

## Direct Cataract Referral Scheme Guidance

The main aim of the Direct Cataract Referral Scheme is to reduce the number/percentage of patients who are referred to hospital but who then do not proceed to surgery (i.e to increase the conversion rate).

### Direct Cataract Referral Scheme Process

Under the Direct Cataract Referral Scheme, the Optometrist will undertake the following:

- i) Diagnose cataract
- ii) Provide patient with information leaflet
- iii) Assess patient's suitability and willingness to undergo cataract surgery, including counselling on the risks and benefits of surgery, in accordance with the inclusion/exclusion criteria listed in this document
- iv) Use of the 'Cataract Score' to support decision making; this should not supersede clinical judgement regarding appropriateness of referral
- v) Complete referral form
- vi) Submit the referral to the Patient Choice Office for choice of provider to be discussed with patient and onward referral actioned.

### Referral/Inclusion Criteria

Patients suitable for referral under the Direct Cataract Referral scheme will satisfy all three points below:

1. Cataract is the cause of reduced vision or symptoms of:
  - a. Generally blurred or dim vision
  - b. Glare in sunlight or when driving
  - c. Difficulty with reading or specific visual tasks
  - d. Difficulty with kerbs or steps or mobility

And symptoms significantly affect patient's lifestyle

2. Following counselling, patients confirm that they wish to have cataract surgery
3. The patient's GP is in a participating locality (NHS Harrogate and Rural District CCG, NHS Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby CCG, NHS Scarborough and Ryedale CCG, NHS Vale of York CCG)

### Exclusion Criteria

Patients are not suitable if they fulfill any one of the following criteria:

1. Patients who do not have significant difficulty with their vision
2. Patients who do not wish to be referred for cataract surgery

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Managing Director

3. Where the patient's GP is not within a participating locality

**Audit**

The participating CCGs will audit the Direct Cataract Referral Scheme, including the following:

- Number/percentage of referrals made via Direct Cataract Referral Scheme versus number/percentage referred via traditional GP/GOS18 pathway
- Outcomes of referral – conversion rates to surgery for both optometrist and GP/GOS18 referrals
- Accuracy and completeness of information provided on referral pro forma
- Patient satisfaction

**Information Requirements**

The Optometrist shall on request provide the Patient Choice Office any information relevant to this scheme to support the audit, including the following:

- Details of patients referred for cataract surgery
- Copies of patient records
- Outcomes of referral – e.g. details of patients not listed for surgery

**Clinical Governance**

The referring Optometrist will be a qualified optometrist registered with the General Optical Council and at all times maintain a high clinical standard to meet the requirements of the General Optical Council.

The Optometrist will observe the legal requirements and professional guidelines of the General Optical Council Code of Conduct and the College of Optometrists Guidelines.

**Responsibilities of the Optometrist**

Clinical Practice – The Optometrist will adhere to the referral process, inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Information sharing - The Optometrist will ensure the completed referral form is submitted, to both the patient's GP and the Patient Choice Office.