

## General Healthcare Policy Directorate



All NI Ophthalmic Contractors  
BY EMAIL

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### CHANGES TO OPHTHALMIC FEES & ALLOWANCES FOR 2022/23

I can advise that the Department is currently working to implement the 2022/23 pay uplift for General Ophthalmic Services agreed by the former Minister Robin Swann MLA. The uplift includes:

1. a 4.5% increase on Health Service sight testing fees and domiciliary visiting fees with effect from 1 April 2022;
2. a 4.5% increase to Continuing Education and Training (CET) allowances payable to optometrists and Ophthalmic Medical Professionals in respect of training undertaken in the year to 31 December 2022; and
3. a 2% increase on optical vouchers.

The first two elements (sight test fees and CET) necessitate a legal Determination to be made by the Department and this will be completed within the next few weeks, with back payments being processed by the Business Services Organisation.

The third element (voucher values) requires an amendment to regulations, which is complicated by the absence of a Minister and a functioning Assembly. Efforts are ongoing to make the regulations in the absence of a Minister using the powers contained within the Executive Formation Act (2022).

A further communication will follow when clarification has been received regarding the use of those powers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael O'Neill', with a stylized, cursive script.

Michael O'Neill

**General Dental and Ophthalmic Services**

cc: Robbie Davis, Director of General Healthcare Policy Directorate  
Raymond Curran, Head of Ophthalmic Services (SPPG)