

Applications for the NHS Video Consulting Service 'Attend Anywhere' for Optometry

September 2020

1.0 NHS Wales Video Consulting (VC) Service

The NHS Wales Video Consulting (VC) Service is being rolled out to offer healthcare services in a safe and secure way to see patients via a video appointment, rather than seeing them in person. The VC Service is delivered via a communication platform called 'Attend Anywhere'.

2.0 What is Attend Anywhere?

Attend Anywhere is a web-based communications platform that allows video appointments to take place between patients, families and clinicians. These appointments can take place anywhere convenient to the patient, such as at work or home and there is assurance to the patient that the video consultation cannot be recorded.

Attend Anywhere is accessible via any type of device that has Internet access e.g. smart phone, tablet, laptop or computer with a webcam and speakers running Chrome or Safari browsers.

3.0 Attend Anywhere Optometry pilot

On 7th July 2020, Welsh Government announced that the video consultation services would be extended to optometry practices. A pilot commenced in 5 optometry practices in Powys (May 2020) and 8 optometry practices in Cardiff and Vale UHB (July 2020) to evaluate potential clinical uses of the system. This pilot included a variety of practice sizes and settings and two full time domiciliary services. Patients and practitioners have been asked to complete a short online survey following the video consultation.

4.0 Governance Arrangements

4.1 Full records are essential to facilitate the clinical management of the patient and continuity of care. You must keep full, accurate and clear patient records, made at the time of the examination, which provide a history of patient care, including referrals.

4.2 The video consultation through Attend Anywhere cannot be recorded or saved electronically. It is important to ensure that all information is recorded in the appropriate care record (as you would normally do).

4.3 When using these tools you still need to safeguard confidential patient information in the same way you would with any other consultation.

4.4 The standards expected of optometrists by the GOC and the ICO apply equally to digital and conventional consultations.

4.5 The appropriateness of remote consultations should be reviewed carefully for patients whom capacity may be of concern.

4.6 Where family members, carers or relatives use online consultations on behalf of the patient, you must ensure consent has been obtained.

4.7 Make sure you conduct the video consultation in a private place, just as you would if the patient were in the practice.

4.8 Check that the patient is happy to have a conversation. For example, they may wish to move to somewhere private so that they cannot be overheard

5.0 Potential uses for Attend Anywhere in Optometry

5.1 General Ophthalmic Services/private sight test

5.1.1 Pre-visit symptoms and history to reduce the time patient is required to spend in practice.

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

5.1.2 Post-visit explanation of eye condition, reason for referral to hospital

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

5.1.3 General dispensing queries or advice to partner/carers on minor glasses repair (e.g. replacement of screw in spectacles)

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination/voucher fee paid.

5.2. Eye Health Examination Wales

5.2.1 Pre-visit triage (no diagnosis but to assess degree of urgency)

This would be considered as part of the normal pathway in a similar way as practice staff complete a triage form presently. It would form part of the overall EHEW Band 1 fee.

5.2.2 Pre-visit symptoms and history to reduce the time patient is required in practice

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would form part of the overall EHEW Band 1 fee.

5.2.3 EHEW Band 1 diagnosis and management for specific gross conditions. where practitioner is satisfied that a clinic visit is deemed unnecessary following virtual consultation.

There are a limited number of discrete conditions (see section 8 of this document) that could be assessed and managed remotely. If a patient would ordinarily have been accepted for an acute examination under EHEW Band 1 protocols, and the examination and diagnosis can be achieved safely through video consultation, then this would constitute an EHEW Band 1 examination and be eligible for payment of an EHEW Band 1 fee. Practitioners must ensure that the examination is recorded within the patient's clinical record, as they would do for all examinations irrespective of the location.

5.2.4 EHEW Band 3 follow up where deemed to be clinically appropriate by the practitioner.

If a patient would ordinarily have been accepted for a follow up examination under EHEW Band 3 protocols, and the examination can be achieved safely through video consultation, then this would constitute an EHEW Band 3 examination and be eligible for payment of an EHEW Band 3 fee.

Please see section 8 in this document for further information regarding payment eligibility.

Practitioners must ensure that the examination is recorded within the patient's clinical record, as they would do for all examinations irrespective of the location.

5.2.5 Completion of pre-operative and post-operative questionnaire

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

5.3 Low Vision Service Wales

5.3.1 Pre-visit symptoms and history (Living situation, support received to date, medical history) to reduce the time patient is required to spend in practice. This does not replace the need to see the patient, face to face, as part of the overall initial (new patient) or annual (existing patient) low vision assessment.

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

5.3.2 Instruction on use of low vision aids (e.g. patient shielding or self isolating).

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

5.3.3 Follow up appointment (2 months) following LVSW initial assessment.

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

5.4 Domiciliary Services

5.4.1 Pre-visit triage to determine whether the patient requires a sight test or an urgent visit (e.g. for Domiciliary Enhanced Eye Care Service).

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

5.4.2 Pre-visit symptoms and history to reduce the time practitioner is required to spend with the patient.

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

5.4.3 General dispensing queries or advice to partner/carers on minor glasses repair (e.g. replacement of screw in spectacles)

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination/voucher fee paid.

5.5 Contact Lenses

5.5.1 Contact lens fitting - pre-visit symptoms and history to reduce the time patient is required to spend in practice.

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

5.5.2 Contact lens aftercare appointments when remote contact lens aftercare appointments are recommended by regulatory bodies

This would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would be included as part of the examination fee.

6.0 Remote consultation and Covid-19 Urgent Eye Care Service (CUES)

Telephone and video consultation have been used as part of the College of Optometrists/Royal College of Ophthalmologists endorsed CUES pathway in England for triage and self-care advice to patients with eye problems during the Covid-19 crisis. This contains a risk stratification, conditions and service pathway which provides examples of eye conditions that are recommended can be managed remotely via CUES.

<https://www.college-optometrists.org/the-college/media-hub/news-listing/nhs-england-covid-19-urgent-eyecare-service-cues.html>

7.0 Guidance on remote consultations in optometry practice

Guidance for practices when using remote consultations has been produced by the AOP

<https://www.aop.org.uk/advice-and-support/clinical/clinical-governance/remote-consultations>

the General Optical Council

https://www.optical.org/filemanager/root/site_assets/publications/covid_19/High-level-principles-for-remote-prescribing_.pdf

and the College of Optometrists

<https://www.college-optometrists.org/the-college/media-hub/news-listing/remote-consultations-during-covid-19-pandemic.html>

8.0 Payment eligibility for EHEW Service video consultations

8.1 Payment will only be provided for video consultations for EHEW Band 1 and EHEW Band 3 video consultations when the video consultation platform Attend Anywhere is used. Phone consultation or alternative platforms of remote consultations will not be deemed eligible for payment.

8.2 The payment pathway provides a structure for practitioners to use their professional judgement, considering local referral guidance. It does not remove from practitioners their professional responsibility to each patient, who should be dealt with on an individual basis.

8.3 EHEW Band 1 Attend Anywhere video consultation claim procedure

EHEW Band 1 claims can be made following a video consultation for conditions where the signs are clear and specific and are restricted to chalazion, hordeolum and non-traumatic related subconjunctival haemorrhage and when the practitioner is satisfied that further clinical

investigations are not required using a slit lamp microscope. The practitioner should write 'Attend Anywhere' in place of a patient signature on the WECS1 claim form.

8.4 EHEW Band 3 follow up Attend Anywhere video claim procedure

EHEW Band 3 claims can be made following a video consultation where deemed to be clinically appropriate by the practitioner.

Examples may include but are not limited to:

- Follow up of a patient following a Band 1 EHEW examination to check on resolution of patient symptoms following treatment with e.g. artificial tears, antibiotic or anti-allergy medication
- Follow up of a patient following a Band 1 EHEW examination to check on resolution of a chalazion, hordeolum, bacterial conjunctivitis, allergic conjunctivitis, viral conjunctivitis or other non complex eye or eyelid conditions

The practitioner should write 'Attend Anywhere' in place of a patient signature on the WECS1 claim form.

8.5 If during the video consultation of the Band 1 or Band 3 examination, the practitioner deems that the patient is required to attend for further examination in the practice, then the video consultation would be considered as part of the overall examination process and would form part of the one overall EHEW Band 1 or Band 3 fee.

This payment eligibility proposal applies only to EHEW payments and does not apply to alternative or additional emergency eye care provision that may be separately commissioned by Health Boards outside of the EHEW Service.