

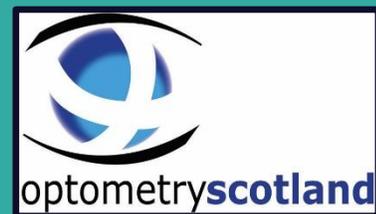
A REVIEW OF GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES IN SCOTLAND 2006-2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

JUNE 2018

OPTOMETRY SCOTLAND

www.optometriscotland.org.uk



GOS WORKS

BUT MORE INVESTMENT IS NEEDED NOW!

The revised General Ophthalmic Services Arrangements (GOS 2006) revolutionised how community eyecare care was delivered in Scotland following the Review of Community Eyecare Services (2005) which made various key recommendations on how to make better use of community optometry resource in delivering care.

This included widespread change in work practices for community optometrists resulting in considerable benefit to the public, the NHS and Government.

Despite the impact it has made – including significant cost savings – there has been minimal investment in GOS in the last eight years. Optometry Scotland is calling for this to change.

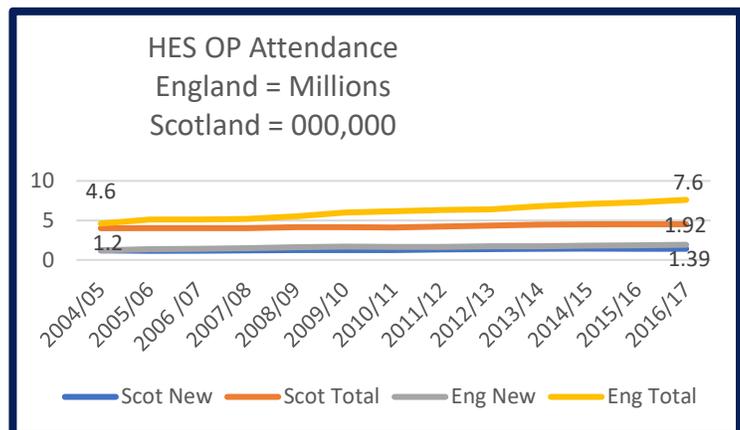
A Review of General Ophthalmic Services in Scotland 2006-2017 (Executive Summary)

- GOS 2006 has led to a **significant shift in the balance of care** from GPs, A&E, Pharmacy and hospital eye clinics
- Optometry practices are located in **all communities across Scotland** addressing health inequality
- In 2016/17 **almost 2.2million people across Scotland attended for an eye examination** – a clear demonstration the service is trusted and valued by the Scottish public
- This total included nearly **1.8million primary eye examinations** (an increase of 4.4% since 09/10 and **471,000 supplementary eye examinations** (an increase of 300% since 09/10)
- In 2016/17 **over a million eye disorders or people at risk of eye disease were managed** as part of a primary eye examination

- In 2016/17 **66% of supplementary eye examinations related to eye emergencies** – retaining over 80% of eye emergencies in the community setting compared with 35% prior to GOS 2006
- The increase in Primary Eye Examinations of 4.4% since 09/10 reflects the changing demographics in Scotland and the **burgeoning demand from older people** who are at increased risk of sight threatening conditions
- GOS 2006 has resulted in **improved public health** through increased identification of hypertension

Scottish Optometry saves 370,000 from attending hospital per year

GOS 2006 has had a considerable impact on Hospital Eye Services. The English model provides a good benchmark for measuring the impact of GOS 2006; the GOS service in England remains unchanged since 2006.



- Pre-2006 the relative difference in hospital attendance was in keeping with the relative population.
- Post-2006 there is marked divergence:
 - 38% increase of new patients and an increase of total attendance of 40%
 - In Scotland the total attendance increased by only 8% and new patient numbers are almost static

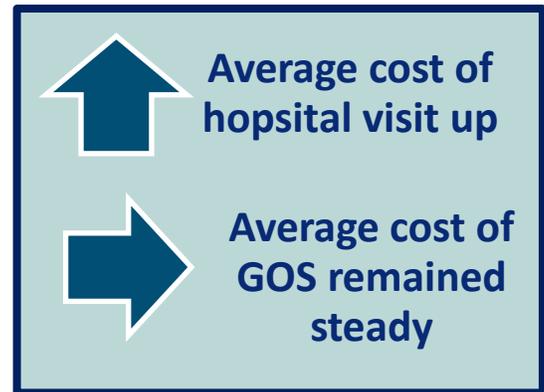
This again demonstrates the positive impact GOS 2006 has had on new and total eye hospital attendance – another strong indicator of shifting the balance of care.

Scottish Optometry saved the NHS £71million last year

Hospital referrals in Scotland have slowed over the years and many patients have been managed safely in the community setting.

The average cost of a hospital visit (ISD) has increased from £114 in 2009/10 to £154 in 2016/17 reflecting the ongoing increases in overheads and running costs over that period of time.

Over the same period the average cost of GOS 2006 has remained at an average of £37 per patient visit.



A conservative estimate would indicate over 30% of the conditions managed within a primary eye examination would be referred if GOS 2006 was not in place.

This would result in an additional burden on secondary care of around 370,000 people in 2017 alone.

Such an increase in demand would cripple the hospital eye service which is straining to meet the existing case load of 451,000 patients.

Comparing the costs of delivering the service in a community and in a hospital setting:

- Using ISD cost data and considering 30% of cases of GOS primary examinations being referred, the cost saving to the NHS for 2016/17 is **£43,293,659**

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- Using the same calculation for supplementary eye examinations, the cost saving for 2016/17 is **£27,922,272**

TOTAL COST SAVING FOR 2016/17 = £71 MILLION

Furthermore, these cost savings take no account of the indirect savings to the public purse which are realised when sight loss is prevented – not to mention the personal burden to individuals and families through avoidable sight loss.

Urgent call for more investment

This review demonstrates the real difference being made by GOS – however there has been minimal investment in GOS since 2010.

Optometry Scotland is calling for a realistic appraisal based around these savings and for substantial resource allocation and investment to be provided for the ongoing development of General Ophthalmic Services in Scotland.

Scottish Optometry is leading the world in the design and delivery of community eyecare. The potential for developing the optometry resource is considerable and fits well with Government policy to shift care from secondary care to the community. Optometry has served the Scottish Public well in being the first port of call for eye problems – but so much more can be done if adequate resources and funding are available.

For the full report, and to discuss its implications, please contact us:

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