



Dear Colleague,

COMMUNITY GLAUCOMA SERVICE (CGS):

- **CGS Application Process**

Summary

1. This letter advises and updates on a number of important areas relating to the CGS, in particular on the different application process phases.

Action

2. NHS Boards are asked to immediately copy and issue the Memorandum to this letter to all:
 - optometrists, ophthalmic medical practitioners and body corporates on their Ophthalmic Lists;
 - community optometry practices in their NHS Board area.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Ferris

Deputy Director
Dentistry, Optometry and Audiology Division
Directorate for Primary Care
Scottish Government

20 February 2023

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards

For information

Chief Executive,
NHS National Services
Scotland

NHS Board Optometric
Advisers

Enquiries to:

eyecare@gov.scot

**MEMORANDUM TO NHS:
PCA(O)2023(01)**

Summary

1. This Memorandum advises and updates on a number of important areas relating to the Community Glaucoma Service (CGS), in particular on the different application process phases.

Background

2. As set out in [PCA\(O\)2022\(06\)](#), the Scottish Government is in the process of working with stakeholders to roll out the CGS.
3. The timeline for the discharge of eligible CGS patients is determined by a number of factors, driven by both primary and secondary care.
4. From a primary care perspective, the most significant factor influencing the rollout is the number of optometrists certified with the [NHS Education for Scotland Glaucoma Award Training \(NESGAT\) qualification](#).

CGS Application Process

5. The application processes for CGS serve multiple purposes:
 - a) They establish the “map” of accredited provider locations across each NHS Board from where the CGS will be provided;
 - b) They determine where those optometrists who currently hold NESGAT certification will provide care to registered patients;
 - c) They allocate places on future NESGAT training cohorts for Independent Prescribing (IP) optometrists who wish to become certified.

CGS Application Process – Phase 1

6. Phase 1 of the CGS application process applied to the Glasgow City, East Dunbartonshire and East Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCP) within NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde (NHS GGC).
7. Applications for these areas have been approved by NHS GGC, and it is anticipated that the discharge of patients to accredited providers in these areas will commence in the near future.
8. At the current time there is no requirement for additional IP optometrists in these HSCPs to achieve NESGAT certification, and therefore no places have been allocated to these areas within NESGAT cohort 3.

CGS Application Process – Phase 2

9. Applications under Phase 2 apply to the following areas:

- NHS Ayrshire & Arran
- NHS Borders
- NHS Dumfries & Galloway
- NHS Fife
- NHS Forth Valley
- NHS Grampian
- NHS GGC – Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire & Renfrewshire HSCPs
- NHS Highland
- NHS Lothian
- NHS Shetland
- NHS Tayside
- NHS Western Isles

10. Applications within these areas may be submitted to NHS Boards between **Monday 20 February 2023 and Sunday 5 March 2023 inclusive**. Further information on how to apply is set out in paragraphs 22-24.

11. For the reasons set out in paragraphs 6-8, 16-19 and 20-21, **no** CGS applications should be submitted in Phase 2 relating to the following areas: Glasgow City, East Dunbartonshire and East Renfrewshire HSCPs of NHS GGC; NHS Lanarkshire; NHS Orkney.

12. The application process within the Phase 2 areas relates to accredited provider, accredited clinician and assisting accredited clinician status. With regard to the clinician applications, this includes those who wish to achieve certification via NESGAT cohort 3.

13. Applicants should be aware that spaces on this cohort are limited. They have been allocated to NHS Boards on a pro-rata basis, and with regard to the numbers of optometrists who already hold the qualification within each HSCP. The submission of an application does not therefore guarantee that a place will be secured.

14. Applicants for registration in these areas should also be aware that the submission and subsequent approval of applications within Phase 2 is not an indicator that the discharge of eligible CGS patients is to commence in the near future.

15. Details of patient discharge timelines within these areas will be provided in due course. It is anticipated that the majority of HSCP areas across Scotland will be in a position to commence the registration of eligible patients by April 2024.

CGS Application Process - Phase 3

16. Phase 3 of the CGS application process will apply exclusively to NHS Lanarkshire.
17. The Scottish Government is currently working with colleagues from primary and secondary care within this Board to determine the rollout plan for this area.
18. This work will determine the dates during which applications may be submitted and when the first eligible patients will be discharged to accredited providers. It is anticipated that this will be within the first quarter of 2023/24.
19. At the current time there is no requirement for additional IP optometrists in NHS Lanarkshire to achieve NESGAT certification, and therefore no places have been allocated for the Board within NESGAT cohort 3.

NHS Orkney

20. At the current time there are no IP optometrists in NHS Orkney, and hence no places can be allocated within NESGAT cohort 3.
21. The Scottish Government will continue to work with colleagues in NHS Orkney to determine when it may be possible to commence the rollout of CGS.

How to Apply

22. Application forms for registration as an accredited provider, accredited clinician and assisting accredited clinician are on the [eyes.scot website](https://eyes.scot.nhs.uk). Additional information is provided in this area to assist applicants with completing the application process. Applicants are strongly advised to read this before submitting their application.
23. This area of the website holds restricted content not accessible to the general public, and applicants will therefore require specific login details to access it. These details have been provided previously by your NHS Board.
24. The Scottish Government recognises that participation within the CGS places specific requirements on clinicians and businesses. Interested parties should therefore be fully aware of the commitment they are making when submitting an application, which includes them agreeing to relevant Terms of Service. These can be found in Schedules 2 and 4 of the [Optometry Enhanced Services \(Community Glaucoma Service\)\(Scotland\) Directions 2022](#).

Notification of the Outcome of Applications – Phase 2

25. Applicants within Phase 2 should be notified regarding the outcome of their application by the relevant NHS Board **no later than Friday 31 March 2023**.

26. For those whose successful application will allocate them a place on NESGAT cohort 3, further information will be sent directly to them by NHS Education Scotland (NES). It is anticipated that the course will start in summer 2023.

Future NESGAT Cohorts

27. At this time, no decision has been taken with regard to future NESGAT cohorts beyond cohort 3. Further information on this will be provided in due course.

Alternative Qualifications

28. The Scottish Government has commissioned NES to undertake work to assess and determine whether there are any alternative qualifications which demonstrate parity or equivalence with NESGAT.

29. The result of this work is yet to conclude, and hence it is not possible for the Scottish Government to provide specific information at this time. However, should an optometrist who already holds an alternative qualification wish to understand potential additional educational requirements, they should contact NES at: glaucoma@nes.scot.nhs.uk.

Enquiries

30. Any other queries about this Memorandum should be emailed to the Scottish Government at: eyecare@gov.scot.

Dentistry, Optometry and Audiology Division
Directorate for Primary Care
Scottish Government