

12/05/2023

Dear Colleague

### **WRT NHS England Eyecare Transformation Accelerator Funding**

At the beginning of the year, I wrote out to the sector to discuss the possibility of a funding programme to support the acceleration of eyecare transformation aligned to a future model of care that we developed in partnership with the sector during 2022 (Summary Diagram Annex A). The response was fantastic and demonstrated the potential for transformation in eyecare with much activity already taking place in the sector.

Key elements of the model, in particular the single point of access (SPoA) with managed triage enabled by digital health products and services to transfer information between settings, were piloted in North Central London from October 2022 to March 2023. There were many lessons learnt and the benefits that were captured have enabled us to build a business case for funding a number of Integrated Care Systems (ICS) to accelerate their transformation plans during 2023 and 2024.

My aspiration is that we can transform the 'way in' stage by introducing a single point of access, enabled by Digital Health products and services, within a transformed model for eyecare in at least one ICS for each of the NHS regions in England during this financial year.

The funding of £3.5m, with a maximum bid of £475k, is to support ICS' to fund staffing and business change to accelerate delivery of a transformed model of eyecare (Lot 1 on application form).

Since one of the objectives of this work is to continue to build the evidence base on the benefits of this approach, the funding is to scale up an existing element of the model that is live or has already been piloted within an ICS area.

The funding is not to support proof of concepts or new pilots, but is to facilitate accelerated change of the pathway, and projects should be concentrated on how Digital Health products and services are used within a transformed model of care – rather than the funding for Digital Health products.

For that reason, NHS England will provide (centrally funded) service designers and user researchers to support you in the development of your transformed pathway through documenting the change, identifying key risks to transformation, and evaluating the impact once live.

There is also the opportunity for 3 of the ICS' to receive additional funding of £60k to support ICS staff to have time to accelerate plans to transform the entire pathway and to work with the NHS England team to build a business case for resolving barriers to achieving this at a national level (Lot

2 on application form). This is not a secondment opportunity, but a recognition that bringing practical local knowledge into national planning is essential but requires time and resources to be enabled.

There are some conditions attached to the funding, but these are centred on us working together to identify risks and issues that need to be resolved at a national level to maintain transformation.

Maintaining and building partnerships is also an important part of this work, and we will be asking for commitment to dialogue with patient bodies (such as the RNIB) regarding how the design of eyecare services can better integrate and better interact with complimentary embedding support to patients which includes information, advice and guidance about their eye condition and emotional and practical support. Working closely with primary care and the local optician community will also be critical to the success of your initiative and will need to be demonstrated.

In addition, it is important that we can collect evidence of the benefits and useful lessons learnt, to support future investment and to support other areas on their transformation journey.

In Annex B you will find an outline of the requirements and a description of the process, Appendix A – Expression of Interest form is attached as a separate file. It is worth noting we are not expecting full project plans at this stage, an outline of your proposal is sufficient, there is a period of funded development that has been built into our timelines.

There is a ‘Show and Tell’ webinar on the work completed in North Central London on implementing the SPOA and managed triage model on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 if not already in your diary please email: [England.eyecare-transformation@nhs.net](mailto:England.eyecare-transformation@nhs.net) if you would like to attend.

If you are intending to apply, then the team would appreciate notification as soon as possible using the same email: [England.eyecare-transformation@nhs.net](mailto:England.eyecare-transformation@nhs.net). The same e-mail address can be used to ask questions, and the team will endeavour to answer them straight away, but you should note there is a deadline of the 25<sup>th</sup> of May for questions to be asked. Anyone that has notified us of their intention to apply will be sent a Frequently Asked Questions summary on a regular basis.

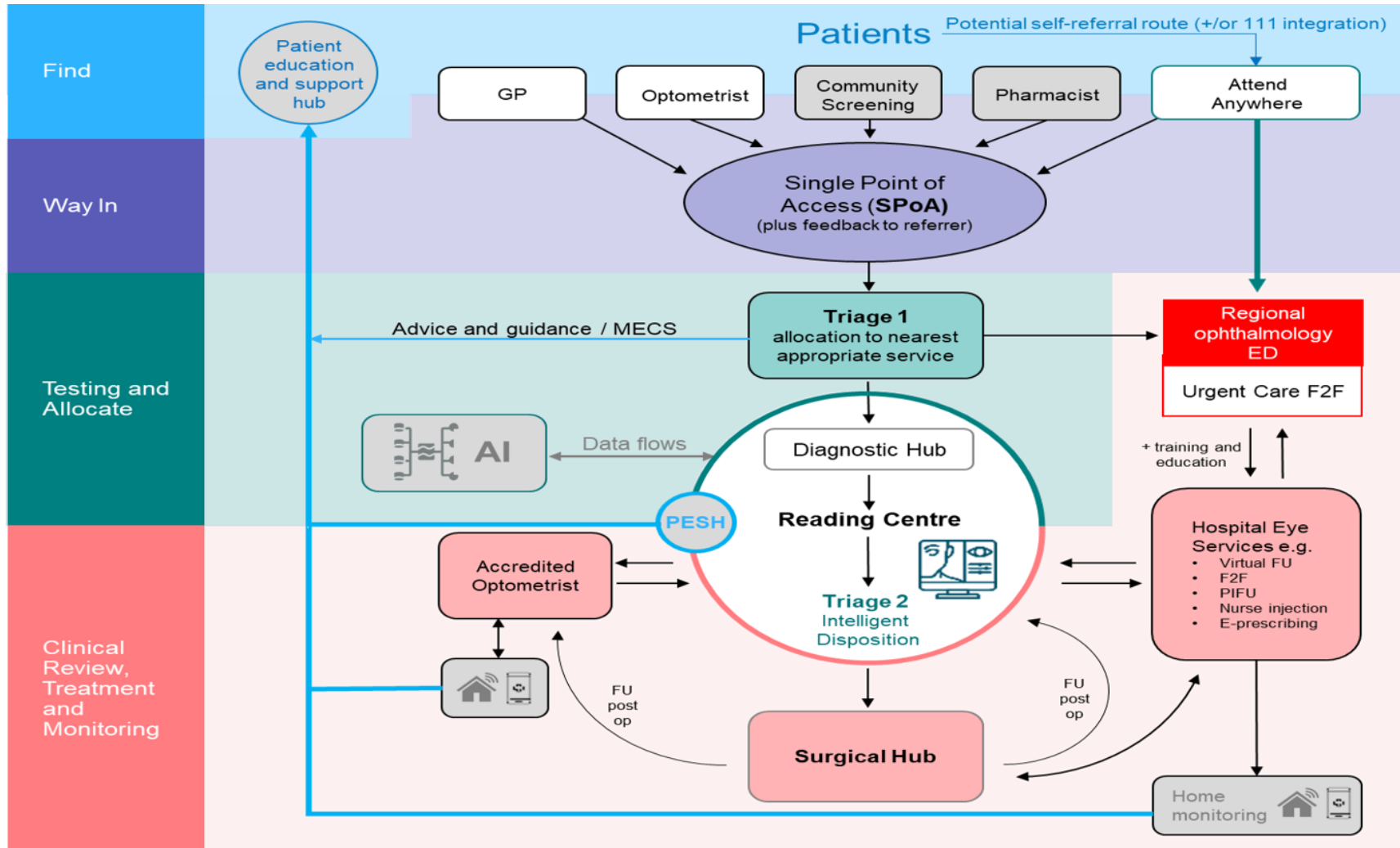
The submission date is the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2023, the bids will be assessed by a stakeholder panel that will include colleagues representing ophthalmology, optometry, and the voluntary sector. I look forward to receiving and reading the submissions and whatever the outcome working with you in the future to support the development and transformation of eyecare.

Yours Sincerely

Louisa Wickham

National Clinical Director for Eyecare NHS England

## Annex A – Transformed model of Eyecare.



## Annex B – Timeline, process and mandatory requirements

<b>Expression of Interest</b>	Launch Expression of Interest	12th May
	Questions - Submission Deadline, Questions can be sent at any time to: <a href="mailto:England.eyecare-transformation@nhs.net">England.eyecare-transformation@nhs.net</a> but questions received after the 25 <sup>th</sup> of May will not be responded to.	25th May
	Answer - Response Deadline (NHS England will answer questions as soon as possible, but all questions will be answered by this time)	26th May
	Expression of interest submission deadline	1st June
<b>ICS selection</b>	Panel review proposals and complete scoring with recommendation	W/C 5 <sup>th</sup> of June
	Communicate to successful / unsuccessful ICS's	9th June
	Formal comms announcement (TBC)	12th June
<b>Phase 1 Funding</b>	Phase 1 Funding released to ICS's	Mid July
<b>Project Planning Phase 1</b>	Projects commence with kick-off event	W/C 19 <sup>th</sup> of July
	Phase 1 conclusion	31-Aug
<b>Phase 2 Funding</b>	Phase 2 Funding released to ICS's	Mid Sept
<b>Project Delivery / Execution</b>	Projects commence with presentations and next steps	w/c 4 Sept
<b>Phase 2</b>	Phase 2 conclusion	28-Feb-24
<b>Closure</b>	Project closure / collaboration event	w/c 25/03/2024

## Process

- All ICSs in England will be invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EO), submissions must be received by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023.
- A questions and answer period has been built into the bid writing period, questions can be received at any time, and will be answered immediately. But must be received by 25<sup>th</sup> May and will be answered by 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023.
- Expression of interest will be assessed initially to ensure mandatory requirements have been met before full scoring.
- Bids that are compliant will be fully assessed by a panel of 6 members from the eyecare community (not all NHS England).
- Bids will be assessed initially on the quality of the proposal (80% of total score).
- Quality scoring will be completed by each panel member independently, following which moderation will take place to consider outlier scores.
- Budgets for each proposal will then be reviewed and a score worth 20% will be applied to give the final score.
- Bids with scores in the upper quartile will be shortlisted and sorted (high to low) by NHS region.
- Ideally the process will identify one ICS per region, if there is remaining budget following this process funding will be awarded to those ICS's who scored the highest.
- Recommendations for funding will be endorsed by the National Clinical Director for Eye care and agreed by the programmes Senior Responsible Officer.
- Applicants will be notified on the 9<sup>th</sup> June, and following agreement of a MoU will commence Phase 1 of the Project and release funding of 20% of the total amount requested – which will support successful candidates to develop a full project plan, for submission by mid-August.
- The submission of a full project plan by this date is a condition of Phase 2 funding which will represent 70% of the total funding.
- The final 10% of the funding will be released in January 2024, and is on condition of monthly reporting submitted for each month from September 2023 to January 2024.

## Mandatory requirements

ICS's will need to agree to the following key elements and will be asked to confirm this within the EOI.

- Funding will be used to support the business change and staff costs required and accelerate full establishment of the model and transformation (funding will not support proof of concepts, pilots)
- To commit to dialogue with patient bodies (such as the RNIB) regarding how the design of eyecare services can better integrate and interact with complimentary services; embedding support to patients which includes information, advice and guidance about their eye condition and emotional and practical support.
- To consider in the design of the service the potential to be accessible beyond geographical and organisational boundaries, at a minimum the proposal should show how the NHS region could benefit.
- Be open to exploration of the use of data for advanced analytics at a national level.
- Work openly with other ICS' who have received funding and meet monthly to share best practice, identify major barriers, and consider opportunities for efficiencies (e.g., joint procurement).
- Open to the challenges that a user lead design and user research approach may bring, and to ensure clinical and commissioning staff are allocated time for involvement in the user design and research and overall evaluation.
- Commit to submitting in phase 1 a full project plan, with risk log and service design process documentation by mid-August to release substantive funding.
- Commit to monthly reporting, using NHS England templates, and engagement with the central team.