

Gateway Reference: 9035

PCT Chief Executives
Optometrists and Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners on PCT lists

27 November 2007

Dear Colleague

General Ophthalmic Services: Increases to NHS Sight Test Fee, Pre-registration supervisors allowance and continuing education and training allowance.

Summary

1. I am writing to announce increases in:
 - **the NHS sight test fee from 1 April 2007**
 - **domiciliary sight testing allowances from 1 April 2007**
 - **the pre-registration supervisors allowance for the 2007/08 financial year**
 - **the continuing education and training allowance for 2007, payable in 2008. No action is required on this now as further guidance and a revised determination will be issued in 2008.**
2. Please could you bring this to the attention of all staff dealing with general ophthalmic services, optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners.
3. Please note that the Statutory Instrument amending the National Health Service (Optical Charges and Payments) Regulations will be available shortly from www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk under SI number 2007 3289 for those who wish to hold a copy.

Increased sight test fee for Optometrists and Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners

4. Following consultations with representatives of the professions, the Secretary of State has determined that the NHS sight test fee for Optometrists and Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners will be increased to £19.32 from 1 April 2007.
5. For superannuation purposes, please note that for Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners the practice expense component of the sight test will be £4.90 from 1 April 2007.

6. Please pay GOS contractors the increased sight test fee for sight tests carried out on or after 1 April 2007.

Increased NHS domiciliary visiting fees for Optometrists and Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners from 1 April 2007

7. The fees payable to Optometrists and Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners for NHS domiciliary visits carried out on or after 1 April 2007 will be £34.02 for the first and second patients seen at one visit and £8.52 for the third and subsequent visits.

Changes to the NHS sight test and domiciliary visiting fees for HC3 holders from 14 December 2007

8. From 14 December 2007 entitlements for patients who hold partial exemption certificate HC3 should be calculated using the following amounts:
 - a private sight test carried out at an ophthalmic practice up to a maximum of a NHS sight test fee of £19.32.
 - a private domiciliary sight test up to the maximum of a NHS domiciliary sight test fee of £53.34.

Pre-registration Training for Optometrists

9. From 1 April 2007 the allowance paid to supervisors of pre-registration trainees has increased to £2800. Claims from trainers taking on pre-registration trainees on or after 1 April 2007 should be paid at this new rate.

Payments for continuing education and training

10. The payment in respect of continuing education and training undertaken by optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners on PCT lists will be £447 for 2007. Although the level of payment has been agreed it will not be claimable until 2008. I will write to you again next year with guidance on this payment, a revised determination and to notify you of the claim period. There is no action required on this now.
11. A revised Statement of General Ophthalmic Services Remuneration is attached which is effective from 14 December when the Statutory Instrument which changes the sight test fee comes into force. The only change made is to the sight test fee and domiciliary visit fees.

Yours Sincerely

Derek Busby
Head of Ophthalmic Services

STATEMENT OF GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES REMUNERATION

The Secretary of State, in exercise of powers conferred on her by regulation 10 of the National Health Service (General Ophthalmic Services) Regulations 1986⁽¹⁾, after consultation with the organisations recognised by her as representing contractors providing general ophthalmic services, makes the following determination:-

PART 1

CITATION, COMMENCEMENT AND INTERPRETATION

Citation, commencement and interpretation

1.—(1) This determination may be cited as the Statement of General Ophthalmic Services Remuneration and shall come into force on 14 December 2007.

(2) Terms used in the National Health Service (General Ophthalmic Services) Regulations 1986 bear the same meaning in this determination as they have in those Regulations.

PART 2

SIGHT TEST FEES

Sight test fee

2. The fee payable to a contractor for an NHS sight test carried out (other than at a place where the patient normally resides) by him or it on or after 1st April 2007 is £19.32.

Domiciliary visit fees

3. The fees payable to a contractor for an NHS domiciliary visit carried out by him or it on or after 1st April 2007 are—

- (a) £34.02 for each of the first and second patients seen at one visit; and
- (b) £8.52 for each of the third and subsequent patients seen at one visit.

(1) S.I. 1986/975, regulation 10 was amended by S.I. 2001/3739, 2002/2469 and 2005/1481

PART 3
CET ALLOWANCE

CET allowance

4.—(1) In this paragraph—

“CET allowance” means the sum of £436.00; and

“relevant year” means the year commencing 1st January 2006.

(2) Subject to sub-paragraph (5), a CET allowance shall be payable to an optician other than a corporate optician if he—

- (a) was included in the ophthalmic list of the Primary Care Trust to which he makes a claim for a CET allowance for a period of at least six months during the relevant year;
- (b) has undertaken appropriate continuing education and training during the relevant year; and
- (c) complies with sub-paragraphs (7) and (8).

(3) Subject to sub-paragraph (5), a CET allowance shall be payable to an ophthalmic medical practitioner if—

- (a) during the relevant year his only remunerated medical or optical activity was the conduct of NHS sight tests;
- (b) he was included in the ophthalmic list of the Primary Care Trust to which he makes a claim for a CET allowance for a period of at least six months during the relevant year;
- (c) he has undertaken appropriate continuing education and training during the relevant year; and
- (d) he complies with sub-paragraphs (7) and (8).

(4) Subject to sub-paragraphs (5) and (6), a CET allowance shall be payable to a contractor in respect of each assistant employed by that contractor if that assistant—

- (a) is either—
 - (i) an optician (other than a corporate optician), or
 - (ii) an ophthalmic medical practitioner whose only remunerated medical or optical activity during the relevant year was the conduct of NHS sight tests;
- (b) is included in the ophthalmic supplementary list of the Primary Care Trust to which the contractor makes a claim for a CET allowance;
- (c) has assisted in the provision of general ophthalmic services for a period of at least six months during the relevant year; and
- (d) has undertaken appropriate continuing education and training during the relevant year,

and the contractor complies with sub-paragraphs (7) and (8).

(5) Only one CET allowance may be claimed in respect of any one person.

(6) Where an assistant is employed by two or more contractors, the CET allowance shall be paid to the contractor which the assistant nominates for the purpose of payment of the CET allowance under this determination.

(7) A claim for a CET allowance shall be made in writing on the form approved for this purpose by the Secretary of State.

(8) A separate claim form shall be completed for each CET allowance claimed.

PART 4

REVOCATIONS

5. The determination of the Secretary of State made on 1st June 2007 relating to the remuneration of contractors are revoked.

Signed by the authority of the Secretary of State for Health.
David Lye