Dear Colleague

GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES (GOS) – MANDATORY TRAINING

Summary

1. This letter provides clarification on the arrangements for the mandatory training that all listed GOS practitioners in Scotland are required to complete.

Action

2. NHS Boards are asked to copy and issue the Memorandum to this letter to all optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners on their ophthalmic lists.

Yours sincerely,

Aidan Grisewood
Head of Primary Care, Scottish Government

3 December 2019

Addresses:

For action
Chief Executives, NHS Boards

For information
Chief Executive, NHS National Services Scotland
NHS Board Optometric Advisers
NHS Education for Scotland

Enquiries to:

Community Eyecare Policy
Primary Care Division
1st Floor East Rear
St Andrews House
EDINBURGH
EH1 3DG

Email:
eyecare@gov.scot (for general GOS queries)
Optometrymandatorytraining@nes.scot.nhs.uk (for queries relating to GOS mandatory training)
MEMORANDUM TO NHS: PCA(O)2019(3)

Summary

1. This Memorandum provides clarification on the arrangements for the mandatory training that all listed General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) practitioners in Scotland are required to complete.

Mandatory GOS training

2. It has come to the Scottish Government’s attention that inaccurate information about mandatory GOS training has recently been issued to community optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners providing GOS in Scotland. The information stated that practitioners who fail to complete the NHS Education for Scotland (NES) ‘First Port of Call (FPOC) Reflective Account of Practice’ training on Turas by 31 December 2019 would not receive payment for providing GOS eye examinations. This information is incorrect.

3. As stated in paragraph 9 of PCA(O)(2018)1, and provided for in paragraph 3A of schedule 1 of The National Health Service (General Ophthalmic Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (“2006 Regulations”), as amended, the first period of GOS mandatory training covers a 27 month period from 1 October 2018 to 31 December 2020 inclusive. Thereafter, mandatory training periods will cover a 12 month period (i.e. 1 January-31 December 2021, 1 January-31 December 2022 and so on).

4. The first 27 month mandatory training period consists of two separate exercises – FPOC, and Consent (which will go live in January 2020). Both of these must be completed by 31 December 2020.

5. There are therefore no payment related consequences for practitioners failing to complete the FPOC training by 31 December 2019. However, we strongly advise that practitioners complete the FPOC training by 31 December 2019. This will ensure that NES is in a better position to support all practitioners with the next consent training exercise in 2020. The exercise should only take approximately one hour to complete, and NES has made available additional support to practitioners. However, both the FPOC and Consent training must be submitted no later than 13 November 2020 to ensure adequate time is available for NES to acknowledge and confirm satisfactory completion by 31 December 2020.

6. The Scottish Government has reflected on feedback from NHS Boards and practitioners about the requirement in legislation for practitioners to provide their NHS Board with a mandatory GOS training completion certificate. We plan to amend the 2006 Regulations in summer 2020 to remove this requirement. In its place we will work with NES and NHS Boards to agree a more efficient solution.

7. Practitioners are advised to cease sending their completion certificates to NHS Boards with immediate effect. NHS Boards are asked to continue for now to store those certificates they have already received, pending further guidance from the Scottish Government.
Enquiries

8. Any enquiries arising from this Memorandum should be emailed as follows to:

- eyecare@gov.scot (for general GOS queries);
- Optometrystonearytraining@nes.scot.nhs.uk (for queries relating to GOS mandatory training).

Primary Care Division, Directorate for Community Health and Social Care
Scottish Government
3 December 2019