



optometry**scotland**

Optometry Scotland is aware of the recent NICE clinical guidelines on Glaucoma. These comprehensive guidelines are recommendations about the diagnosis and management of Chronic Open Angle Glaucoma (COAG) and Ocular Hypertension (OHT) for the NHS in England and Wales.

The College of Optometrists have issued statements expressing concerns that the guidelines do not reflect the existing work or expertise of optometrists in this area and also that implementation of these guidelines is likely to result in an overwhelming number of patients referred to HES departments.

OS has also consulted with every Lead Ophthalmologist in Scotland, through Eyecare Scotland who is the representative body who had this to say:

“Eyecare Scotland notes with dismay that following the publication of the NICE glaucoma guidelines, the AOP, FODO and ABDO, the indemnifying bodies for optometrists, have recommended that optometrists should now refer any patient to an ophthalmologist if the pressure is over 21mmHg as the NICE guidelines recommend the use of gonioscopy in the diagnosis of ocular hypertension (intraocular pressure over 21mmHg) before continued monitoring.

Eyecare Scotland, which represents all Hospital Eye Services in Scotland, has in the previous week consulted all lead clinicians for ophthalmology in Scotland.

As a result Eyecare Scotland can state categorically that the unanimous views of its members are to reassure their optometry colleagues that the NICE glaucoma guidelines are:

1. Only advisory
2. Do not apply in Scotland
3. Are at odds with the accepted Scottish guidelines (<http://www.pathways.scot.nhs.uk/>), developed by the Centre for Change and Innovation for NHS Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government, using SIGN methodology, which takes precedence over NICE in Scotland.

Eyecare Scotland would wish to reassure its optometry colleagues in Scotland that ophthalmology in Scotland will expect, and indeed insist that optometrists in Scotland will follow the Centre for Change and Innovation for NHS Scotland glaucoma patient pathway and no other.

<http://www.pathways.scot.nhs.uk/Ophthalmology/Ophthalmol%20Glaucoma%20Jun05.pdf>