

**Ophthalmic Services****General Ophthalmic Services Memorandum**

26 October 2015

**To all Optometrists,  
Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners and  
Dispensing Opticians**

**Dear Practitioner**

This MOS provides clarification on claiming for a small frame supplement and a special frame supplement. It **replaces** guidance relating to these supplements that was previously issued within MOS 204.

**Small Frame Supplements (SFS)**

The Optical Charges and Payments Regulations (1997) state the requirements that must be met to permit claiming of a Small Frame Supplement. These, in summary, state:

Small frame supplements may only be claimed:

- a) for a child who is under 7 years of age  
**and**
- b) who requires a frame that has a boxed centre distance of 55mm or less  
**and**
- c) where the frame is either custom made or is a stock frame that requires extensive adaptations to ensure an adequate fit.

**Where a stock frame is used the nature of the adaptations required must be noted with the dispensing/supply details on the patient clinical record.** These adaptations may include those made by the frame manufacturer to suit the requirements of very young, very small children.

**Please note:**

1. All three criteria must be met; for example: the supplement cannot be claimed for fitting curl sides to a frame that is larger than 55mm.
2. This supplement applies to the frame only; the 'extensive adaptations' criteria does not apply to ophthalmic lenses e.g. lens edge thinning (special subs) is not an adaptation that may be considered.

***Providing Support to Health and Social Care***

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**Supplement for Special Facial Characteristics (SFS)**

The Optical Charges and Payments regulations (1997) also state the requirements that must be met to permit claiming a supplement for Special Facial Characteristics. These, in summary state:

A supplement for **special facial characteristics** may only be claimed

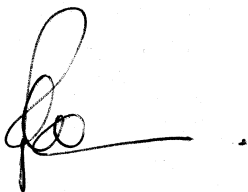
- a) for a patient who has unusual facial characteristics or asymmetry  
**and**
- b) when the prescription and, therefore, the voucher, has been issued by the HES i.e. by a hospital optometrist or ophthalmologist.

**Prior approval** must be sought from HSCB/BSO before claiming a supplement for special facial characteristics by contacting BSO Ophthalmic Services who, if the request is approved, will issue an approval number which should be noted on both the voucher claim form (GOSV) and on the patient clinical record.

**Please note:** under current Regulations this supplement may not be claimed when the prescription and, therefore, the voucher has been issued by a primary care optometrist.

If a patient requires a very specialised optical appliance but does not meet the requirements to entitle them to a 'special facial characteristics' supplement, contractors are requested to contact an optometric adviser prior to dispense for guidance on applying for assistance with the cost.

Yours sincerely



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Mr. Raymond Curran  
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Head of Optometry  
Health and Social Care Board

