

WALES GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES (WGOS)

CHANGES SUMMARY: WGOS 1 & 2

EXPECTED IMPLEMENTATION DATE: 20 OCTOBER 2023

Warning:

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Please check www.eyecare.wales.nhs.uk for the current version.

This summary is issued in advance of regulatory reforms to be laid by Welsh Government in the Senedd in September 2023.

Please check www.eyecare.wales.nhs.uk for amendments after the regulations are laid.

WGOS general service information

Before mid-October 2023 (date tbc), GOS and EHEW are two distinct services, each with a different service level agreement. Contractors may provide GOS without providing EHEW.

After mid-October 2023, GOS and EHEW will be incorporated into one service – WGOS, as WGOS 1 (old GOS) and WGOS 2 (old EHEW). Contractors who provide WGOS1 must also provide WGOS 2.

Service Agreements to provide WGOS

Currently EHEW can only be provided in a static practice and being EHEW accredited is not mandatory.

From mid-October 2023 (date tbc), all practices regardless of whether they are operating from a static or mobile premises are required to provide WGOS 1 and 2, thus must meet the WGOS 2 (old EHEW) standards.

All practices and mobile providers that dispense optical appliances must offer a suitable pair of spectacles to voucher whose cost is completely covered by the WGOS optical voucher.

Currently practices are asked to state their opening hours only. From mid-October 2023, practices are required to notify health boards via NWSSP of the core hours in which they provide WGOS 1 and WGOS 2.

WGOS lists of who can provide WGOS

From mid-October 2023, every Optometrist, OMP, EHEW CLO and Low Vision DO/CLO must undertake WGOS mandatory training to remain on (or to join) the list.

From mid-October 2023, every Optometrist, OMP, practice and mobile contractor must be EHEW-accredited. This includes mobile-only (domiciliary-only) performers and contractors.

By the end of January 2024 (tbc), Student Optometrists (pre-reg) and remaining DOs will be included on the NHS Wales list.

WGOS 1 and 2 for patients who reside outside Wales

A patient's eligibility to access WGOS 1 and 2 will not be dependent on where they reside, if they attend a practice in Wales. Mobile WGOS 1 and 2 may be provided at eligible addresses in Wales.

Mobile WGOS

All contractors wishing to undertake WGOS in a mobile setting (including adjustment / fitting of spectacles), irrespective of frequency of provision, are required to have a Mobile Service Agreement with the Health Board aligned to the location the service is being delivered.

From mid-October 2023, the requirement for the practice to provide 48-hours' notice to the Health Board via NWSSP of their intention to perform a Mobile Service, will cease.

NWSSP will not be required to approve a day centre prior to a service being delivered.

Remote consultations

Elements of WGOS 1 and 2 may be completed remotely, e.g. history and symptoms by telephone call. WGOS 1 may not be completed entirely remotely and most WGOS 2 episodes typically require in-person examination of the patient by the Optometrist, OMP or WGOS 2-accredited CLO.

WGOS access reporting

Contractors must notify the Health Board if they refuse to provide WGOS to an eligible patient.

Duty of Candour

Contractors are required to notify the Health Board when the duty of candour has been triggered for an incident involving an NHS patient.

WGOS practice (and mobile) equipment

To be able to offer WGOS, all contractors (practice-based, practices who offer mobile, and mobile-only) are required to have access to appropriate equipment, including portable equipment for any mobile services

Referrals within WGOS first

Patients who require referral from WGOS 1 & 2 must be referred to WGOS 3, 4 or 5 (as appropriate) in Health Boards where services exist, by electronic means (where possible), rather than referring to the Hospital Eye Service.

Time limits for WGOS claims

From mid-October 2023, the time limit for WGOS 1 and 2 claims submissions will be 3 months (not six months as previously).

WGOS 1 Performers

WGOS 1 Eye Examination may be performed by any Optometrist or OMP on the new Wales Ophthalmic List.

WGOS 1 Eye Examination

The WGOS 1 Eye Examination supersedes the GOS sight test and the 'at risk' EHEW Band 1 examination. Patients previously eligible for an EHEW Band 1 on the grounds of being considered 'at risk' will be eligible for a WGOS 1 Eye Examination.

A WGOS 1 Eye Examination includes everything in a former GOS sight test with the addition of prevention and well-being messaging, including Making Every Contact Count (MECC) and a Patient Management Plan (PMP).

WGOS 1 eligibility

Patients currently eligible for GOS are eligible for WGOS 1.

In addition, the following patients are also eligible for WGOS 1:

- Those under 18 who are care leavers or under the care of the Local Authority are eligible for WGOS level 1
- A prisoner on leave from prison is eligible for a WGOS level 1 examination
- Those considered to be at risk of eye disease, due to ethnicity, being unioocular, hearing impaired or living with Retinitis Pigmentosa (who were previously eligible for a EHEW Band 1). In the new regulations dilation and routine GP reports will no longer be a mandatory requirement for this cohort of patients.

WGOS 1 early test codes

From mid-October 2023, new early test codes will be used for WGOS 1 Eye Examinations.

Private patients who reveal WGOS 1 entitlement after their sight test

From mid-October 2023 patients who reveal their WGOS 1 entitlement to the practice after their private sight test may complete the relevant paperwork for a WGOS 1 claim providing the practice

performs/provides the additional prevention and well-being messaging, including Making Every Contact Count (MECC) and a Patient Management Plan (PMP).

The requirement for the practice to perform/provide the additional prevention and well-being messaging, including Making Every Contact Count (MECC) and a Patient Management Plan (PMP) does not apply when a patient claims a refund of private fees from the NHS directly.

WGOS 2 Performers

WGOS 2 Bands 1, 2 and 3 may be performed by any Optometrist or OMP on the new Wales Ophthalmic List.

WGOS 2 Bands 1 and 3 may be performed by any CLO on the new Wales Ophthalmic List.

WGOS 2 Band 1 eligibility

- Patients with an acute eye problem
- Patients who have been referred by another health professional

NB Patients 'at risk' who previously received EHEW Band 1 now receive WGOS 1.

WGOS 2 Band 1 contractor duty

WGOS 1 & 2 contractors are expected to assist patients with an acute eye problem who contact any member of their staff within their agreed core hours and respond to the patient within 24 hours by providing a WGOS 2 Band 1 assessment within an appropriate timescale indicated by triage.

Rarely, in exceptional circumstances, the WGOS 1 & 2 contractor may fulfil this duty by arranging a WGOS 2 Band 1 appointment with another WGOS 2 Band 1 provider within an appropriate timescale indicated by triage.

WGOS 2 Band 1 clinical judgement

The examination required for WGOS 2 Band 1 is a matter for the performer's clinical judgement, e.g. whether dilation is required, whether contact tonometry is required.

A patient may have more than one WGOS 2: Band 1 per year providing, in the performer's clinical judgement, the second or subsequent Band 1 represents a different clinical episode and this is clearly documented in the patient's record.

WGOS 2 Band 2 clinical judgement

The examination required for WGOS 2 Band 2 is a matter for the performer's clinical judgement, e.g. whether and OCT scan is performed to refine or potentially prevent a referral.

Band 2 may not be used to perform an OCT to create baseline scans.

Band 2 may not be used to perform an OCT to compare new scans with baseline scans unless this would refine or potentially prevent a referral.

WGOS 2 Band 3 clinical judgement

A patient may have more than one WGOS 2: Band 3 per year providing, in the performer's clinical judgement, the second or subsequent Band 3 is clinically necessary and this is clearly documented in the patient's record.

WGOS optical vouchers – contractor duty

All practices and mobile providers that dispense optical appliances must offer a suitable pair of spectacles to voucher whose cost is completely covered by the WGOS optical voucher.

WGOS optical vouchers – eligibility

In addition to the patients that were eligible for GOS optical vouchers for help towards the cost of their optical appliances, the following patients are eligible under WGOS:

- Under 18 who are care leavers or are in the care of a Local Authority
- Prisoners on Leave (PoL)

Non-tolerance

Where a patient cannot tolerate their new spectacles a second WGOS 1 Eye Examination can be performed by coding the claim form appropriately for non-tolerance. Prior approval to issue another voucher following this examination is no longer required.

WGOS optical vouchers – names and values

From mid-October 2023, voucher names, dioptric values and monetary values will change.

WGOS optical vouchers – non-stock lens supplement for children

From mid-October 2023, a supplement will be introduced for patients under 19 years old who are eligible for a WGOS optical voucher where a non-stock lens is used for an optical prescription between 4.00 D and 6.00 D (inclusive).

WGOS optical vouchers – repairs and replacement

From mid-October 2023, patients aged 16, 17 or 18 who are eligible for a WGOS repair / replacement optical voucher will no longer need prior approval from NHS Wales before the voucher may be claimed.

WGOS optical vouchers – spare pairs

Patients are not automatically entitled to spare pairs. From mid-October 2023, contractors / performers may apply electronically to NHS Wales for authorisation to issue a second WGOS optical voucher for a spare pair of glasses.

WGOS optical vouchers – cross-border

GOS vouchers issued elsewhere in the UK may be used by patients as WGOS optical vouchers. Contractors in Wales will give these vouchers the same value as if they had been issued in Wales and submit them to NHS Wales for payment through the same route and within the same timescale as WGOS optical vouchers.

Patients may take their WGOS optical voucher to a supplier of their choice, including elsewhere within the UK.