BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOC NEWS

WINTER 2009

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The NICE Guidelines on Glaucoma and OHT, issued in April this year, have impacted on all practices. Your LOC has been working very hard on your behalf, negotiating with PCTs and local commissioning services, in order to introduce referral refinement pathways in our area. We hope to introduce local training for accredited, nationally recognised schemes, in the not too distant future.

We held two successful education evenings in November, one at MKH and one at SMH. These were very well-attended, and it was good to see lots of new faces, as well as our loyal regulars. More events are planned, and details appear in this newsletter.

If you need to contact LOC members, their details appear on the last page of this newsletter. You may wish to note the new email addresses for the Chair and Secretary. We're gradually acquiring email addresses for more and more local practitioners. Please contact the Secretary if we don't already have yours.

Remember that your Newsletter is also available online at www.loc-net.org.uk/bucksloc and that's the easiest way to follow any of the links that appear in these pages.

BRUCE GILSON– Chair Bucks LOC

PEER REVIEW

Peer Review events are on-going at two venues in our area, and we love seeing new faces. 2 CET points are available for each meeting, and they're an excellent way of learning, and exchanging views, in a relaxed, non-threatening environment, suitable for all levels of expertise.

The **Chiltern Group** will be meeting at Amersham Hospital at 7.00pm on the 17th March 2010, for an evening on glaucoma referrals. Further details of this may be obtained from Anne Frier. The **Milton Keynes Group** will meet at Milton Keynes Village Hall at 7.00pm on 22nd March 2010. Contact Claire Ranger for more details.

Complaints Reporting

GOS contractors are obliged to operate the NHS complaints system in accordance with regulations and with your contract with the PCT regarding the provision of GOS and other (but not private) locally commissioned primary eye care services.

You must take responsibility for the arrangements in your practice(s) for dealing with complaints and designate a complaints manager. You must inform the public of your arrangements, e.g. by means of a notice or leaflet . You must seek to resolve complaints in good faith and treat complainants appropriately. (An oral complaint resolved within 24 hours is not considered to be a complaint.)

A complaint may be made up to twelve months after the incident in question, either directly to the practice or via the PCT, and must be acknowledged within three working days. You must then offer to discuss the complaint with the complainant, You must try to resolve the complaint within six months. You must keep a record of all the complaints that you have received in each year ending 31st March, and, ideally, submit your report to the PCT by 30th June.

This advice has been adapted from the AOP's website, and you are advised to access the complete version here http://www.aop.org.uk/12560322342528.html where you will also find useful samples of the relevant paperwork.

Milton Keynes News

Wet AMD Pathway

Milton Keynes Hospital now has a direct referral clinic for wet AMD.

BUS Clinic

There is a new referral form for the Booked Urgent Service.

Appropriate paperwork for both of these schemes is available on our website or from Heather Cox on 01908 561495. Because these forms are faxed, it is important that practice details are clearly legible. Please do not use rubber stamps.
The Local Information sheet has been "tweaked" slightly, to incorporate these changes, and is also available on our website.

The Direct Cataract Referral Scheme continues as before. Remember that only accredited optometrists may refer through this scheme. For information on accreditation, contact the Optometric Adviser or the Secretary.

VETTING AND BARRING SCHEME

This scheme came into effect in **October 2009**. At the moment it only requires employers to notify the ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) of any relevant information, including prosecutions and disciplinary actions, which lead an employer to suspect that the person may cause harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

For the purposes of this legislation vulnerable groups include children under 16 and all adult health care patients (NHS or private).

From **1st November 2010** all staff changing employers or entering the workforce for the first time will need to be ISA registered before they can work with vulnerable groups, and from this date employers will be required by law to check all new staff's ISA status

Registration by the ISA will be available from **26th July 2010**

For further information see www.isa-gov.org.uk

Waste Disposal

If you are not disposing of your waste correctly, you are in breach of your GOS contract, and contravening College Guidelines

"Non-hazardous pharmaceutical waste", includes used or unused minims and Fluorets. These items need to be kept in a rigid, leakproof container, and then incinerated.

Non-hazardous healthcare waste, includes emptied CL solution bottles, tonometer probes and large quantities of CLs, eg time-expired bank lenses. These items may go in tiger bags, to be disposed of in the **"offensive waste"** stream.

Chloramphenicol is considered as **"hazardous waste"**, and needs to be kept in a rigid, leak-proof container, and then sent for specialist incineration.

Cannon Hygiene can supply a leakproof container, suitable for all but the hazardous waste. Their charge for a 5 litre unit is £15.08 +VAT. The unit would be delivered to your premises , collected when filled, and replaced with an empty container for a similar charge.
Contact Jane Wilmot on 01524 595403 jane.wilmot@cannonhygiene.com

Chloramphenicol is much trickier and more expensive to dispose of, and practices might feel that it's no longer appropriate to keep this on the premises.

College Guidelines may be viewed here http://www.college-optometrists.org/coo/download.cfm?uuid=4E9BEE2D-12AF-4E0C-80D90ACCF0B6DE00&type=guidance

NOTES FROM THE OPTOMETRIC ADVISER

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

PCT Performers list – Optometrists and OMPs are now referred to as ophthalmic performers as opposed to GPs who are medical performers, etc, and we all have an Ophthalmic Performers List (OPL) number. You can only be on one PCT performer list. PCTs regularly 'clean' their lists and remove people who have not worked in their area for the past 12 months. To avoid being removed without your knowledge make sure you inform the PCT if you move house.
It's now possible for employers and optoms/OMPs to look on the TVPCA website www.tvpca.nhs.uk to check the PCT listing of performers in the Thames Valley area. I would urge everyone reading this to have a look and if you can't find a name you're looking for please let me know.

GOC registration – Every year one or two optoms from Bucks & MK are removed from the GOC register for not paying their registration fee or not returning the paperwork, often because they've moved and not informed the GOC. No sight testing can be undertaken whilst not registered. This also results in immediate removal from the PCT Performers List and may require a new application process to be undertaken. This could result in a considerable period of time when GOS patients cannot be seen even after restoration to the GOC register. So all optoms and their employers should check with the GOC that everything is in order before 31st March.

Point of service checks – Please try to make sure that patients don't sign GOS forms indicating that they are in receipt of state benefits to which they are not actually entitled. Checks are made on a regular basis and the patient could receive a letter demanding repayment of the sight test fee or voucher value, plus a penalty charge. It is a GOS contractual duty to undertake Point of Service checks so please make sure staff understand which benefits entitle patients to help with health costs. HC11 and HC12 leaflets explain entitlement and are available from TVPCA stores. If the patient is unsure they should pay and reclaim using an HC5, if they are sure but have no evidence put a cross in the box.

Safeguarding children – Whilst the full implications of the new Vetting and Barring scheme are still unclear our responsibility as professionals and citizens to be alert to signs of abuse remain. Please take a few moments to look at the NICE quick reference guide on when to suspect child maltreatment: http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG89. Every practice should have details of who to contact if any member of staff becomes aware of concerns about a child. Concerns should be discussed with a senior member of staff.

Quality in Optometry (QiO) – By the time you read this the QiO website www.qualityinoptometry.co.uk should have been re-launched with level one providing information and links to enable contractors to meet the requirements of the PCT's contract monitoring visit. Preparation for a visit by looking at this website should ensure that everything goes smoothly on the day. Recent visits have revealed that contractors often don't have all the required policies and procedures in place and this webiste, produced by the profession, has model documents available to make contract compliance easier.

Pre-reg students – Employers, supervisors and students please note that pre-reg optometrists should apply to join a PCT list at least three months before they hope to qualify otherwise they run the risk of not being able to see NHS patients even after registration with the GOC. **Important**: Former supervisors cannot sign GOS forms on behalf of newly qualified optoms. Neither can GOS forms be held back and submitted for payment after the former student has been granted their performers list number. Once on a performers list the optom can work anywhere in England although see above about removal if not working within the PCT area.

Buckinghamshire Diabetic Retinal Screening Service - The Buckinghamshire Diabetic Retinal Screening Service, which covers both Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire, is drawing to the end of its third year. In the three years it has been operational, the programme has seen a steady rise in the diabetics entering the service and we continue to maintain the quality standards associated with the programme. During the Quality Assurance visit by the English National Screening Programme for Diabetic Retinopathy, the programme was praised for its success to date. During 08/09 the programme offered 100% of diabetics within Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire a screening appointment, of which 84% of patients received screening. Of the 84% screened, 35.5% of patients had pathology identified, including all grades of retinopathy and maculopathy, which is consistent with the range identified in the UK, which sits between 30% and 40%.

Record Keeping - During contract compliance visits I now look at a few records as it is the contractor's (practice owner's) responsibility to ensure that adequate clinical records are kept. A revealing little exercise is to audit a sample of each performers records and sample audit sheets are available on the QiO and AOP websites.

Mid and South Bucks News

The Direct Cataract Scheme continues. Accredited optometrists should refer patients directly to the one-stop clinics at SMH or WGH. For information on accreditation, contact the Optometric Adviser or the Secretary.

Wet AMD Pathways
The referral form for wet AMD is now the same across MK and Bucks PCTs, and is available on our website, but the patient journey will differ depending on which hospital receives the referral. For more information go to our website.

Urgent Referrals may be sent to the UBOC (Urgent Booked Ophthalmic Clinic) at WGH or the Emergency Clinic at SMH.

All Other Referrals should now be sent for triage to The Practice:Ophthalmology www.thepracticeplc.com , who offer a Referral Support Line: 01494 690 900. Their hours are: Mon – Fri 9 – 5, Sat 9 - 1.

EDUCATION

Don't forget that we're coming to the end of this CET cycle. You must have all your required points by the end of 2009.

Talks planned so far for 2010 are:

Dry Eye and Blepharitis, with speaker Caroline Christie at SMH on Weds 10th February 2010.

Contact Lens Topics, with Karl Aberdeen from Coopervision, at MKH on 24th February 2010.

Communications—Spacemen and Llamas with speaker Wendy Sethi. This will be held at our AGM on 10th May 2010.

Invitations will be sent nearer the times of the events. For more information, contact the LOC Secretary: Angela McNamee.

STOP PRESS

- New guidance on H1N1 (Swine Flu) for Ophthalmic Services contractors was issued by the Department of Health on 16th December. To access this, go to: http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_110247

- New guidance on the referral of glaucoma suspects was issued by the College of Optometrists and Royal College of Ophthalmologists on 17th December . To access this go to: http://www.aop.org.uk/uploaded_files/joint_working_group_guidance_on_glaucomaand_oht_referral.pdf

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOC

www.loc-net.org.uk/bucksloc

CHAIR
Bruce Gilson
H 01628 664415
bruce.gilson@nhs.net

TREASURER
Jacqui Lucas
H 01494 862161

MEETINGS SECRETARY
David Sculfor
01296 315034

CLINICAL GOVERNANCE LEAD
Heather Heath
01280 824267

MK LEAD
Claire Ranger
P 01908 695395

MID & SB LEAD
Bruce Gilson

PEER REVIEW CO-ORDINATOR
Anne Frier
01494 784141

Henry Leonard
Barbara Nall
Raj Shah

HOSPITAL REPRESENTATIVE
David Sculfor

LOC SECRETARY
Angela McNamee
07788 424152
bucksloc@hotmail.com

PCT OPTOMETRIC ADVISER
Jill Ellis
H 01525 712859
Jill.ellis@buckspct.nhs.uk