



GOC Consultation

Service of statutory notices by email policy – FODO Response

About us

FODO – The Association for Eye Care Providers is the leading national association for eye care providers working in primary and community care settings. Each year our members provide over 18 million eye examinations and offer a wide range of other eye care services across the UK. We have seen the responses of BLM, our major legal defence provider, which we fully support and reproduce below, with our additional comments.

Questions

1. To what extent do you agree with the content of the policy?

a) Strongly agree b) **Agree** c) Neither agree nor disagree d) Disagree e) Strongly disagree

If you answered 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree', please explain your reasons.

We agree with the overall content of the policy but please see our comments below.

2. Is there anything unclear or missing in the policy?

a) **Yes** b) No c) Not sure

If you answered 'yes', please give details.

We consider that a check should be added to the process whereby the GOC send an email to the registrant's registered email address (providing that the registrant has previously consented to statutory notices being sent by email) setting out that the GOC will shortly be sending a notice by email and asking the registrant to confirm, within 48 hours, that that original email has been received. Once the registrant has replied to confirm receipt, the statutory notice can then be sent. Should the registrant not respond, we consider that the notice should be sent by post.

Registrants would then be aware that a notice was about to be received by email and so would be able to check their 'junk' email folder and to follow up if a notice were not subsequently received. If such a process is not followed, we consider that there will be too significant of a risk that an important notice could be held within a

registrant's junk email folder or in some other way not received by the registrant. We do not consider it reasonable to expect registrants to routinely check their junk email folders in case of contact from the GOC.

This process would also protect the GOC as, again, the risk of registrants not receiving important notices would be minimised and the GOC would have a record of a registrant having responded to the GOC's initial email contact.

It is crucial in our view that, in the world of electronic communications overload, the GOC is assured that electronic communications are received and by the correct recipient. These are key registrant protections and will also ensure that registration and FtP processes run smoothly for the public benefit.

3. Are there any aspects of the policy that could discriminate against stakeholders with specific characteristics? (Please consider age, sex, race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, caring responsibilities or any other characteristics.)

a) Yes b) [No](#) c) Not sure

If you answered 'yes', please give details.

4. Are there any aspects of the policy that could have a positive impact on stakeholders with specific characteristics? (Please consider age, sex, race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, caring responsibilities or any other characteristics.)

a) Yes b) [No](#) c) Not sure

If you answered 'yes', please give details.

5. Are there any other impacts (including financial) of the policy that you would like to tell us about?

a) [Yes](#) b) No c) Not sure

If you answered 'yes', please give details.

NB This document is an aide for you to see all the substantive consultation questions at once. We would be grateful if you could input your responses into our consultation hub so that we can collect information about you or your organisation and whether the response can be shared.

It will be important for the GOC to be very careful in terms of consistently using the correct email address for a registrant. We are aware of circumstances in which correspondence has been sent to one email address and then subsequent, important correspondence has been sent to a different email address.

It will be important for sufficient resources to be allocated to the task of reviewing registration renewal forms and keeping registrant's consent details up to date.

We consider that notices regarding removal from the register should still be sent by post, as well as email, to reduce the risk of an individual practising without appropriate registration, which constitutes a criminal offence.