

21st March 2011

**To all Optometrists,
Dispensing Optician and
Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners
Providing General Ophthalmic Services**

Dear Colleague

Re: GOS CLAIMS – PAYMENT and PROCESSES UPDATE

1. Forms

Since the introduction of the new payment system in BSO, which is now scanning ophthalmic claim forms, the traceability and processing of claims has improved. However some claims are still being received on the old GOS forms. You are advised that the old GOS forms should be destroyed and, as stated in MOS 259, claims should only be submitted on the new GOS forms, otherwise the claims cannot be processed.

2. Payment claims: submission dates and timescales

You are reminded that claims should be submitted to BSO **by the 10th day of the month** and should either be hand delivered and signed in at reception or sent by registered post.

The time periods for submission of payment claims (as per General Ophthalmic Services Regulations (2007) and HPSS Optical Charges and Payments Regulations (NI) 1997) are **six months from the date of test** for sight test claims and **three months from the date of supply** for vouchers and repair/replacement claims. Late claims will not be considered for payment other than in very exceptional circumstances.

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All claims you submit should be reconciled with the payments you receive at the end of each month and all discrepancies should be followed up in writing to the BSO as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of the practitioner to follow up payment queries promptly.

3. Submission of queries on payments

From **1 May 2011** it will be the BSO's policy that queries will only be dealt with **up to six months** from the date of service i.e. date of sight test or date of supply of appliance/repair/replacement.

Any payment query submitted later than six months from the date of service will not be considered for payment other than in very exceptional circumstances.

In cases where claim forms cannot be traced and a claim form is being re-submitted, the claim form **must be signed by the patient and clearly marked "duplicate"**. Should there be a large number of such claims, then an Optometric Adviser may have to visit the practice to verify these claims.

Any enquiries arising from this memorandum should be directed to: -
Mrs Angela Dowds, Ophthalmic Payments Department, Business Services Organisation (angela.dowds@hscni.net or by telephone - 02890 535526/ 535527 /535528/ 535529)

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