



optometry**scotland**

Welcome!



Welcome to the February 2011 Newsletter. It has been a while since our last newsletter but it has been all go at OS and funds were limited due to attending all the political party conferences in October 2010!

May I take this opportunity to remind all optometrists that OS, as your representative body in Scotland, we continue to lead in PR activities, attend any meetings in Scotland to do with eye health care, e.g. lobbying MSPs, political events, quarterly meetings with the Scottish Government, PSD and all other representative bodies involved in health care and eye care including RNIB Scotland and Eycare Scotland. We can only continue to function if everyone in Scotland supports us financially! The team at OS do a great job, recently securing

the GOS funding for 2011/2012, but we could do even more and make more of an impact if we had the full support of the profession and not have to rely on donations when attending the likes of the political party conferences. Other representative bodies of other healthcare professionals are continually surprised at the amount OS achieves as our workforce is a fraction of those other representative bodies. I am the only full time member of staff at OS and we rely on the Optometrists who are part of the OS Council and Executive committees giving up their time in practice to represent OS where necessary and at times with no remuneration.

If you have any enquiries at all or would like to join OS please contact me at the OS office anytime. 0141 202 0610 or debbie.mcgill@optometryscotland.org.uk

Debbie McGill
Operations Manager

OS Dispensing Sub Committee

I would like to announce that Fiona Anderson is now chair of the OS Dispensing Sub Committee. Fiona is the ABDO Area 12 Chairman and an ABDO Board Member. Below is a brief report from Fiona on the Dispensing Sub Committee activities:

I am pleased that ABDO are represented on the OS Council, as OS develop and represent the views of the entire Optometry sector of Optometrists, Dispensing Opticians and Optical Bodies



Corporate to the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Government Health Directorates and other relevant stakeholders.

ABDO in conjunction with OS last year successfully delivered the first groundbreaking NES funded CET Day for the profession - and I'm glad to say we have been informed that NES will be continuing to support CET for DO's again in 2011.

Again, ABDO in conjunction with OS, delivered an "Exam Revision Day" for students before exams in summer of 2010 - something which is hoped to take place again in 2011.

ABDO & OS continue to lobby government

for DO listing & recognition of DO's as NHS contractors who supply GOS. In addition to this a paper has been circulated around all OS members on Paediatric Dispensing (written by Barry Duncan (ABDO Past-President) & Cliff Williams) aligning Scotland with the whole of the UK on the ABDO initiative on "Poor Quality & Illegal Dispensing" instigated by Jennifer Brower, ABDO President with the backing of the ABDO Board.

2010 was a busy year for ABDO & OS and it looks like 2011 will be even busier.

Fiona Anderson

Optometry Scotland Chairman's Brief



OS Chairman Peter Carson and Ms Shona Robison, Health and Sport Minister

I would like to take this opportunity to thank again everyone who contributed towards the cost of Optometry Scotland attending the Political Party Conferences. This enabled OS representatives to lobby MSPs from the Scottish Parliaments political parties (Labour, SNP and Liberal Democrats), and put across the importance of maintaining the universally funded eye examination that we have in Scotland. I am pleased to pass on that there was a high level of praise for the Optometry profession and for the way that Optometrists have integrated into

the NHS as a whole. Improved patient pathways with direct referrals, improved communication and joint working with our secondary care Ophthalmology colleagues and excellent models of innovation that have improved the quality of patient care as well as free up resources. For example the Grampian Eye Health Network and the Fife Electronic Referral Unit have been noticed and applauded by MSPs.

The optometry profession in Scotland is using the universal eye examination to become the first port of call for eye health issues that can provide earlier and more accurate diagnosis of eye problems that can be managed in a community setting and appropriate referral of sight threatening conditions such as wet AMD that need to be treated in secondary care.

The Scottish Government has rewarded the profession by investing just less than seven million pounds in the Eyecare IT link and this will provide Optometry practices with the ability to electronically send patient referrals and payment claim submissions. The ability to link electronically with secondary care for patient referrals including the attachment of digital images will provide Eyecare services in Scotland with a massive opportunity to improve



From left to right – Hal Rollason, Sam Watson, Peter Carson, Shona Robison, Frank Munro and Eric Gray (SGHD)

patient pathways by ultimately reducing overall referral numbers and improving the quality of referrals made. It will also provide the opportunity to reduce duplication in our current system if Optometry practices can link to other systems such as DRS. There are three OS representatives on the Eyecare IT Steering Group that met for the first time on 17th January 2010 and we are fully supportive of the project and the benefits it will bring.

The GOS budget has been maintained at its 2010 level for the coming year and that is something that we can all be pleased about given the current financial climate. Optometry Scotland will continue to meet with the Scottish

Government Health Department to make sure that the Optometry profession continues to develop its role within primary care to provide value for the money spent on its services. By developing the quality of work we are already providing in primary care by implementing the examples of best practice throughout Scotland and by maximising the potential benefits of the future Eyecare IT link we can fully justify the continuation of General Ophthalmic Services spending and the universal eye examination.

*Peter Carson
Chair Optometry Scotland
February 2011*

Report from Dr Ross Henderson, Chair of the Optometry Scotland Professional Development Committee

Audit is a word that does not always conjure up positive emotions. As busy practitioners we often don't have time to measure what we are doing. But Audit is an important tool in assessing patient care. Dr Ross Henderson and Professor

Gordon Heron have set up a web based record card audit that will tell us what eye conditions are being managed in Scotland and England by optometrists.

You may receive a request to take part in this study and we would hope that you will be able to contribute as it is going to be essential that we have data to show Scottish Government that



the contract is working. It may also assist NES in finding the key areas for continuing professional development.

The PDC are also developing a practice manual which will contain relevant local and national protocols. As many practices use Locums from different health boards this information needs to be at hand to help in complying with local referral pathways. This practice manual will be issued to all practices that pay the OS levy. We hope it will make the day-to-day complying with

GOS regulations and referrals much easier.

Finally as the next 80 optometrists start the Independent Prescribing course in March 2010 at Glasgow Caledonian University, OS are working towards getting GP 10 Prescription Pads for all Scottish IP Optometrists. Experience of other Non-Medical prescribers has shown that this can be a slow process to get prescription pads but it will be high on our agenda as almost 10% of Scottish Optometrist move towards IP.

DOMS

We are aware that many practices are having issues with compliance in respect of General Ophthalmic Service regulations regarding portable field screeners for domiciliary visits. We have been in discussion with the Scottish Government

Health Department to relax the regulations for domiciliary providers in this regard. The basis for this is the fact that in most cases automated visual field screening is impractical and difficult to carry out in an elderly and housebound patient. It is hoped that we will have a decision on this from the SGHD very soon!

PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups)

As you may be aware PVG will be replacing enhanced disclosure in Scotland as of 28th Feb 2011. We have released interim advice on PVG and you can view this at www.optometryscotland.org.uk and further advice regarding the PVG scheme at the following website: www.disclosurescotland.co.uk. We are liaising with MSPs and the Scottish Government regarding PVG and we hope to issue further advice on what this means for Optometry practices in Scotland as soon as possible. I will be emailing all OS members with this information. If I do not have your most up

to date email address please email me at the OS office: debbie.mcgill@optometryscotland.org.uk.

Finally if you have any questions/concerns please do not hesitate to contact me at the OS office. OS are here to represent your views and we are happy to hear from our members directly. We will be in touch later in the year with more updates, in the meantime, I will email any updates to all our members and post these on our website.

*Best wishes
Debbie*

