

# Optometry Scotland in fOcuS

## Update from your Optometry Scotland Team

We hope that this newsletter finds you all safe and well during what has been a very challenging time for us all personally and professionally.

OS has been continuing to work hard on your behalf behind the scenes, albeit virtually, and have been doing all we can to answer your questions and address your concerns as we adapt to the new normal.



*Julie Mosgrove and David Quigley*

We have been undertaking weekly Zoom meetings of the Executive Committee that incorporates a wide section of the profession – multiples and independents together with national bodies FODO, AOP, The College of Optometrists and ABDO – to discuss our ongoing negotiations with the Scottish Government and remobilisation terms and conditions.

We would like to express our thanks to all practices which took the time to submit weekly figures to us during the peak period of the pandemic – this has provided us with valuable data to use during our discussions and negotiations.

Please see the link below summarising our lobbying activity prior to the pandemic.

<https://www.optometriscotland.org.uk/2020/07/29/optometry-scotland-parliamentary-bulletin-july-2020/>

## Expert Working Group

We are continuing to work with Invicta Public Affairs to promote the profession to key members of the Scottish Government, in particular the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport, Jeane Freeman MSP.

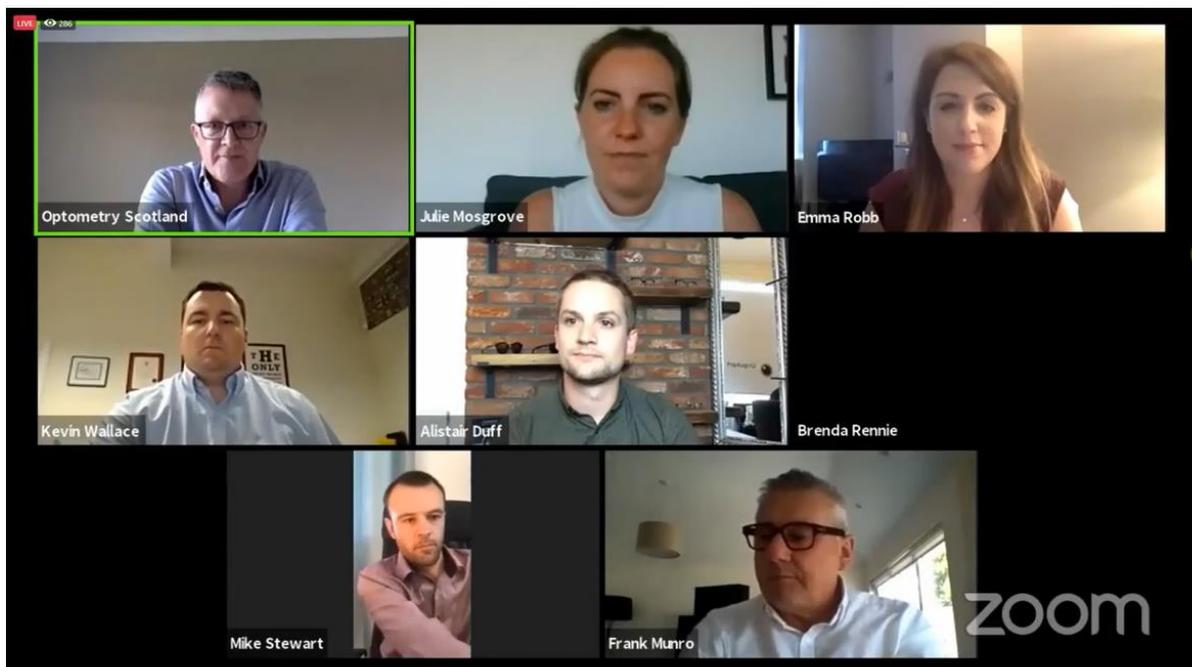
We met with the Cabinet Secretary in December last year to discuss the fitness and purpose of the current funding methodology. Following the meeting, the Cabinet Secretary wrote to David Quigley and Julie Mosgrove committing her officials to

working with Optometry Scotland in developing proposals for a more sustainable funding model and a methodology for annual fee negotiations that would bring Community Optometry in line with our colleagues in General Practice, Dentistry and Community Pharmacy.

Our recommendations around this and the role of the optometry sector within community-based primary care will be the basis for an Expert Working Group for Primary Eyecare Services.

We will reconvene these discussions in the early Autumn and report back to the Cabinet Secretary thereafter.

### **Impressive turnout for phase 2 webinar**



OS ran an interactive webinar during Phase 2 of lockdown which was hosted by representatives Alistair Duff and Emma Robb with Panellists Julie Mosgrove, Kevin Wallace, Frank Munro and Brenda Rennie.

We would like to extend thanks to Mike Stewart, Advisor to the Scottish Government for joining us and answering questions. We have received a lot of positive feedback.

A recording, which has already been viewed some 5,500 times, is available on our Facebook and YouTube channels and can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnFYCKXUTpE>

## **Join OS and have your voice heard**

We have seen our numbers grow this year and we would like welcome all our newest members.

In recent months we have received our highest ever number of enquiries as professionals across the country worked hard to navigate the changes that lockdown brought.

The stronger our membership and the more support we have, the more we have the potential to achieve, and we are proud to support and represent you.

Please find a link below to our membership page if you should wish to share this with any prospective members who want to find out more:

<https://www.optometriscotland.org.uk/member-services/join/>

## **Primary Care Announcements**

This has been a very busy and changing time for the Scottish Government Primary Care Department and OS endeavours to keep members informed of all the latest developments. Please see links to the most recent PCAs below:

<https://www.optometriscotland.org.uk/2020/08/30/pcao202013-cet-pre-reg-supervisors-grant/>

<https://www.optometriscotland.org.uk/2020/08/31/pcao202014/>

## **Collaborative Working**

OS was approached by Visibility Scotland to set up a joint working initiative during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The 'Ask the Expert' initiative allowed Visibility service users to access advice directly from an optometrist and dispensing optician together with Visibility staff members around their eye concerns.

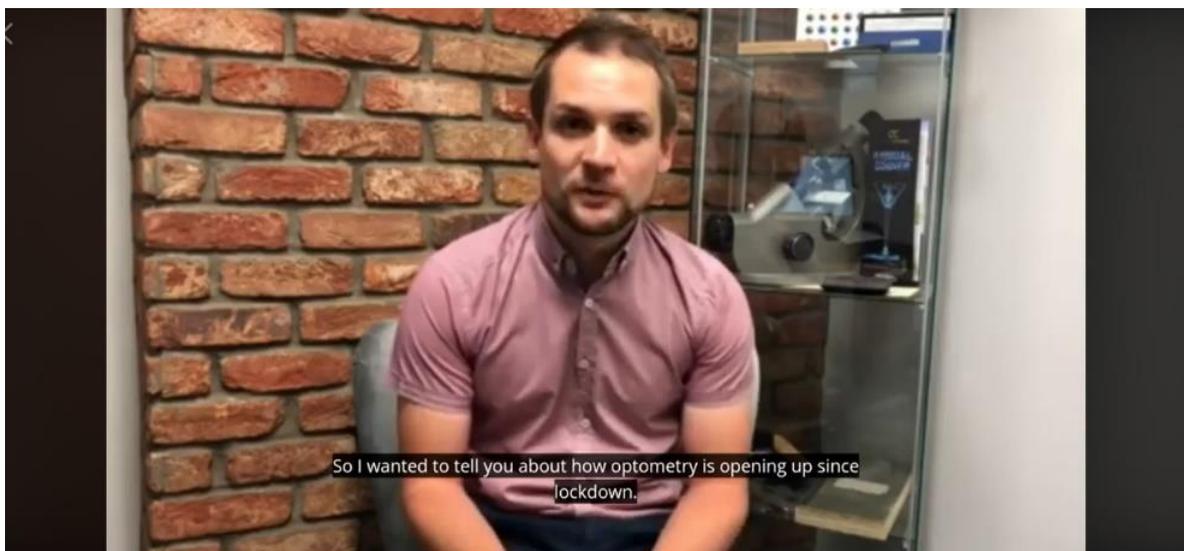
A vast range of eye conditions and topics were discussed, from low vision advice to guidance on everything from eye conditions to available benefits.



Thanks to Nikki McElvanney (OS Communications), Brenda Rennie (ABDO representative for OS), Emma Robb (Multiple representative) and Fiona Anderson (Chair of European Society of Opticians) for hosting these very constructive sessions.

OS will be putting together a summary of this activity to present to appropriate bodies in the hope that funding may be made available to continue this valuable piece of work.

## Supporting RNIB Scotland



What to expect if you need to access eye care services

 RNIB Scotland

22 shares

We worked with RNIB Scotland and Alistair Duff, independent member of the Optometry Scotland Executive Committee, to create a video explaining some of the changes patients will experience when they come into community optometry practices.

**R N I B**  
Scotland

This helps to guide patients through the procedures and safety measures in place to protect them and staff.

Many thanks to Alistair for his presenting and camera work!

We have also contributed to a recent press release from RNIB Scotland on the resumption of routine services and care that can be offered in patients' homes.

## Scottish Vision Strategy

OS was delighted to be asked to provide a presentation on the success of General Ophthalmic Services at the 2020 SVS meeting held in the Crowne Plaza in Glasgow and hosted by RNIB Scotland.

A wide range of voluntary service providers and their service users were in attendance with the Scottish Government optical team and NSS Scotland.

Optometry Wales spoke about their Low Vision Service that greatly interested SG as this is one of the recommendations of the 2016 Eyecare Review:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-eyecare-services-review/>



## Pharmacy First

**PHARMACY FIRST** NHS SCOTLAND

Need healthcare advice without an appointment?  
Go to your Pharmacy First

OS attended the launch of Pharmacy First at the Signet Lounge in Edinburgh earlier this year.

The event was attended by members of the Health and Sports Committee, including its Chair Lewis MacDonald MSP.

OS was consulted by Community Pharmacy Scotland to provide advice on pathways and which ophthalmic drugs should be made available by the service. This will be evaluated and revised as appropriate after a six month period.

## Primary Care Joint Working

OS continues to work closely on a National basis with its colleagues in Primary Care through the Primary Care Clinical Professionals Group. The group issued a letter to the Cabinet Secretary around the importance of all Primary Care providers in the remobilisation of services.

The group is also in the process of revising the Joint Principles Paper and OS will share this with its members once completed.



## **National Eye Health Week 2020**

It is almost time for National Eye Health Week once again.

We are currently liaising with RNIB Scotland and Visibility Scotland on joint initiatives during this week.

As always we will use the opportunity to remind the public of the importance of routine eye examinations – with a particular focus on those who had to postpone eye tests during lockdown.

If you are planning any activity around this time OS would be delighted if you could share it with us.



*'Blind Bake Off' during 2019's NEHW*

**We are particularly keen to hear from any practices which may have a recent example of a life-saving or sight-saving case study which we can highlight in our media activity – please get in touch with us if you can assist.**

## **Standout students**

Optometry Scotland was proud to sponsor the awards for Glasgow Caledonian University's stand-out optometry students this year.

Niloufar Rezaie scooped the title of Best Final Year Optometry Student, while Sonia Rai was awarded 'Best Overall Ophthalmic Dispensing Student for All Management Modules'.

Prizes were announced virtually via Zoom by OS's Nikki McElvanney with each student receiving a £100 Amazon Gift Card.

## **Resumption of Services**

Finally we would like to wish everybody a safe and healthy return to the new normal.

OS endeavours to represent the whole of the profession in its negotiations and we would like to reiterate our invitation to all opticians to provide us with any ideas and feedback you have.



Contact our Tell OS service by email at [TellOS@optometriscotland.org.uk](mailto:TellOS@optometriscotland.org.uk)