

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOC NEWS

SPRING
2007

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Welcome to another edition of the Bucks LOC newsletter. We are still working in the wake of the PCT re-organisation and trying to establish links with the right people to deal sympathetically with when Optometry is on the agenda. As we are aware Optometry is only just on the agenda as far as the NHS is concerned so when all the other professions have had their look in we may be able to get somewhere. Having said that we have continued to meet representatives of Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes PCTs in a joint representative committee. At the last meeting it was decided that in future we would meet separately with the Bucks and MK PCTs. The format and date of these meetings is yet to be set.

Following the disappointment of the GOS review we have still to decide the best way forward and have decided to subscribe to the Central Support group about which I am sure you have all read. We are hoping this will give us guidance and help for the future. Our treasurer thinks that the payment requested can be met without changing the level of statutory levy paid at the moment. Full details of this will be given at the AGM. Speaking of which I would urge you to attend the AGM and cast your vote for those who you wish to represent you for the next four years. There is the added incentive of obtaining CET points for attendance at the lecture. Some long standing members of the committee including Awen Campbell and Susanne Kelly will be standing down and I express my thanks to them for their hard work and service.

BRUCE GILSON– Chair Bucks LOC

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the LOC will this year be held on the 16th May 2007 at the Sir Henry Floyd auditorium of the Post Graduate Medical centre, Stoke Mandeville Hospital. A buffet supper is served at 6.30pm and the meeting begins at 7.00pm.

This year the LOC retires after 4 years service and a new committee is elected. If you are interested in becoming a member or would like to nominate someone please contact David Williams. David will be sending all contractors and supplementary list members full details in the near future.

We are also delighted to have Donald Cameron to speak to us on 'Defects of the Visual Pathway'. Donald was one of the architects of the Scottish Eyecare scheme and this was one of the modules needed to gain accreditation to the scheme. 2 CET points (Optometrist) are awarded for this evening.

REFRESHER COURSE

**Wednesday 7th November 2007
NATIONAL BADMINTON CENTRE
MILTON KEYNES
9.30am—5.00pm**

The popular biennial refresher course is being held again this year in November. The speakers booked are of the usual high quality and further details will be available shortly. At the moment please note the date in your diary.

WEBSITE

The Bucks LOC now has a website on the AOP hosted LOC webpages. It is as yet incomplete but when time allows it will contain all information relevant to Optometrists in Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire including all forms and instructions relating to local schemes.

Any suggestions as to content etc please make to Peter Chilton email pete@wainhill.co.uk

The website is accessed by www.Loc-net.org.uk and clicking on the link to Bucks LOC

PCT Re-organisation

The re-organisation of the PCT is still on-going slowly. Many levels of staff still face uncertainty over the future and it is still causing uncertainty with our relations to the PCT. Many of the people we have dealt with in the past have been re-appointed but not necessarily to the same job. Much of this has only happened in the last month or so. They are just getting to grips with their role and as they have to deal with all 4 contractor professions we are, as usual, bottom of the pile and it will be some time before some of our issues are addressed. We do know that some parts of the PCT will be based in Aylesbury and other parts at High Wycombe.

Also on the horizon is the amalgamation of Bucks Primary Care Support Services and Thames Valley Primary Care Agency. This is the agency which deals with payments, maintenance of the lists etc. We have little knowledge of the agency except that it is based in Reading which is not as convenient as Aylesbury. The change is due to happen on the 1st June but this has already been changed 3 times. Our main concern will initially be that there is no interruption to payments.

ROAD SAFETY

- The PCT and LOC have been working with the Road Safety Officer of Bucks County Council, in partnership with the Thames Valley Police on an eyesight campaign for Buckinghamshire. Unfortunately this has stalled because the Road Safety officer we were dealing with retired. The campaign is to raise awareness of the potential risks to all road users of driving with poor or uncorrected eyesight.
- Optical practices may be asked to display posters to compliment the local advertising which is planned to include the backs of buses and bus shelters.
- Leaflets are to be produced and practices may also be asked to distribute these.

CET CLAIM FORMS

CET claims for the year 2006 should be made between 1st June and 31st August 2007. These forms should be available shortly. Claims may only be made by contractors, so if you are an assistant (employee) your claim must be made by the contractor you work for and to the PCT you are listed with.

Retinopathy Screening

All retinopathy screening is now by means of digital imaging and must be part of a recognised scheme. This has been slow to get going but is now underway with cameras based at MK general, Stoke Mandeville, High Wycombe and Amersham hospitals. MK is generally up to date, the other hospitals are about 6 months behind for those patients deemed to not be at high risk. New staff have been recently recruited so this backlog should soon reduce. It is anticipated that the facilities will be available 9.00am to 5.00pm every day and hopefully until 7.30pm on 2 days a week. Patients will be invited to make an appointment by telephoning a call centre based in Milton Keynes. This opened at the beginning of April and the telephone number is **01908 243735**.

Patients attending the local PCT camera scheme receive a letter informing them of the result and you should ask to see it. You should make a note on your record when the patient last attended for screening and inform the GP if the interval is over 12m or if they have never been called for screening. **If you see retinopathy, which is inconsistent with the patient's report letter or their verbal report, then you should inform the GP and advise the patient to phone the scheme's call centre to arrange a re-screen.**

You should encourage patients to attend the PCT screening scheme. Patients can choose to opt out of the PCT screening scheme and may ask you to do their retinopathy check. If you decide to offer this service it will be beyond a GOS sight test and the AOP advice is as follows:

You should provide the same quality of screening as local and national standards (digital photography is recommended nationally)

You should notify the patient's GP of the full grading result, using locally or nationally agreed grading criteria.

It would not be appropriate to discourage patients from participating in the local screening scheme

NOTES FROM THE OPTOMETRIC ADVISER

If you have any questions about the topics on this page please contact me - Jill Ellis

Operation MAXIM

The Metropolitan Police have recently arrested a number of professional people who have fraudulently countersigned UK passport applications for people they do not know.

If you have not personally known them for at least two years do not be tempted to 'do someone a favour' by agreeing to countersign a passport application, or other document requiring confirmation of identity. You do not know what they will do with that fraudulent identity document and it is a possibility they want it in order to commit serious crime.

To be a passport counter signatory you have to be a professional person or a person of standing in the community who holds a current British or Irish passport. You must have known the applicant for two years, be living in the UK, and must not be related by birth or marriage to the applicant or be in a personal relationship with the applicant. It is illegal to countersign a passport application for someone you don't know.

If you have information about anyone committing any sort of identity document abuse please call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111, or contact Operation Maxim, by email on operationmaxim@met.police.uk <<mailto:operationmaxim@met.police.uk>>.

Prescribing for children even if referring

When you see a young child for the first time and decide to refer for an orthoptic assessment please prescribe glasses if there is a significant Rx. The sooner the child has glasses the better.

Reminder about frequency

Any sight test must be clinically necessary and the reason for the recall frequency should be evident from the records. It is not acceptable to recall all patients in a certain age group at the minimum frequency as laid out in the Memorandum of Understanding. For instance not all emmetropic children, or every 70 year old, needs to be seen every 12 months.

Similarly the reason for a patient requesting an early re-test should be evident from the history & symptoms. It cannot be justified merely by finding a change of Rx.

Informing the PCT

The GOS Terms of Service oblige you to inform the PCT of various changes in your circumstances.

1. If you are unlucky enough to find yourself the subject of a PCT or GOC investigation you are obliged to inform the PCT with which you are listed.
2. If you haven't worked within your PCT area for six months they may remove you from their list so it might be best to change to the PCT where you work.
3. Contractors (practice owners) must inform the PCT of the names of all the performers (optoms & OMPs) who work for them regularly.
4. For individuals remember to inform the PCT of any change of name or address.
5. For contractors remember to inform the PCT about any changes of ownership, directors, address, etc or of any change in the hours you offer General Ophthalmic Services.

Last sight test date

GOS1 forms require the date of the last sight test irrespective of whether it was NHS or private. Also please check that the patient hasn't been elsewhere since the last time they attended your practice. We have had an instance of a child attending four different practices which has resulted in 4 sight tests and 6 pairs of glasses within 15 months. This applies to repairs and replacements too, do not assume that lost glasses were the ones you made up as only the most recent Rx can be repaired or replaced.

Second opinions

Patients do not have the right to demand a second opinion. In exceptional circumstances the PCT may approve another sight test but in most cases the patient should be advised to return to the first practice to discuss any concerns.

Contractors (employers)

Employers MUST check that any optom working for them is on the GOC register and on a PCT list. All 'locum' details should be checked and regular staff checked annually in April. Do not assume that employment agencies have checked. If in doubt contact Karina in Verney House (01296 310033). Failure to be registered and on a PCT list will result in ST forms not being paid.

Peer Review Groups

Over the years we have found peer review groups to be an excellent way of discussing cases in a relaxed and not threatening environment. This has led to learning of different approaches to problems and increasing knowledge. Due to leaders moving away and retiring these have fallen, in some areas, to meetings no longer taking place. We aim to re-launch these in the Autumn and if you would like information or to lead a group please contact Anne Frier on 01494 784141.

INTERMEDIATE CARE

Milton Keynes

As you will have been informed 2 new intermediate clinics have opened recently in Milton Keynes. One is based at the walk in centre and is run by Dr Dhanoa. This is for 'medical' cases which do not need a hospital setting i.e persistent dry eye but not glaucoma. The second based at westcroft is run by Dr Rana and is for minor lid surgical procedures, i.e chalazion etc. Both centres have to be accessed by referral via the GP and not by direct referral although we hope this will change in the future.

Referral for emergencies is still to the long established BUS clinic.

Buckinghamshire.

In addition to the well established clinic at Prospect House a number of new clinics are now open. You will have been sent details of these along with the means of accessing them, which is now direct for all of them. A further update listing clinics and services available will be sent shortly along with new referral forms. An electronic version of these is being worked on but whether it will fit with your practice software will have to be discussed with your supplier.

The clinics are

Network Eyes (formerly known as Prospect House, Practice Networks and Buckinghamshire Eye Service) run clinics at Great Missenden, High Wycombe, Buckingham, Haddenham, Iver and Chalfont St Peter. Referrals for all these clinics should be made to Prospect House in Great Missenden

Vale Health runs a clinic at Princes Risborough and referrals should be sent to Cross Keys surgery.

Prime Eye Care have clinics at Burnham Health Centre and Riverside Surgery in High Wycombe and referrals should be made to these surgeries.

Full details will be available in the circular to follow shortly.

You can, of course still refer to the Hospital Eye Service for all conditions and these should be sent to the Referral Support centre the same as Direct Cataract Referral Forms.

Milton Keynes Direct Referral Cataract Scheme.

As you know no update course has been held this year. The PCT are considering this and the form it should take. As soon as firm arrangements are in place you will be notified at the same time we hope to re-negotiate some of the details of the scheme. Copies of the latest patient information and referral process will shortly be on the website. For now the choice of hospitals is

- Milton Keynes General Hospital
- Stoke Mandeville Hospital
- Northampton General Hospital
- Bedford General Hospital
- Netcare, Bicester (Private)

All hospitals are required to offer an appointment within 11 weeks, at Netcare waiting is between 5 and 9 weeks

BAB services in MK

The Bucks Association for the Blind has a resource centre in Milton Keynes which is open on Tuesday afternoons at present. The BAB also organises various clubs for the visually impaired.. More information is available from 01908 395498. This is in addition to the statutory provision by the RNIB in association with Social Services

LOC COMMITTEE

2003-2007

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