Financial and funding information

For every eye test performed on behalf of the NHS the opticians practice receives a set fee of £37 for patients aged under 60, £45 for patients aged 60 and over. This contributes to, but does not fully cover expenses such as optometrist and staff salaries, equipment costs and other store overheads.

If you are not eligible for the NHS eye test, please contact our practice for details of our current charges.

4) Information on eyecare for the public

Information about optical and ocular conditions, eye tests, glasses, and contact lenses, is freely available from our practice. A set of leaflets are available from The College of Optometrists:

www.college-optometrists.org/en/knowledge-centre/publication/patient-leaflets/

Additionally the information can be found on our website: www.thevillageoptician.co.uk

5) Complaints

If you have a complaint about any of our products or services, we recommend that you first discuss any problems with the practice. If the matter cannot be resolved in this way or you are unsatisfied with the response you receive please contact Gillian Scott on 01355-244723. A full copy of our complaints policy is available on request.

If you are still unable to resolve any complaint you have recourse to:

The Optical Consumer Complaints Service
P.O. Box 4685
London SE1 6ZB
Tel: 020 7261 1017

If you think that we have failed to provide information, we again recommend that you discuss the problem with the practice. If you are still not satisfied, you can complain to the Scottish Information Commissioner who oversees the Act and whose contact details are:

Kevin Dunion OBE
Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St. Andrews
Fife KY16 9DS

From 1st January 2005, when the general right of access comes into force, there will be a formal appeal mechanism when information is withheld. Further details on this will be available on the Scottish Information Commissioner's website at: www.itspublicknowledge.info before this date.

6) Our policies and procedures

Such as:

- Complaints
- Data protection
- Health and safety

are available on request from:

The Village Optician, 27B Montgomery Street, East Kilbride G74 4JS

7) Information management policies

In this class we will publish the criteria on which our information management policies are made and a referral point for all enquires regarding information management generally in practice.

Cost of Information

There is no charge for retrieving and locating information under the scheme and, for the most part, we will only charge for hard copies, or copies onto media. Charges are as follows and will be reviewed regularly.

- Accessed from our website – free of charge.
- Single hard copies – free of charge.
- Multiple hard copies, or archived copies will attract a charge for photocopying and postage.
- E-mail - free of charge.

Part 3. Useful Resources

Websites:

- Scottish Information Commissioner: www.itspublicknowledge.info
- UK Information Commissioner: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk
- NHS Scotland via Scottish Executive website: www.scotland.gov.uk

Publications:

- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002: www.hmsso.gov.uk

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