



news

June 2011

Notes from the Chair

By now you will be aware of the recently-announced amendments to the proposed NHS reforms. Commissioning groups will now contain hospital doctors and other health professionals (including optometrists?) as well as GPs, and the 2013 deadline for these groups to take over the commissioning of local services has now been relaxed. In the meantime your LOC is still in regular contact with both PCTs, and glaucoma referral refinement schemes are still being discussed. Another item of news, that might have passed you by, is that PCTs have been directed by the Department of Health to reduce in size, and to form "clusters". This process has now happened locally, with Milton Keynes clustering with Northants, and Bucks clustering with Oxfordshire. TVPCA remains the payment agency for MK and Bucks for the present. To help steer LOCs through the changes to come, LOCSU has appointed a number of local Optical Leads, and I'm pleased to say that I am now the Lead for the South Central area.

Bruce Gilson – Chair Bucks Local Optical Committee

News in Brief

- * If you wish to discuss the outcome of your **PPV visit**, please feel free to contact the LOC for advice.
- * Although Bucks LOC no longer contributes to the **Central LOC Fund**, contractors are still free to make their own arrangements to contribute if they so wish. To learn more visit: www.centalfund.org.uk/
- * **New to the Area?** Have a look at our website www.loc-net.org.uk/bucksloc to learn more about LOC activities and local referral schemes, or to download past copies of this newsletter. Links and downloads are also available for current national initiatives, like the Optical Confederation **Children's Campaign**, and Age UK's **Falls Awareness Week**.
- * Please ensure that you are using the most recent version of your local **Eyecare Pathways** sheet. The MK sheet was updated in July 2010 and the Mid & South Bucks one in March 2011. Both are available on our website in the Local Schemes and Forms section.
- * **Please don't email referrals** unless you are sending them from and to an nhs.net email address. The LOC is trying to acquire these for all practices; watch this space.

Education

- The **Chiltern Peer Review Group** will next meet at Amersham Hospital on 21st September at 7.00pm. Contact Anne Frier for more information.
- The **Milton Keynes Peer Review Group** will next meet at Milton Keynes Village Hall at 7.00pm on 17th October 2011. Contact Claire Ranger for details.
- On 8th September at MK Hospital, Mr Bimal Kumar will be talking to us about **Common Lid, Lacrimal and Orbit Disorders**.
- On 28th September at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Mr Bruce James will enlighten us on **Interpretation of Visual Fields**.
- On 25th October at SMH, Mr Richard Smith will be telling us about how to recognise some **Things That You Don't Need to Refer**.
- Invitations for the lectures will be sent nearer the time. To be sure of receiving yours personally, please send your email address to Angela McNamee bucksloc@hotmail.com.

News from the College of Optometrists

The College played a key role in the development and delivery of a new "Careers in Optics" initiative, designed to promote optometry as a profession to school children and to raise awareness of the importance of good eye health. They are now recruiting volunteer "ambassadors" to enable them to roll this initiative out nationwide. The ambassadors will receive a free two hour training session at venues throughout the UK to ensure that they are well-equipped to deliver the workshops. If you are interested in being an ambassador for schools in Buckinghamshire then please e-mail charlotteverity@aop.co.uk or if you have any questions please call Ellen (Head of Marketing and Communications) at the College on 020 7766 4342 for more information.

Did you know that if you are a College Member you can ask for an athens username and password from the College Library to allow you to access a number of journals online? Call 020 7766 4352 to register.

If you have any questions about the College and how they can help you then please do not hesitate to contact me:
Rasmeet11@hotmail.com
Rasmeet Chadha, South East Regional Representative on College Council

Update on Cataract Referral/Accreditation

All practices should have an optometrist/OMP who is accredited to refer directly to the local hospitals for cataract surgery. **A new distance learning accreditation scheme for performers working in Bucks (not MK) PCT area** has been approved by the PCT. For information on how to access the course, please contact Angela McNamee on bucksloc@hotmail.com. Those who gained accreditation under the old scheme will still be recognised at present, but will be required to undergo the new training eventually. Please also note that, in order to complete the accreditation process, you must inform Jill Ellis once you have undergone the new training.

NOTES FROM THE OPTOMETRIC ADVISOR

Mean IOPs – Current guidelines suggest taking the mean of four IOP readings but if one reading is much higher than the other three try taking another and consider ignoring the high reading to obtain a more realistic average. This may sound common sense but apparently referrals are received with the average over 21 only because of one rogue reading.

TVPCA - This is the primary care agency which deals with GOS claims on behalf of the Thames Valley PCTs (Bucks, MK, Berks & Oxon). The staff will try to help you if necessary but they are not qualified to make clinical decisions and they should not be expected to approve claims you know are outside the regulations. Also, please do not direct patients to contact TVPCA staff by phone. Pleading for adult repairs or spare pairs because of a string of ailments and disabilities is not appropriate.

Pre-reg optoms – Just to remind students and supervisors that being qualified and on the GOC register is not enough as inclusion on a PCT ophthalmic performers list is required before any GOS work can be undertaken. Please apply early, ideally three months before qualification is expected as the necessary CRB checks take time. Supervisors cannot continue to sign forms for their pre-reg students once they are qualified and on the GOC register.

When is a sight test a sight test? – Some of you may soon discover that the Post Payment Verification (PPV) team will reclaim sight test fees if it is deemed that a whole sight test was not undertaken. Every sight test record must include evidence of a refraction, internal and external eye examinations plus other relevant tests. It is not appropriate to claim a sight test fee for investigation of flashes and floaters for example. For further clarification please look at recent joint guidance issued by The College of Optometrists and The Royal College of Ophthalmologists, available in the Practitioner Matters section of the LOC's website www.loc-net.org.uk/bucksloc

Other PPV points – Remember to record unaided vision or VA with current glasses and the reason for the sight test. Always note why a repair or replacement is needed. GOS2 & GOS3 forms should not be retained in the patient's notes as they should be handed to the patient by the optom/OMP at the end of the sight test.

Checking – All spectacles should be checked against the original sight test record or outside prescription before collection. Even if made in an onsite lab this final checking should take place and the dispensing record should be signed off by the person doing the final checking.

[Buckinghamshire LOC](http://www.loc-net.org.uk/bucksloc)
www.loc-net.org.uk/bucksloc

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