



Dear Colleague

GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES (GOS):

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) allowances for optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners (OMPs)
- End to mandatory wearing of Fluid Resistant Surgical Masks (FRSM) at all times in domiciliary settings
- Pause in asymptomatic Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing
- Winter COVID-19 and flu vaccines
- NHS medication prescribing
- Staff wellbeing support

Summary

1. This letter advises on:
 - the launch of the CPD allowance claims process for appropriate CPD undertaken by optometrists and OMPs in 2021;
 - an end to the mandatory wearing of FRSMs at all times in domiciliary settings;
 - a pause in asymptomatic LFD testing for health and social care workers;
 - Winter COVID-19 and flu vaccines for frontline health and social care workers;
 - NHS medication prescribing;
 - a reminder about staff wellbeing support available through the National Wellbeing Hub.

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
Scottish Government

20 September 2022

Addresses

For action
Chief Executives, NHS Boards

For information
Chief Executive,
NHS National Services
Scotland

NHS Board Optometric
Advisers

Enquiries to:

nss.psdgospayteam@nhs.scot
(for queries about the CPD
allowance claims process)

eyecare@gov.scot (for any
other queries)

**MEMORANDUM TO NHS:
PCA(O)2022(04)**

Summary

1. This Memorandum advises on the following:

- the launch of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) allowance claims process for appropriate CPD undertaken by optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners (OMPs) in 2021;
- an end to the mandatory wearing of Fluid Resistant Surgical Masks (FRSM) at all times in domiciliary settings;
- a pause in asymptomatic Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing for health and social care workers;
- Winter COVID-19 and flu vaccines for frontline health and social care workers;
- NHS medication prescribing;
- a reminder about staff wellbeing support available through the National Wellbeing Hub.

CPD allowance claims process and eligibility criteria

CPD allowance claims process

2. CPD claims for appropriate CPD undertaken in 2021 can now be submitted by eligible persons (see paragraphs 8 to 9) to Practitioner and Counter Fraud Services (P&CFS) [via this link](#).
3. The CPD allowance amounts will be confirmed separately in due course.
4. A separate claim must be made for each eligible person, and must be received by P&CFS **by midnight Wednesday 30 November 2022**.
5. Only one claim may be paid in respect of any one eligible person for appropriate CPD or independent prescriber CPD undertaken by that person during the 2021 claim period.
6. Practitioners on Part 2 of an NHS Board's Ophthalmic List are reminded that they should submit their own claim, and the allowance will be paid directly to them to the bank account details that they provide.
7. Optometrists and OMPs are not required to produce evidence of undertaking CPD as a compulsory part of the claim or pre-condition of payment. However, a claim

may only be paid in respect of an optometrist or OMP who has maintained their professional registration and P&CFS may undertake a sampling exercise to verify and validate to confirm registration pre or post-payment.

CPD allowance eligibility criteria

8. A standard allowance (the amount of which, as stated above, will be confirmed separately in due course) is payable in respect of appropriate CPD undertaken in 2021 (i.e. in the period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 inclusive) by the following individuals:

- optometrists (other than bodies corporate) who were on the Ophthalmic List of an NHS Board for at least six months during 2021, and who have maintained their registration with the General Optical Council;

and

- OMPs whose only remunerated medical or optical activity in 2021 was GOS, who were on the Ophthalmic List of an NHS Board for at least six months during 2021, and who have maintained their registration with the General Medical Council.

9. A higher allowance (the amount of which, as stated above, will be confirmed separately in due course) is payable in respect of appropriate independent prescriber CPD undertaken in 2021 (i.e. in the period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 inclusive) by optometrists (other than bodies corporate) who:

- were registered as an independent prescriber during 2021;
- were included on the Ophthalmic List of an NHS Board and registered with a host Board as an independent prescriber for at least six months during 2021;

and

- have maintained their registration with the General Optical Council.

Wearing of FRSMs in domiciliary settings

10. Due to a number of factors including high vaccinations rates and other mitigations against COVID-19 in the social care sector, there is no longer a recommendation that FRSMs must be worn at all times in social care settings and when visiting a patient's own home. Practitioners who wish to continue wearing a FRSM in these settings can still do so however.

11. Practitioners are advised to familiarise themselves with the guidance on the [Scottish Government website](#), and note that there may still be some circumstances

where, after risk assessing the situation, it may be appropriate to wear a FRSM (such as where there is poor ventilation). The [National IPC Manual \(NIPCM\) Addendum 22 for Community Health and Care Settings guidance](#) will be updated in due course with this information.

Pause in asymptomatic LFD testing for health and social care workers

12. Directors Letter [DL\(2022\)32](#) from the Scottish Government gives advance notice that, following a regular clinical review, asymptomatic LFD testing for health and social care workers (including community optometry practice staff) can be paused with immediate effect where possible, and should be implemented by no later than Wednesday 28 September 2022. Practitioners and practice managers should familiarise themselves with the full detail of DL(2022)32.

Winter COVID-19 and flu vaccines

13. Further to [DL\(2022\)29](#), frontline health and social care workers can now book their Winter COVID-19 and flu vaccines via the online [booking portal](#). Further guidance on booking an appointment, including what constitutes a frontline health and social care worker, is available on [NHS Inform](#).

Staff wellbeing

14. All community optometry practice staff are reminded that a range of support to help with their wellbeing is available through the National Wellbeing Hub. Further information is available via the [National Wellbeing Hub](#) website, and set out in paragraphs 8 to 11 of [PCA\(O\)2021\(08\)](#).

NHS medication prescribing

15. Practitioners are reminded that where a patient needs medication following a GOS eye examination, they should always be given the opportunity to access the medication on the NHS, whether it be via a NHS prescription slip, NHS Pharmacy First Scotland or from the patient's General Practitioner.

Enquiries

16. Any queries about the CPD allowance claims process should be emailed to P&CFS at: nss.psdgospayteam@nhs.scot
17. Any other queries about this Memorandum should be emailed to the Scottish Government at: eyecare@gov.scot

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