

Y Grŵp Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Health and Social Services Group



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Dear Colleagues

New Wales General Ophthalmic Services Contract

I wanted to take this opportunity to write to you and update you with progress on reform following The National Health Service (Ophthalmic Services) (Wales) Regulations 2023 coming into force on 20 October 2023.

Firstly, I want to thank you, and other stakeholders from across eye care, for supporting the process, specifically those who have given up their time from their already busy day jobs since the start of our journey in the Autumn of 2019. Representation from across the whole profession throughout the scoping exercise, the numerous focus groups, workshops, contract reform development groups and implementation groups has been unparalleled. This has resulted in a whole system change in optometry, underpinned by innovative new pathways.

During the past year we have moved forward at pace to implement optometry contract reform, working across all health boards, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership and in collaboration with the profession, to effect real meaningful change in Wales.

It is a great testament to these colleagues who have facilitated the necessary changes, and the speed and agility that our optometry practices, and the profession across Wales, have worked to and be in position to deliver our nationally agreed reform and new pathways.

It is not an understatement to say that Wales is leading optometry clinical reform across the UK, and that optometrists and dispensing opticians are working at the top of their clinical licences. It is impressive to see how the profession has embraced reform, the numbers that have already gained higher qualifications, and those applying to be involved in the new models of service delivery has exceeded expectations.

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.



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Wales clinical reform will have a significant impact on patient access to specialist eye care services in primary, community and secondary care, with the associated improvements in patient outcomes.

The regulations coming into force was a significant moment; however, it was just one of many steps being taken in our journey of implementation to deliver the new clinical model of eye health care that we have been working towards.

As you know, Wales General Ophthalmic Services (WGOS) 1 and WGOS 2 pathways are fully functional, and regulations apply specifically to these two pathways. WGOS 3, 4 and 5 pathways are regulated through legislative directions (as seen previously - Eye Health Examination Wales and Low Vision Service Wales legislative directions); however, whilst WGOS 3 is fully functional, WGOS 4 and 5 pathways are the next priority for the implementation groups.

This process has begun with the introduction of the Independent Prescribing Optometry pathway for WGOS 5 to treat and manage acute presentations from primary care. We expect full implementation of WGOS 4 and 5 by the end of March 2024.

Throughout this implementation process, I would encourage you all to monitor communications from the WGOS national clinical leads and Optometry Wales.

These are exciting times for our profession, and we have much to be proud of in Wales. The new working environment is based on why optometrists and dispensing opticians entered the profession; to provide clinical services and work at the top of their licence.

I very much hope that we will continue to embrace these new opportunities together, as we deliver current reform and consider future developments to support patients and reduce unnecessary sight loss.

Yours sincerely



David O'Sullivan

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