



REPRESENTING THE UK OPTICAL SECTOR

# CODE OF PRACTICE for Domiciliary Eyecare

October 2006

*The Domiciliary Eyecare Committee is grateful for the comments of the Department of Health on this code*

## CLINICAL

- Patients will receive a sight test in accordance with the regulations, their individual needs and the duty of care and confidentiality of the optometrist towards the patient
- Providers will utilise specialised portable equipment to enable the optometrist to deliver the best possible care to the patient consistent with the regulations
- Where the environment or medical limitations of the patient make it impossible to include the full range of procedures, the reasons will be shown on the record card
- Providers acknowledge that when supplying domiciliary services they are acting in a privileged position of trust. All providers will monitor and support any clinical staff with regular clinical governance reviews

## PREPARATION

- NHS sight tests will be offered to those who cannot access community optical practices unaccompanied, as a result of mental or physical disability, as set out in the regulations
- Eligibility for a domiciliary examination will be established and the reason noted on the record card, as will any eligibility for an optical voucher, as set out in the regulations
- The provider takes responsibility for confirming that the venue complies with the regulations and that the address is the normal place of residence of the patient
- Providers will respect the right of each patient to make their individual choice of provider for services and appliances

## CONTINUING CARE

- Spectacles dispensed will be fitted individually to patients and any tolerance problems will be addressed by suitably trained staff
- Providers commit themselves to revisiting each patient for a further eye examination as indicated at their previous examination (subject to the patient/carer's agreement)
- Patients have a right to expect a high standard of continuing care which ensures that any follow-up care required or requested is provided efficiently and professionally
- Providers have an obligation to ensure that, when a patient opts to be cared for by another provider, relevant information (e.g. spectacle prescription and date of last sight test) is made available to that new provider with the consent of the patient or the patient's carer

## COMMUNICATION

- Providers will only recruit clinical personnel who possess the specialised communication skills and clinical skills necessary for domiciliary patients

- Each patient will be treated as an individual and communication will primarily be with them throughout their care unless this is inappropriate
- Carers and relatives will be involved where appropriate
- Providers will provide a spectacle prescription or statement for each patient as required by the regulations and additionally (if relevant) will deposit further information with the home/carer, with the patient's permission, to summarise the outcomes of sight tests

## GENERAL

- Providers are committed to providing high quality, personalised and professional eyecare and optical services for housebound patients
- Business will be conducted according to the statutory regulations currently in force, the GOS Terms of Service and with regard to peer group guidance
- All providers agree not to supply concessionary optical services including sight testing services, optometric products or other inducements to the owners and staff of care homes
- The competitive market is recognised as a positive driver of quality and patient choice and companies will not compete in ways that are inappropriate
- Providers apply a non-discrimination policy towards all patients in the supply of domiciliary services

## PROBITY

- Providers are committed to the highest standards of probity and to employing rigorous audit processes to ensure eligibility for NHS funding

## COMPLAINTS

Any complaints about providers or allegations that a provider has fallen below the standards set out in this code should be addressed, in the first instance, to the provider, the relevant **Primary Care Trust (PCT)** or the

**Optical Consumer Complaints Service (OCCS).**  
P.O. Box 4685, London, SE1 6ZB  
Tel: 020 7261 1017

They can also be raised in confidence with the Domiciliary Eyecare Committee.

**Domiciliary Eyecare Committee**  
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