

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 4; MAY 2015

Colleagues,

I hope that you continue to find the HSCB Optometry Newsletter a useful source of information in relation to; ongoing developments within Ophthalmic Services in Northern Ireland, the wider Health and Social Care system, the profession on a national level and other issues of relevance to you as an eye care professional.

Developing Eyecare Partnerships (DEP) continues to be an important focus for the Health and Social Care Board and your ongoing support for the various strands of DEP is valued. In 2015/16 it is hoped that further progress will be made in the areas of local enhanced service, eReferral and Independent Prescribing.

I would also encourage you to continue to engage with Optometry Northern Ireland, (ONI) which will optimise the mechanisms for keeping you abreast of important discussions and developments.

Please continue to share this newsletter with your colleagues and staff. If you have any ideas or suggestions for future content please contact one of the HSCB Optometric advisers.

Best wishes,



Mr Raymond Curran, Head of Optometry HSCB



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Adverse Incidents – Sharing of Learning

The HSCB have received two reported adverse incidents (AIs) in recent weeks. Both AIs were contact lens related. One incident was an adverse reaction (possible allergy) to disposable contact lenses and the practice reported the problem to the manufacturers and ensured adequate clinical follow up care. The second incident related to the insertion of a rigid contact lens into the eye without rinsing off the surfactant cleaner. This incident was exacerbated by the fact that local anaesthetic had been instilled into the eye prior to lens insertion. Practitioners are reminded to bear in mind both of these contributory factors when fitting contact lenses. Thanks are extended to both practices for following good governance and reporting these AIs. [AI reporting forms](http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2563.htm) can be accessed from the BSO website <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2563.htm> ([click here](#)).



IOP Referral Refinement (Repeat Measures) Local Enhanced Service

Thank you to all those practitioners who recently participated in the two recent training and assessment sessions for IOP LES provision. Your support for the service is appreciated. There are now 357 Optometrists accredited for IOP LES provision across all LCG areas.

As part of the work of Developing Eyecare Partnerships the Health and Social Care Board are working with many stakeholders, including Optometry Northern Ireland, investigating the options for further work in relation to referral refinement (enhanced service provision). Recent commissioning guidance issued for consultation by the Royal College of Ophthalmologists provides recommendations in relation to the optimum care pathway for patients who are referred for assessment for OHT and Glaucoma. In addition to consideration of this guidance, audit of referrals made by optometrists into the glaucoma service (Belfast Health and Social Care Trust) will inform this planning.

Please note: The Health and Social Care Board intend to contact those practitioners who are currently LES accredited to survey interest in further training in referral refinement. If you are LES accredited you are encouraged to respond to this survey as it will be your opportunity to express an interest in being involved in further service development.

General Optical Council—Consultation on Standards of Practice

In the February issue of the HSCB Optometry Practice Newsletter you were advised of the ongoing work by the General Optical Council to revise the Standards of Practice for Registrants. The consultation on the revised Standards of Practice for Optometrists, Dispensing Opticians and Student registrants closes on 7th June 2015 and you are encouraged to read the DRAFT Standards of Practice and comment on them. The consultation questions are in the form of an on-line survey and this can be accessed at: <https://www.optical.org/en/get-involved/consultations/index.cfm>, or [click here](#)

General Ophthalmic Services – new MOS guidance and information, QA returns

MOS/295– Guidance in relation to the provision of second pairs

This [MOS](#) replaces MOS/273. Please ensure that all ophthalmic professionals and support staff within your practice are aware of this guidance. Please be reminded that, as stated in MOS /295, there is not an automatic entitlement to a spare pair .

MOS/297 Guidance in relation to GOS and home schooled children

This [MOS](#) provides information in relation to GOS eligibility for children who are educated at home.

***** ALL OF THE ABOVE ARE HOSTED ON THE [BSO WEBSITE](#) *****

Annual Practice Quality Assurance (2014/15) Practice Returns

The annual QA documentation was issued to all practices at the beginning of April 2015. Thank you to those practices which have made their returns already. If your practice has not submitted their QA return proforma and declarations please do so as soon as possible returning the required information to the named individuals on the documentation issued.

Ophthalmic Listing—Process for Notification of Changes

In early March 2015, all practices received information and guidance in relation to Ophthalmic Listing and the statutory obligations for GOS contractors in regard to their ophthalmic listing status. The guidance details the process for notification of changes to ophthalmic listing details—please ensure that you follow this process. The [forms for notification of changes](#) are available for download on the BSO website: <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2561.htm>. Remember to send your notifications to Karen Lee at BSO or electronically (web form) via the new [FPS Optometry](#) landing page accessed through the BSO web-portal. The link for this is: <http://sharepoint.hscni.net/sites/fpsoptometry/SitePages/Home.aspx>



TO NOTE: It is ***vital*** that you inform HSCB/BSO of any changes in ***employed optometrists*** within your practice as this will impact on the planning for the introduction of electronic referral (eReferral) by optometrists. HSCB/BSO must be notified of any changes as the mechanism for eReferral is based on individual optometrist log-in within your practice.

Accurate and up to date practice information is increasingly important as the work to develop services continues. Please ensure that you notify changes of your practice Ophthalmic Listing details.

Update on Referrals and Paediatric Ophthalmology Services

In the last issue of the HSCB Optometry Practice Newsletter you were advised of the work which is being undertaken in relation to electronic referrals by Optometrists. Currently GPs refer their patients into secondary care using the 'CCG' - the **C**linical **C**ommunications **G**ateway. The eReferrals project for Optometry practices involves complex planning and development of systems and processes to enable practices that have connectivity to the HSC network (via their practice cryptocards and log-in) to connect to the CCG to generate electronic referrals to secondary care eye services. This will improve the safety and security of information transfer, ensure legible and comprehensive referrals and provide an full and detailed audit trail on all referrals. The latter will enable optometrists to see when and where their referral has been received and actioned. Part of the process involved the integration of details of the Optometrists who are providing GOS within the CCG. In order for this to happen, as an initial step there must be sharing of this information with NHS information colleagues in Scotland who are collaborative partners in the CCG initiative in Northern Ireland. Any optometrist who does not wish to have the opportunity to send electronic referrals should contact any one of the HSCB Optometric advisers (contact details on the front page). It is hoped that by the end of 2015 a pilot testing within several optometry practices will have been completed. As advised previously Optometry Northern Ireland (ONI) as the professional representative body are engaged in the work. If you wish to more know about eReferrals please contact ONI who will be able to brief you on all developments.

In the meantime you are encouraged to use the [referral forms](#) hosted on the BSO website for all your referrals and type the information. As CCG is used by GPs the scanning of GOS18 referrals (from the triplicate pad) to send the referral (electronically) significantly reduces the quality and legibility of a handwritten referral.

Paediatric Ophthalmology Services

The pathway for referrals to **paediatric ophthalmology** in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) has been revised to take account of the introduction of a new service for **urgent paediatric referrals**. In the past children with an urgent eye problem were often sent to eye casualty and the BHSCT have developed the **P**aediatric **O**phthalmology **P**riority **C**onsultation **C**linic (POPCC). This new [NI Health Care Award winning service](#), developed by Ms Eibhlin McLoone, consultant ophthalmologist and her paediatric ophthalmology team in BHSCT is for children with URGENT eye problems ONLY and should **not** be used for non-urgent or routine eye conditions where an ophthalmological opinion is required. Further details of the new service and referral protocols will be issued by the HSCB and BHSCT in due course. For non-urgent or routine referrals please send the GOS 18 referral forms to the patient's GP requesting referral to Paediatric Ophthalmology, Royal Victoria Hospital. **Please do not send referrals for paediatric ophthalmology to any of the local hospital refraction service clinics as this could delay triage and the arrangement of an appointment.**

In acknowledgment of a colleague's contribution



At the beginning of March, Mairéad McKenna retired from her optometry practice in Maghera. Those of you who are privileged to know Mairéad will no doubt appreciate the commitment Mairéad has given to Optometry in Northern Ireland. Mairéad qualified from City University in November 1973 and established her practice in Maghera soon afterwards. Driven by a real love for her profession, Mairéad was an early pioneering adopter of continued professional development undertaking further study and examinations on Glaucoma, Diabetes and the Acute Eye through City University. In more recent years, prior to the establishment of the regional HSCB, Mairéad worked with local commissioning bodies to help develop a pilot service for the management of non-sight threatening acute eye problems. The pilot was supported by the then Mid Ulster Local Health and Social Care Commissioning Group (LHSCG) which enabled optometrists in the Maghera/Magherafelt/Cookstown area to assess, triage and treat patients with non-sight threatening 'acute/sudden onset' symptoms. Mairéad is the consummate professional, a 'gentlewoman' with a legion of loyal patients who will no doubt miss her meticulous attention to their eyecare needs. The Health and Social Care Board would like to take this opportunity to thank Mairéad for the immense contribution she has made to Optometry in Northern Ireland and offer best wishes to Mairéad in her retirement. Mairéad has transferred her business to her trusty colleague, Roisin McGuinness, with the promise that she will make an occasional guest appearance!

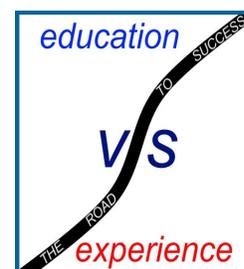
Optometrists raising funds for charity in the 2015 Belfast City Marathon Relay

Michael Thompson an optometrist with R A Glass Associates took part in the Belfast City Marathon Relay on Monday 4th May. Michael also managed to persuade his long-time friend Fiona North, HSCB Optometric Adviser to run with him for their chosen charity '[Habitat for Humanity Northern Ireland](http://www.habitatni.co.uk)'. Michael and Fiona started working as optometrists in R A Glass Opticians in the mid 80's. Michael was raising funds for Habitat and will travel to India in July, having previously travelled to Tanzania in 2007. Habitat's vision is 'a world where everyone has a decent place to live'. Given the destruction of so many homes in the recent Nepalese earthquake, Michael's efforts to reach out to those in need of shelter and housing are more important than ever. He is travelling as part of a team of 17 and they will be working in a resettlement colony outside Delhi. They aim to help build basic homes and sanitation blocks. Michael said "the Belfast Marathon Relay was a great successful fundraiser as 50 people ran for the upcoming Habitat trip to India. A great way to spend a day off work, getting exercise, raising the profile of Habitat and as well as raising money". Further information available at: www.habitatni.co.uk. Well done Michael, Fiona and the Gilnahirk St Colmcille's relay team!



Continued Education and Training – A Synopsis of the Spring 2015 Event

The HSCB/BSO spring CET event was held at Greenmount College on 24th March 2015. The Health and Social Care Board would like to thank all those practitioners who attended and for the positive feedback and comments on the quality of the presentations. Your feedback is much appreciated as it enables the HSCB and BSO to plan or further events both in terms of hospitality and educational content, taking into account resource implications and constraints. The Health and Social Care Board also wish to thank each of the following speakers who gave of their time to disseminate important knowledge and learning in their respective disciplines.



Mr Brendan Lacey — Mr Lacey presented on eyelid, ocular and orbital tumours providing classification of lesions and neoplasms in terms of their malignancy and ocular position. The talk was not for the faint-hearted with several rather graphic slides of ocular tumours which Mr Lacey has dealt with. The take home message for practitioners was to always be alert to the appearance of lesions noting; the colour, size, absence of eyelashes, ulceration and change over time. The recording of clinical signs is very important and quick action where possible malignancy is suspected as some of the more 'rare' malignancies such as meibomium gland carcinomas, are highly metastatic and as such, are life threatening.

Ms Rukhsana McCann — Ms McCann presented case studies on nerve palsies with a focus on determination of whether a palsy was concomitant or incomitant. Ms McCann provided four examples of 4th and 6th nerve palsies going through the presenting histories and symptoms and the differential diagnosis. The importance of **recording all history and symptoms; general health, recent trauma and ocular motility and all OMB test results** was noted as a patient's history can provide valuable information when a patient presents with a recent onset of binocular vision problems.

Dr David Armstrong — Dr Armstrong presented some very interesting case studies with an emphasis eye casualty services. Dr Armstrong introduced the updated HSC Trust eye emergencies protocol and cited excellent examples of what were true eye emergencies and what cases would be deemed less urgent. Again practitioners were advised of the importance of **recording ALL necessary clinical information** for referrals to eye casualty— age, past medical history/CL history/visual acuity/RX/pupillary reactions/clinical findings/IOPs. An updated protocol on eye emergencies will be issued to all practices in the incoming weeks.

**** TAKE HOME MESSAGES ****

CAREFUL RECORDING OF H&S / CAREFUL EXAMINATIONS/
CLEAR & LEGIBLE ANNOTATION OF REASON FOR REFERRAL

Ms Giuliana Silvestri — Ms Silvestri's talk was titled "An overview of Macular Treatments". The presentation gave practitioners a superb background and insight into the pathogenesis of AMD and current treatments. Ms Silvestri provided an overview of the timelines for the major AMD trials and studies for the various treatments as they came on board. Practitioners were advised of the processes for NICE Technology Appraisals (TAs) and the recently NICE approved treatments for retinal/macular conditions and also those pending NICE approval. Several wonderful case studies of patients who have been treated for WetAMD in the Macular Service in Belfast Health and Social Care Trust were presented and the benefits of not only the treatment, but the patient management system, were noted. Ms Silvestri finished her talk with information on the European working time directive and how this has impacted on ophthalmology services.

Mr James Sharkey— Mr Sharkey provided an fascinating talk on "Flashes, Floaters and Detachments" accompanied by two videos of retinal surgery. The presentation covered classification of retinal detachment, symptoms and signs and treatment options. Mr Sharkey provided clear and concise advice on referrals for retinal detachment highlighting the 'at risk' groups. Information on audit and outcomes was also provided. As with the other presentations, optometrists were reminded of the importance of thorough clinical note taking and clinical investigations. All those in attendance will remember the swirling gin & tonic and ice in a glass analogy!

SAVE THE DATE!! - The next HSCB/BSO CET event will be on Tuesday 20th OCTOBER 2015 (afternoon event)

Ophthalmic Drug Alert

A recall has been issued for the following eye drops by Allergan UK Limited:

Exocin 3mg/ml Eye Drops (Ofloxin) Danish Language Packs Only

<u>Batch Number</u>	<u>Expiry Date</u>	<u>Pack Size</u>	<u>First Distributed</u>
E75048	Sept 2016	1 x 5ml	03 March 2015

Please refer to [MOS/296](#) for full details or view the alert at: <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2396.htm>

RNIB Overdrive— a digital download service

[RNIB Overdrive](#) is a digital download service for persons with visual impairment. The service facilitates downloads of talking Books, talking Magazines and podcasts onto computer, smartphone or tablet. Please see the following link for further information <http://www.rnib.org.uk/services-we-offer-reading-services/rnib-overdrive-digital-download-library-service> ([click here](#)).

IP Optometrists

If you have recently qualified as an IP Optometrist and wish to register for your HS21 prescription pads for primary care optometry practice then please contact one of the HSCB Optometric advisers (contact details are on the front page). If sufficient numbers are available, HSCB will organise a registration session.

Smoking Cessation—Brief Intervention Training

The Optometry team in the Health and Social Care Board would like to thank Mr David Tumilty, our colleague in the Public Health Agency (PHA) for his recent presentation on smoking cessation at the recent CET event in Greenmount. David's talk provided an overview of the work of the PHA in relation to the smoking cessation. The presentation provided context, strategy and defined the need, professional responsibilities and opportunities very well. As outlined in the February issue of the Optometry Practice Newsletter, smoking is a significant risk factor for eye health and as a health care professional, you are encouraged to make every contact with your patient count. **Any optometrist who wishes to engage in brief intervention training for smoking cessation should contact one of the optometric advisers. Should sufficient interest be shown the Health and Social Care Board will engage with the PHA to arrange this training.**

Domiciliary Eyecare - Review of the GAIN Guidance

Thanks to those practitioners who generously gave their time to attend the domiciliary eyecare meeting, held at the end of March. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the findings of the recent audit of the GAIN Best Practice Guidance for Domiciliary Eyecare. The meeting was productive with helpful suggestions for amendments and revision of the current GAIN guidance.



Health and Social Care – useful resources

The following websites and social media links are useful resources for all health care professionals. Some are eye care specific and you are encouraged to follow/review them: Knowledge Exchange: @HSCKnowledge <http://www.knowledge.hscni.net>
Transforming Your Care: @TYC_Action <http://www.transformingyourcare.hscni.net/>
Health and Social Care Board: @HSCBoard eHealth HSCB: @HSCBeHealth
Public Health Agency: @publichealthni Optometry NI: @OptomNI
College of Optometrists: @CollegeOptomUK <http://www.college-optometrists.org/en/home.cfm>
UK Vision Strategy: @UK_Vision <http://www.ukvisionstrategy.org.uk/>
RNIB NI: @RNIBNI Macular Society: @MacularSociety

Macular Society—Awareness Week

The Macular Society has launched a new awareness week which aims to help raise the profile of macular conditions. The charity is calling on practitioners to take part in the awareness week from 6th to 12th July 2015, by hosting fundraising and awareness events in practice. For more information and to get involved in the initiative, practitioners should contact the Macular Society on 01264 321 964.

Patient Safety – raising concerns

Patient safety is everyone's concern and Health Education England have created a [video](#) which demonstrates the issues of patient safety very effectively. The video is available at the following link: <http://hee.nhs.uk/work-programmes/the-commission-on-education-and-training-for-patient-safety/raising-concerns-speaking-up-about-patient-safety/> ([click here](#))

University of Ulster Research—Northern Ireland Childhood Errors of Refraction study

On 24th April 2015 [The Times](#) newspaper featured a front page article on the increased prevalence of myopia. [The article](#) referenced the ongoing longitudinal research study by the renowned Vision Research Group at the University of Ulster in relation to refractive error, in particular the development of myopia. The full report is being finalised for publication but the findings evidence that levels of myopia appear to have doubled in 50 years for teenage children, based on a comparable study published in 1960 on children in London. It also appears that the condition is developing at a younger age. These trends mirror data coming out from other countries. Researchers have proposed that contemporary children spend more time indoors and more time focusing on tablets, mobile devices and gaming. More work is needed to fully understand the risk factors. and we hope it will inform how eye care professionals treat and manage children's vision as well as ongoing research to identify risk factors and preventative measures. It will also help inform the ophthalmic public health work undergoing within Developing Eyecare Partnerships (DEP) and the wider global understanding of eye conditions in children.

Call for Research Participants— The impact and effectiveness of the current CET scheme on clinical decision making

Mr David Parkins, current President of the College of Optometrists is undertaking a research project as part of his Professional Doctorate through the Institute of Optometry, London South Bank University. Mr Parkins is calling for Optometrists to volunteer to participate in the research which will examine clinical decision making in two sets of ten clinical scenarios separated by a time interval of six months. From the cohort of participants some will be randomly selected for invitation to Phase 2 of the research which involves self audit of referrals for a period of one month. Participants will be entered into draws to win 2 iPads. The study has received ethical approval and CET points will be available for questions in the second set of clinical scenarios. Should you wish to enquire about the research you are advised to email: scenarios@bpeyecare.co.uk or go to: <http://optomscenarios.co.uk/Account/Index?ReturnUrl=%2f>, [click here](#). Thank you for your consideration of this call for participation.

Retirement of College of Optometrists CEO

The CEO of the College of Optometrists, Bryony Pawinska, is to retire early next year and the Health and Social Care Board would like to convey our thanks to Ms Pawinska for her leadership, engagement and innovative approach to dealing with changes in the profession and the wider health care agenda over the last twelve years.

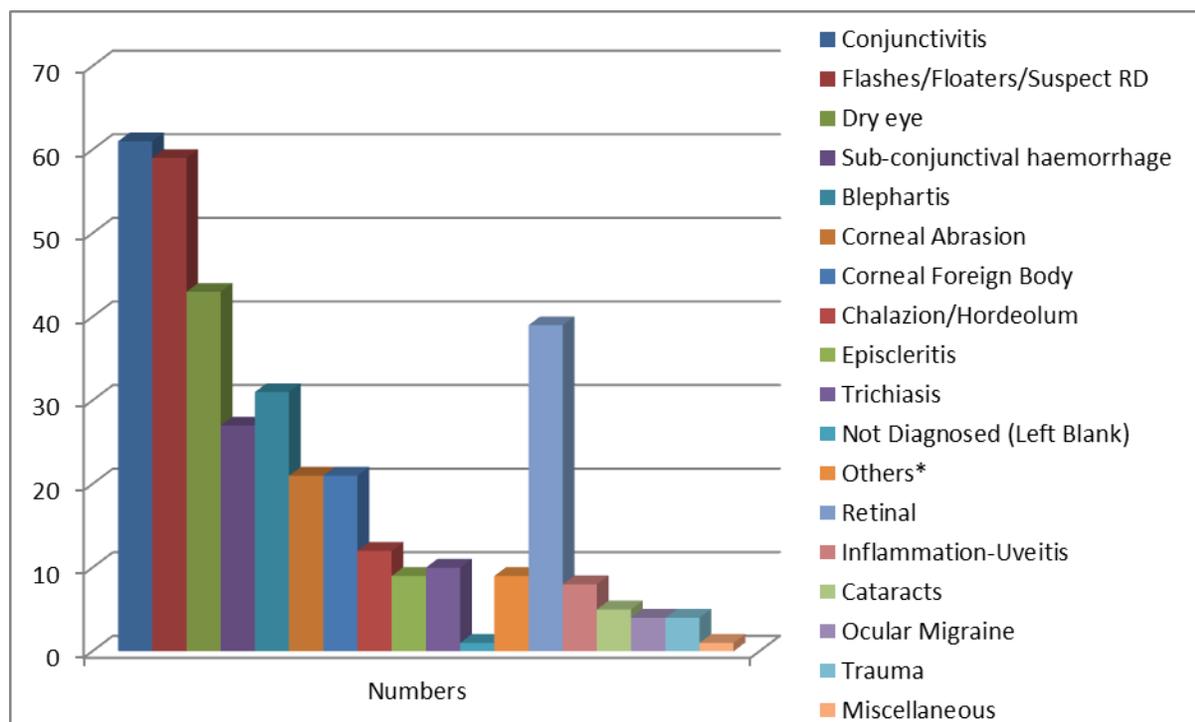
Southern Primary Eyecare Assessment and Referral Service –SPEARS – Pilot Update

Over the past 8 months 16 optometrists in 12 practices in the Armagh/Dungannon locality have been hard at work providing this pilot service to patients presenting with sudden (acute) onset eye problems. Thanks to the commitment of the participating optometrists the Southern LCG have considered the pilot service beneficial and have provided funding to extend it until the end of August 2015.

REFERRAL

To date over 450 patients have received SPEARS assessments with the majority self referring but an increasing number, now up to 22%, referred from GPs and pharmacists. The most commonly presenting conditions are minor and non sight threatening with the exception of flashes and floaters, as demonstrated in the graph.

DIAGNOSES



OUTCOMES

Currently approximately 80% of the patients are being managed in primary care practice either being given advice only and discharged or having treatment with only % requiring a follow-up appointment. Approximately 15% require urgent onward referral to secondary care, usually Eye Casualty, and 5% are referred to their GP. These outcomes are very encouraging and are inline with outcomes from similar 'PEARS' type services in other parts of the UK.

EVALUATION

While there is evidence from other parts of the UK to support optometry involvement in acute eye care pathways this local pilot must be evaluated to show evidence that it provides good access, safe and appropriate patient care and is cost effective, within the Northern Ireland setting. There are three strands to the evaluation:

- ◆ Ongoing analysis of data sourced from Outcome & Claim forms submitted from participating practices — this includes information on referral sources, diagnoses, as demonstrated by the graph, management and outcomes.
- ◆ Patient Experience Questionnaire — questionnaires are currently being given to patients following a SPEARS assessment to assess their opinion of the service in terms of access, experience of the optometric management and the outcome for them.
- ◆ Clinical Audit — a sample of clinical records from each participating optometrist are to be reviewed by the local consultant ophthalmologist and an Eye Casualty doctor to assess the appropriateness of the optometric management and, therefore, the safety of the service.

Data on the numbers of patients being referred to secondary care from the Armagh/Dungannon area before and after the introduction of the service will also be considered.



FUTURE

It is anticipated, from preliminary analysis, that the outcomes of the evaluation will be positive and this evidence will be used to support a business case for extension of the service both to all practices in the southern LCG area and to other LCGs across NI.

Thanks are due to all the participating optometrists who have shown such commitment to the pilot, to John Waldron HSCB graduate intern and the HSCB southern office staff who are providing invaluable administrative support.

Optician Awards 2015

The Health and Social Care Board would like to congratulate the three Northern Ireland Optometry practices who were shortlisted for the Optician Awards 2015.

- ◆ Curtis Opticians — Family Optician of the Year
- ◆ McGoingle Opticians — Contact Lenses for Life Award (Teens)
- ◆ Curtis Opticians — Optical Assistant Team of the Year
- ◆ Noel McCrystal — Optometrist of the Year



Barbara Allingham, Jamie Lee Logue and Paul Curtis

Curtis Opticians were the winners of the Family Optician of the Year Award 2015. Curtis Opticians is a long established family optometry practice. Paul Curtis, from Curtis Opticians conveyed his pride to the Health and Social Care Board after having won the award. It is a triumph that Curtis Opticians, a Northern Ireland practice, has been acknowledged on the national stage as a provider of excellent eyecare and service. Paul and some of his staff are pictured at the awards ceremony which took place in Birmingham on 18th April 2015. Well done to the team at Curtis Opticians !

The Health and Social Care Board would also like to congratulate McGoingle Opticians, (Claudy) and Noel McCrystal Optometrist (Dungannon) on their shortlisting for the Optician Awards. It is a marvellous achievement to be shortlisted for the annual Optician Awards and demonstrates again the dedication to excellent eyecare service provision across Northern Ireland.

National Eye Health Week—21st to 27th September

National Eye Health Week (NEHW) is now in its sixth year and is growing in strength year on year and will take place from 21-27 September this year. NEHW is chaired by Mr David Cartwright and resources have been updated and enhanced to support practices in the promotion of NEHW. In addition there will be a public and media engagement exercise with national press and television coverage. There are several themes for individual days during the 2015 NEHW including: 'Technology', 'Nutrition and the Eye', 'You and your eye health' and 'UV Protection'.

Optometry practices and professionals are encouraged to support NEHW and you can find out more about NEHW and how to get involved on the Vision Matters website: <http://www.visionmatters.org.uk/> or [click here](#).

NATIONAL EYE HEALTH WEEK 21st-27th SEPTEMBER —REMEMBER THE DATE