



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Email / Address
Y Grŵp Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Health and Social Services Group

Date / Dydiadd: Friday 07 August 2020

Dear Colleagues,

COVID 19: Optometry Amber Phase

The Welsh Government wrote to all optometry practices in July to provide additional guidance as we progress through the current Amber Phase. Further changes within the Amber Phase are detailed below. In the meantime, the prioritisation guidance and PPE arrangements remain in place.

Domiciliary Services

The routine recall of patients and the re-introduction of domiciliary eye care services will commence in the Amber Phase, as detailed in the July correspondence (domiciliary eye care services from 17 August).

Please find attached further guidance and procedures for domiciliary services and the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) Return to Work self-assessment document.

For providers of domiciliary services who have not yet completed the return to work document, please ensure this is completed and returned to NWSSP prior to providing services, as detailed in the documentation.

Financial Support

Changes will shortly be made to the monthly payments based on practice activity data submitted for analysis.

Optometry practices have continued to be supported with an average NHS monthly payment since March 2020; however, as progress is made through the Amber Phase, practice activity is increasing, indicating a resumption in services. Therefore, providers should prepare to return to the usual payment administration process, following the timeline below:

1. Payment period 28/07/2020-24/08/2020 Average NHS payment to all practices.

2. On 10/08/2020 to recommence submission of all NHS claim forms (GOS/EHEW and LVSW) for payment of, and related to, patient examinations on or after 10 August.
 - Practices to continue to provide weekly activity data up to and including week commencing 24/08/2020 and then this process will cease coinciding with when the average payment will cease.
 - Payment will be made for all claims processed from 10/08/2020
3. Payment period 25/08/2020-24/09/2020
 - Average NHS payment will cease
 - Payment will be made for all claims processed from 25/08/2020 in the usual way based on submission of claims during this time period.
 - Payment will be made for outstanding claims processed from 10/08/2020
4. Payment period 25/09/2020-27/10/2020
 - Payment will be made for all claims processed from 25/09/2020 in the usual way based on submission of claims during this time period.
 - This usual administration payment process will continue going forward.

GOS and WECS Forms

The suspension of patient signatures on GOS and WECS claim forms submitted by optometrists for payment by NWSSP will continue during the period 10/08/20 to 01/10/20 of the Amber Phase. Instead, optometrists are to write on all forms, where a patient would ordinarily sign: "COVID-19"

NWSSP will undertake an additional level of checking during the period 10/08/20 to 01/10/20 to provide assurance to the Welsh Government that services have been provided. In the meantime, the Welsh Government and NWSSP will work with other key stakeholders to review the process (suspension of signatures) as we move through the recovery process.

The Welsh Government continues to monitor the situation across the UK, Europe and the rest of the world and there are no certainties. I would therefore expect practices to continue to work with Optometry Wales to consider current and future adaptations to service delivery to accommodate what will be the 'new normal' for the foreseeable future.


The Welsh Government continues to work closely with Optometry Wales, the Welsh Optometric Committee, Health Board Optometric Advisers, NWSSP and Health Education and Improvement Wales, whilst navigating through the pandemic, and we will contact you with information as the situation evolves and further changes within the Amber Phase are required.

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Once again, I would like to thank you for the professionalism that you have demonstrated in addressing the backlog of patients waiting to access eye care during the current Amber Phase.

Yours sincerely,



David O'Sullivan

Chief Optometric Adviser / Prif Optometrig Ymgynghorol
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Directorate of Health Policy / Cyfarwyddiaeth Polisi Iechyd
Department for Health and Social Services / Yr Adran Iechyd a Gwasanaethau
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