



Association of British Dispensing Opticians
Association of Optometrists
British Medical Association
Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians

Optometric Fees Negotiating Committee

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By email

1 August 2025

GOS fees 2025/26

Dear Ali,

I am writing in response to your letter of 29 July 2025 in which NHS England presented further work it had undertaken to try and better clarify its GOS data.

As we previously discussed, OFNC has raised concerns about the data being used to set budgets for NHS primary eye care. While we note your efforts to further improve and correct previous assumptions, we also note ongoing gaps in NHS datasets and your offer to continue the discussion.

We think it would be helpful to bring together key data points and principles in one place so that we can make progress on the outstanding points; we do so in the spirit of long-term collaboration which we know the government is keen for all in the NHS to do at this time.

Briefly, OFNC raised concerns about NHS England's data several months ago and asked NHS England to check and confirm expenditure, budgets and its working assumptions to allow us to then move forward to agree 2025/26 fees. On 14 July NHS England confirmed it was confident with its data and set out that the 2025/26 budget envelope was £633m.

While we have made it clear throughout that the proposed funding would result in another real terms cut, and pushed for more investment in primary eye care, NHS England has insisted that DHSC will not change the total budget envelope, and we understand that the same principles are being applied across all NHS care.

We remain concerned about the ongoing underinvestment in NHS primary care but have continued to engage constructively with NHS England with the goal of ensuring the limited budget has the

maximum impact for patients who depend on NHS primary eye care. So, while we remain disappointed at the total budget allocated to core NHS primary eye care services and the quality of data which NHS England has shared over the negotiating period, in Appendix 1 we have taken the stated budget and the ledger NHS England provided on 29 July as the definitive spend for 2024/25 and applied the 1% uplift in activity to reflect the growth that NHS England stated it had confidence in at our meeting of 15 May 2025. With the remaining budget, we have set out what this means for the GOS 1 fee. In summary, this indicates that £24.45 per GOS sight test is within the stated budget envelope.

Funding £24.53 per sight test would cost an additional £1m and funding £25 per sight test would cost an additional £7.5m. It is therefore more than reasonable to expect the minimum payment for a GOS sight test could be £24.45 and that £24.53 is affordable. This also must be viewed in the context of NHS England acknowledging in the letter of 19 March 2025 that the OFNC has submitted good evidence with our bids which shows the cost of a sight test far exceeds this figure.

We would welcome a meeting with NHS England and DHSC so that we can collectively discuss how to move forward, especially considering the profession has, in good faith, welcomed the 10 Year Health Plan and its commitments to invest more in primary care. We all recognise the need to end the current avoidable harm that is caused to patients by delays in hospital eye care and, that to achieve this, the NHS must shift more care out of hospitals and into the community. Strong, sustainable, primary eye care is central to making that shift work — and our members are key to that transformation. They are ready to collaborate and help deliver the ambitions of the NHS 10 Year Plan. Now is the time for us to end the ongoing real terms cuts to NHS primary eye care services and agree on a better way of working together in the years ahead.

Yours sincerely

Paul Carroll

Chair OFNC

Appendix 1

Expenditure **excluding** GOS 1

Category	24/25 actual	1% growth
GOS 3	236.7	239
GOS 4	20.8	21
GOS 5	0.1	0.1
GOS 6 high and low	29.5	29.79
CET	6.5	6.56
Pre-reg	2.5	2.5
Other	0.2	0.2
Total	296.3	299.2

- Total budget £633m, less £299.2m, leaves £333.85m for GOS1.
- GOS1 activity in 2024/25 was 13,518,326, with 1% growth in 2025/26 this equates to 13,653,509.
- £333.85m for 13,653,509 sight tests equates to £24.45 per sight test.