



ASSOCIATION OF OPTOMETRISTS  
BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION  
FEDERATION OF OPHTHALMIC & DISPENSING OPTICIANS

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## **Press Release**

**Release date:** 2 November 2007

### **Sight Test Fees increased by 2.5% Grants to Pre-registration supervisors increase from £2665 TO £2800**

The Department of Health and the Optometric Fees Review Committee have agreed an increase in GOS fees (including domiciliary fees and CET allowances) of 2.5% and an increase in the Grant to Supervisors of Pre-Registration Optometrists from £2665 to £2800 – all backdated to 1 April 2007.

The Sight Test Fee becomes £19.32, and domiciliary fees are increased to £34.02 for each of the first and second patients seen at one visit and £8.52 for each of the third and subsequent patients seen at one visit. The CET allowance for 2007 is £447 (to be claimed in 2008) and the 2007/8 pre-registration supervisors grant, £2,800.

Commenting on the announcement, **Robin Banks, Chairman of the Optometric Fees Review Committee (OFRC)**, said:

“The profession can be assured that we made a very strong case to the Department for an increase that reflected the real cost of providing the sight testing service, but once again they have been unwilling or unable to meet the profession’s reasonable demands. After much negotiation, we did manage to achieve the small concession of some additional assistance, above the 2.5% general increase, for pre-registration supervisors, but that does not

compensate for a sight test fee that has to be subsidised by those who purchase spectacles and contact lenses.

“We made clear to the Department that this settlement would add to the growing anger in the profession that their reasonableness has once again been used against them and against the interests of patients. We face constant pressure to increase the scope of the sight test and to comply with costly and time consuming further regulations, all in return for a below-inflation increase. The Department have to understand that this cannot continue.”

**David Hewlett, OFRC Secretary, said:**

“We are strongly resisting any additional burdens that could flow from the Primary Ophthalmic Services Regulations, due to be brought in next April. The Department, NHS and NHS Counter Fraud simply have to understand that we cannot take on more work for them without appropriate fees being paid. A line in the sand has been drawn and we owe it to our patients to protect their eye care service by pushing for appropriate fees and proportionate regulations. In particular, they can expect us to be absolutely ruthless about the fees we negotiate for enhanced services locally.”

**ENDS**

**Notes for Editors**

**Notification**

The Health Departments will be notifying PCTs / Health Boards as soon as possible that sight test fees (including domiciliary fees) and CET allowances have been increased by 2.5% backdated to 1 April 2007. A Statutory Instrument giving effect to the change in England will be introduced in Parliament imminently. Optometry Northern Ireland and Optometry Wales will discuss implementation with their national administrations.

## **The OFRC**

The Optometric Fees Review Committee (OFRC) comprises of the Association of Optometrists, the Federation of Ophthalmic & Dispensing Opticians and the British Medical Association.

### **OFRC Members:**

#### **Association of Optometrists**

Robin Banks  
Lynn Hansford  
Bob Hughes

#### **Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians**

Michael Bateman  
Brian Carroll  
David Hewlett

#### **British Medical Association**

Rhod Daniel  
Suryanarayanan  
Nagasubramanian  
David Algie

OFRC will hold a strategy meeting later this autumn to discuss tactics for the rest of the year and for the longer-term.

Under established arrangements the Chairman and Secretary of OFRC now rotate with FODO's **Michael Bateman** becoming Chairman and AOP's **Bob Hughes** becoming Secretary.

### **For further information please contact:**

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