

NHS South West Collaborative Commissioning Hub

November 2025

Optometry Bulletin

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Christmas Opening Hours

We will be circulating the opening hours for all mandatory GOS contractors across the SW to all interested parties including OoHs providers, GP practices and other primary care contractor's w/c 8th December.

Thank you to all contractors who have notified us of changes to usual GOS hours on dates around Christmas and New Year which are not bank holidays.

Could any contractors who have not yet notified us of similar changes please ensure these are shared asap to ensure they are captured on the circulation.

Termination of Contract

Please note that as contractors you are required to give 3 months' notice for the termination of contract as stated in your contract.

Where the Contractor serves notice pursuant to clause 144, the Contract shall terminate 3 months after the date on which the notice is served ("the termination date"), save that if the termination date is not the last calendar day of a month, the Contract shall instead terminate on the last calendar day of the month in which the termination date falls.

Please see the NHSBSA website for the relevant form and further information [GOS Contract Management | NHSBSA](#)

GDPR Securing of Emails

In relation to a recent review of GDPR guidelines, all contractors are reminded of the confidentiality of patient data, especially if transferred over email.

All contractors have a responsibility to transfer patient information over email with encryption. The two routes possible through NHS means are either obtaining an NHSmail email account or registering for an Egress file sharing account.

Any emails that contain any patient information sent from SW Collaborative Commissioning Hub that are not to an NHSmail address will now be encrypted via Egress, therefore contractors are to ensure they have access to Egress file sharing.

Domiciliary Providers are also reminded, as part of Schedule 3 of the contract, you are to have a patient leaflet with details of who has access to patient information (including information from which the identity of the individual can be ascertained) and the patient's rights in relation to disclosure of such information.

Below are some helpful guide links

[Accessing Encrypted Emails Guide for non-NHSmail users](#)

[Encryption Guide for NHSmail](#)

Flu/Covid Vaccination

NHS England has sent letters to healthcare professionals to get vaccinated against flu to protect not only themselves from illness during the busy winter months but also protect vulnerable patients by reducing transmission risk.

From 1st October 2025 all frontline health care workers, including both clinical and non-clinical staff who have contact with patients, should be offered the flu vaccine through their employer as a vital part of their organisation's policy for the prevention of the transmission of flu.

Eligible individuals can book appointments for NHS COVID and flu vaccinations online or via the NHS App. More information can be found at [Winter Vaccinations 2025 - Google Drive](#)

Temporary Suspensions

Please note that it is a contractual requirement to advise us if you are not able to fulfill your contracted GOS hours due to unforeseen circumstances such as fire, snow, flooding or staffing issues. Please inform us by sending an email to england.optometrysouthwest@nhs.net

NHS Email Accounts

Please note that you must not send any patient identifiable information via insecure email addresses. In the case where you must send patient identifiable information, please ensure that you do so using a secure NHS email address or Egress.

There are two processes for requesting a shared store email/Egress account, depending on whether the contractor has 10 practices or less, outlined below:

1. **GOS contractors with 10 or more practices**

- Contractors to complete the form at the link below, NHSBSA will then create an Egress account on receipt of the completed MS Form:

[NHS mail address/Egress request form \(Page 1 of 6\) \(office.com\)](#)

2. **GOS contractors with less than 10 practices**

- Contractors should contact NHSBSA on pao-support@nhsbsa.nhs.uk, to request an authentication code. Once they have the code, they will be directed by NHSBSA to complete this form <https://portal.nhs.net/Registration#/optometry>

Please note, if contractors complete the form without first contacting NHSBSA for the authentication code the application will **not** be processed.

For assistance with unlocking your NHS email account please call 0333 200 1133 or email helpdesk@nhs.net

Additional Linked nhs.net Personal Accounts

Any member of the practice team can obtain a linked nhs.net email account in order to access the shared nhs.net mailbox. These can be requested when the account is created, or by emailing the helpdesk if the shared account is already set up.

For requests please send the full name, mobile number and a personal email address for each member of the team requiring a linked nhs.net email address to helpdesk@nhs.net The request must be sent from the shared nhs.net mailbox.

If there are already 10 or more linked personal nhs.net email accounts a valid business justification for the request must also be included in the covering email.

Violence & Abuse Towards NHS Staff

Violence and abuse towards NHS staff, including physical violence, harassment, and sexual misconduct, is a significant and rising problem, with a 2024 survey showing 1 in 7 staff experienced physical violence and 1 in 12 experienced unwanted sexual behaviour.

In response, NHS England has established policies, like the Violence Prevention and Reduction Standard, and some trusts have implemented new measures, such as warning systems and "Choose Kindness" campaigns, to support staff and hold offenders accountable.

Statistics

- Physical Violence:

In 2024, 14.38% of NHS staff reported experiencing physical violence from patients, relatives, or the public. This represents a slight increase from 2023.

- Harassment and Abuse:

Around 25.08% of staff reported experiencing harassment, bullying, or abuse from patients, service users, their relatives, or the public in the last 12 months.

- Sexual Misconduct:

8.82% of NHS workers experienced unwanted sexual behaviour, including offensive comments, touching, and assault.

- Discrimination:

9.25% of staff experienced discrimination, with over half of those incidents being based on their ethnic background.

- Highest Risk:

Staff in ambulance trusts report the highest levels of violence

Primary care teams can download <https://campaignresources.dhsc.gov.uk/campaigns/help-us-help-you-primary-care/nhs-staff-respect/>

Email Correspondence – Signature Details

Please can you ensure when communicating with the South West Optometry Team you include the following details within your correspondence to help us with responding to your enquiry - Contact Name, Name of Contractor, ODS code. Thank you.

Optometry Clinical Skills Guide

Optometry Today, in collaboration with the Association of Optometrists (AOP), has released two [video skills guides](#). One is presented by Dr Byki Huntjens, AOP education lead, exploring history and symptoms, with videos on the key questions to ask during a sight test and when carrying out a contact lens assessment. The second, led by Lorcan Butler, optical engagement manager at The Brain Tumour Charity, addresses headaches – offering guidance on recognising symptoms that may indicate serious underlying conditions, as well as practical advice on managing patients who present with migraines.

GOS 4 Clarification

When requesting a GOS 4 for an adult patient please ensure that you follow the process set out in the document below and complete the BSA pre-authorisation form.



GOS 4 Briefing
updated July 2023_

Learning From Patient Safety Events (LFPSE)

Please find a link below to an explainer video regarding the new reporting platform, LFPSE, which is being introduced.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mlRu-B-XbGM>

GOS 6 User Guide



201xx-gos-6-user-guide_v1.pdf

Interpretation and Translation Services

Interpretation and translation services are available for Community Optometrists when treating NHS Patients. These services are commissioned and paid for by NHS England.

This document provides details on how to currently access these services.



20230630 South
West Interpretation

This information is also available to access via the NHS South West website via the following link
[NHS England — South West » Interpretation and Translation Services](#)

Useful Information

NHS England – South West Region Optometry Contract Management Team

Team Member / Working Days		Telephone	Email Address
Michele Toy	Mon - Thurs	07568 431890	england.optometricsouthwest@nhs.net

Sarah Lillington	Mon - Thurs	07920 834445	
Louise Norman	Mon - Fri	07730 379362	
Thomas Toogood-Smith	Tues - Fri	07551 136800	
Alison French	Mon - Fri	07795 684805	

Website

Please see our website for more information and any blank templates, forms and documents. The contact details for all 7 ICB Complaints Teams can also be found on this page

[NHS England — South West » South West Eye Health information](#)

Primary Care Support England (PCSE)

PCSE has the responsibility for the delivery of NHS England primary care support services.

For Opticians PCSE provides:

- [Ophthalmic Payments](#) - Administering monthly payments of GOS forms, processing Continuing Education and Training (CET) payments, deducting local Optical Committee levies.
- [Performers List](#) - Administering entry and changes to Performers Lists on behalf of NHS England
- [Supplies](#) - Providing NHS stationery, pre-printed forms, needles and syringes via PCSE Online.

Guidance for contractors is available here: [Ophthalmic Payments | PCSE \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

Contact details for PCSE

- If you have an ophthalmic payment queries you need to contact PCSE via the online contact form by using the following link: [Ophthalmic Payment enquiries | PCSE \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA)

Contact details for NHSBSA

- GOS4 Pre-authorization (for adults): pao@nhsbsa.nhs.uk
- Contract management queries: pao-cm@nhsbsa.nhs.uk
- NHS Mail/any other contractor queries: pao@nhsbsa.nhs.uk