



optometry**scotland**

DECEMBER 2011

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE OPTICAL PROFESSION



Peter Carson and Shona Robison MSP in 2010 when funding had been granted for the IT link.

In the OS newsletter earlier this year I reported the excellent news that government funding had been obtained to enable electronic connection between optometry practices and the NHS for electronic referral of patients and electronic claim form submissions to Practitioner

Services Division. I am very pleased to now report that progress is being made as to how both systems will function and Optometry Scotland are represented on both the steering and implementation groups for this Eyecare IT Integration project.

A launch event for

this system was held on September 27th at the Stirling Management Centre and was well attended by primary care and IT leads from the different Health Boards as well as Ophthalmologists and Area Optical Committee Chairs and Optometric Advisers. The presentations at the event emphasised the benefit to patients that electronic referrals with the option of digital image attachments would bring in terms of making referrals faster and



will be electronic by April 2014 and Optometry Scotland is working with PSD as well as the various optical software suppliers and IT reps for both independent sector systems and all the multiples' systems, to help realise that target.

more secure with the potential to making them more accurate using feedback from Ophthalmology. There will also be the option of sending an image for a specialist opinion to decide whether a particular eye condition requires to be referred or can be safely retained for follow-up by the optometrist, thereby facilitating a more integrated approach to patient care. This type of system has already been working successfully in Fife and will be rolling out on a Health Board by Health Board basis over the coming months with implementation occurring at local level as well. A representative from Optometry Scotland will also be travelling around each of the regions to support the roll out.

The electronic connection to the NHS will also enable the electronic submission of eye examination and spectacle voucher claim forms with the resultant reduction in administration and postage costs to optometry practices. Practitioner Services Division have the target that 95% of claims

While on the subject of IT, a questionnaire was sent by PSD requesting basic details about IT systems and internet connectivity in your own practices and thank you to the majority of practices that have already replied. To those who have not returned the questionnaire can you please do so as soon as possible. If you have not received the request for some reason, or you are not quite sure what is required please feel free to contact Debbie McGill at the OS office for assistance.

Following the success of the Grampian Eye Health Network in the Aberdeen area, that has reduced the number of outpatients appointments by approximately 5000 per annum thus freeing up resources for the Wet AMD treatment programme, we have seen a number of other health board areas deciding to change their hospital based eye casualty units from a walk-in to an appointment/referral based service. This means that more eye health issues are

being seen by optometrists as the first port of call and can be assessed under General Ophthalmic Services via slit-lamp etc before deciding whether or not further referral is required to eye casualty.

The Grampian scheme highlighted that only around 10% of the walk-in service patients had a sight threatening condition and the other 90% of these patients could have been safely retained in the community/primary. In a Health Board area with 60 optometry practices 5000 patients would equate to fewer than two extra patients a week to an average practice while at the same time having a hugely beneficial impact in freeing up ophthalmology resources. Therefore it is important that all practices are able to act as a first port of call and prioritise eye health issues for their patients or if they are not able to do so to insure that patients are able to receive appropriate attention elsewhere.

Developing Quality in Primary Care (DQPC) is a national action for the NHS in Scotland that essentially is designed to improve the quality of care and access to care for patients in their own community setting in Scotland. The emphasis is on a safe, effective patient centred approach with integrated care pathways that the impending IT link will help to develop. The vast majority of patient/practitioner interactions in the NHS occur at primary care level and as far as optometry is

concerned we are monitoring and managing many more eye problems than we are actually referring in to the Hospital Eye Service e.g., early cataracts, dry AMD, dry eye etc. Therefore one of the goals of the IT link from an optometry perspective will be to capture information about the eye conditions that patients have who are not actually referred as well as those that are, (much in the same way the data is captured on the back of the existing eye examination forms). Electronic capture of this data will provide a better understanding of the eye problems that are being encountered by optometrists than the current paper based system and has the potential to make it easier to demonstrate the value of the optometry profession from a public health perspective.

NHS Education for Scotland for optometry has recently opened another centre for training in this time in Ninewells Hospital Dundee. This in addition to the ones already in place and being used for training optometrists and facilitating independent prescribing placements. They now also have appointed NES optometry tutors who can support optometrists at a more local level over and above the courses and training events that have been organised at various locations through-out Scotland.

Optometry Scotland meets with the Scottish Government Health Department on a regular basis to discuss matters relating to optometry and the General Ophthalmic Services contract. Recent discussions have included proposals to tidy up the anomalies that arose after the last round of regulation changes and also to change the requirements regarding automated visual field assessment for domiciliary patients that is causing difficulties for some in the provision of a domiciliary service. The proposals have reached a stage that OS and representatives from the domiciliary sector and the SGHD are happy with but as these will be part of regulation we will need to wait until the necessary legislation can be passed before the changes will take effect. OS is also working with SGHD to enable the provision of NHS prescription pads to those optometrists that gain independent prescribing status and again although we have agreement from the SGHD that this should happen we have a number of practical issues to sort out first.

The overall message therefore is a very positive one regarding the optometry profession in Scotland and the continued integration we have made into the NHS as a whole and the development of the role we provide our patients and value of the services that we have to offer nationally.

*Peter Carson
Chair Optometry Scotland*

Optometry Scotland and Community Pharmacy Scotland Joint Working

During recent months Optometry Scotland has engaged extensively with Community Pharmacy Scotland to discuss joint working initiatives to improve patient care of eye conditions.

During these discussions it was agreed that improving understanding of each other's contracts will improve care of patients with eye conditions across Scotland.

Community Pharmacy Scotland is keen to encourage its members to foster a referral pathway with their local optometrist to help patients presenting in pharmacy with red eyes. Recent evidence published by the British Journal of General Practice indicates that the use of chloramphenicol is not required in all cases of conjunctivitis. Community Pharmacy Scotland is keen that contractors are made aware that optometrists are keen to review patients with red eyes to support triage. To support this engagement a referral form has been produced for use by pharmacists to refer presenting patients with any eye complaint to optometry and the same for patients who have been seen by an optometrist who may for example need artificial tears, the optometrist can recommend treatment to the pharmacist using the referral letter. You can download the referral form from the Optometry Scotland website.

Lobbying

Mary Scanlon MSP sponsored Optometry Scotland to have a stand within the Scottish Parliament on Tue 8th and Wed 9th November. Debbie McGill, Gill Syme and Frank Hamilton lobbied many MSPs regarding eye health, the importance of regular eye checks as well as Optometrists being the first port of call for any eye problems. This was well received and we got lots of positive comments on the preventative care Optometrists provide within the community. Many MSPs visited the stand including Ms Margaret McCulloch pictured here with the OS team. Big thank you to Mary for sponsoring the event!



We are also hosting our 4th parliamentary dinner within the Scottish Parliament in December where we will be presenting to the MSPs on joint working with Ophthalmology and the roll out of the IT project across Scotland, joint working with Community Pharmacy to better patient pathways/care and the importance of preventative eyecare and Optometrists being the first port of call for eye problems. A big thank you to Bob Doris, MSP, for sponsoring the dinner! Attending will be MSPs from all political parties, PSD, NES, Scottish Government

representatives and members of the OS council including AOP, FODO and ABDO representatives.

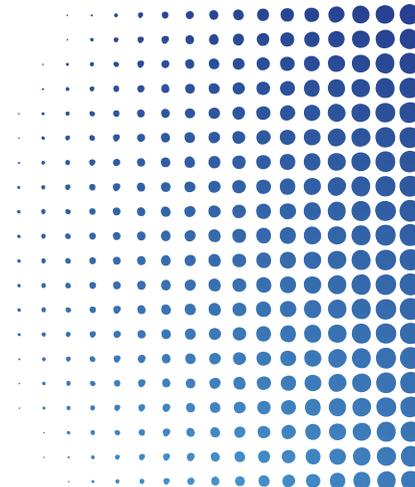
Debbie and the team also continue to lobby all MSPs individually and will do so again early 2012.

OS Constitution

Optometry Scotland has consulted its members regarding proposed changes to the Constitution which will allow better representation of the profession within the OS Council – The outcome of this will be confirmed after our Council meeting in January 2012 and published in our next Newsletter (Feb 2012)

Are you supporting OS?

If you are not a member of Optometry Scotland please contact Debbie at the OS office debbie.mcgill@optometriscotland.org.uk and sign up today! Your support will go a long way in helping us maintain eye health in Scotland.



ADVERTS

Eye Examinations for People with a Learning Disability

There are nearly one million people in the UK with a learning disability, with approximately 120,000 in Scotland, but only 22,000 known to local authorities. An estimated 1 in 3 of them have a sight problem. Relying on others to ensure good eye health can be extremely disempowering.

People with a learning disability need the support of their local optometrist. Support RNIB and sign up with us today.

'Bridge to Vision', an RNIB DVD produced in conjunction with leading expert Professor Daphne McCulloch, (Eye Clinic, Glasgow Caledonian University), provides an easy way for optometrists and dispensing opticians to gain an overview of this subject, whilst earning two CET points.

To request a copy please email: learningdisability@rnib.org.uk or

Telephone: 0141 772 5588

The International Glaucoma Association (IGA)

The Charity for People with Glaucoma

Set up in 1974, The IGA has for mission to raise awareness of glaucoma, promote research related to early diagnosis and treatment and to provide support to patients and all those who care for them.

We recognise that Glaucoma will form a much larger element in the work of optometrists and are keen to work with you to raise awareness of the condition and the importance of regular eye health checks in line with the new GOS Contract . The vital importance of early detection and treatment to preserving sight and ability to drive, for example, cannot be over stressed. IGA aim to support optometrists in their frontline role with our Eye Way Code & Can U C 2 Drive Campaigns.

For more information about the IGA, to discuss how we can help, or to order our free posters and patients literature visit or contact:



John Hughes, Business Development Manager – Scotland, at or telephone 07889 102 189

We also are very keen to stimulate and support the formation of Glaucoma Patient Support Groups and may have a group forming in your area

INTERNATIONAL GLAUCOMA ASSOCIATION

Charity registered in England & Wales No.274681, and in Scotland No. SC041550

Woodcote House,
15 Highpoint Business Village
Henwood, Ashford, Kent TN24 8DH
Sightline: 01233 64 81 70
Administration: 01233 64 81 64
Email: info@iga.org.uk

Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Module: Adults with Incapacity: The Assessment of Capacity for Health Care Professionals

Module Information

This education provides practitioners with the knowledge, skills and values to independently, safely and effectively assess the capacity of patients to consent to treatment and interventions and issue Section 47 Certificates under Part 5 of the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000.

The amended Adults with Incapacity legislation allows for practitioners, dentists, ophthalmic optometrists and registered nurses and others (at the discretion of Scottish Ministers) to independently assess the capacity of patients to consent to treatment and interventions.

Who the module is for

This is a 15 week distance learning, web-based theory and practice-based module developed and delivered by Edinburgh Napier University to educate and prepare relevant practitioners: -

- Dentists,
- Ophthalmic Optometrists
- Registered Nurses and
- Other health care professionals, such as GPs who wish to refresh their knowledge and skills of the Act
- Practitioners who have a focus on working with patients who may lack capacity and therefore require an understanding of the Act and the

implications for practice and service delivery

The education and assessment of the competence to assess capacity and issue Certificates is therefore required by dentists, ophthalmic optometrists and registered nurses who are required by virtue of the practice to independently provide direct treatments and interventions to adults who may lack capacity to consent. Practitioners may for example work as dentists or ophthalmic optometrists in the NHS or privately or may be registered nurses working in areas such as, out-of-hours services, minor injuries, hospital at night services, out-patient services, treatment room services, practice nursing clinics, nurse led clinics or providing psychological or behavioural interventions.

The module content

The theory component of the module, for example, includes units that prepare practitioners in relation to: -

- Attitudes and values
- Access to healthcare
- Working with vulnerability
- People who may be at risk of harm
- People and care groups who may lack capacity to consent to care and treatment
- Models for assessing capacity
- Models for obtaining informed consent

to treatment

- Human Rights-based practice
- Disability Discrimination legislation
- Adults with Incapacity legislation
- Adult Support and Protection legislation
- Mental health legislation
- Interrelationship between legislation
- Professional accountability
- Codes of Practice

The module assessment

The module is assessed by the development of a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate knowledge of legislation, policy and research-evidence in relation to cognitive impairment and determining capacity, an understanding of the theories and evidence-base in relation to assessing capacity and demonstration of the relationship between theory and practice skills to safely and effectively assess capacity to consent to treatment under the Adults with Incapacity legislation.

The module requires all students seeking recognition of their competence to assess capacity and issue Section 47 Certificates to successfully complete both the theory and practice components of the module and produce a portfolio of evidence. The portfolio of evidence must be supervised by a practitioner who is already competent to assess capacity and issue Section 47

Certificates. The identification and allocation of a local supervisor rests with the sponsoring NHS Board.

There is also the option for students to undertake a SCQF level 9 and 11 assignment for academic credit that can be used towards an undergraduate or postgraduate award.

It is envisaged that all NHS Boards will have completed a local needs assessment will identify the full scope of their practitioners who are required to undertake the education as well as those who may need a wider understanding of the Act to facilitate and enable service delivery.

Applying for the module

The module is due to start week commencing 14th January 2012 for 15 weeks and regularly thereafter. For an application form and to register please contact Alice

Proc at a.proc@napier.ac.uk (+44 (0) 8452 60 60 40).

NES will fund Optometrists practicing in Scotland to complete this course. Optometrist that would like to apply for funding should contact Dr Heather Ellis at NES for prior approval. Heather.Ellis@nes.scot.nhs.uk

MERRY CHRISTMAS, BEST WISHES FOR 2012
FROM DEBBIE AND THE TEAM AT OS

