

# The Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record (NIECR)

## The 'Optometry-view NIECR': Guidance for Optometrists

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This guidance document provides information on the Optometry-view NIECR including:

- What the NIECR is and the benefits of access to NIECR in clinical practice
- The NIECR application process
- The NIECR Terms of Use and other governance requirements
- Support for Optometrists – HSC training materials and IT assistance

*Please ensure that you read the following guidance carefully and consider in full before submitting an application for an NIECR account.*

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### 1. The Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record (NIECR)

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#### *What is the NIECR?*

The [NIECR](#) is a single point source of information on a patient's care in Northern Ireland. The information within the NIECR can be made available to health care professionals and identified staff working in Health and Social Care (HSC) and the access to the NIECR is tailored for certain groups of health care professionals. Optometrists working in primary care optometry practices can access an '**Optometry-view NIECR**' which provides them with identified medical and ophthalmic information about their patients. **Unlike eReferral (using the CCG) an Optometrist will need only one NIECR account in order to access information on their patient, regardless of how many practices they work in.**

#### *What are the benefits of access to NIECR?*

Use of the NIECR must be for "**direct patient care**" and it affords Optometrists the opportunity to view information including patient referrals and attendance at eye clinics. This information is valuable because when relevant information is readily visible Optometrists can make more informed clinical decisions in regard to their patient's care. *For example*, an Optometrist will be able to see if a referral has already been generated for their patient and current medications/treatments.

By using the information provided in NIECR an Optometrist will be enabled, and expected, to take into account the knowledge gained through NIECR about their patient to make considered decisions about their patient's health and eyecare.

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## 2. The NIECR application process

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Optometrists in Northern Ireland can apply to have an NIECR account using a dedicated online application process. In order to access the NIECR, Optometrists must fulfil the following:

- Have current GOC Registration
- Have a current GOS personal code
- Work in a practice which is connected to the HSC Network via the FPS Optometry Portal (VPN connection) and which has a HSCNI email account for that practice
- Have access to eReferral via CCG in the practice
- Have the **support and agreement** of the GOS contractor for the practice, to submit an application for an NIECR account

The following points should be followed when submitting an NIECR application and the screen shots provided (pages 5-8) of this guidance provide visual cues and alerts for important aspects of the application process.

### *How to apply for an Optometry-view NIECR account*

1. The application for an NIECR account is hosted at the following link (please [click here](http://fpsebusiness.hscni.net/ophthalmic-niecr-application/)).

**Please note:** The NIECR application form is also hosted on the FPS Optometry Portal when in the practice which is supporting and agreeing to the application (please click on the icon which states “NIECR Application Form”)

2. Individual Optometrist NIECR applications will be received by the Health and Social Care Board and will be processed within a few days of receipt.
3. All communications in respect of the application will be via the contractor practice HSCNI email account **and** postal address. **NIECR account information will not be sent to Optometrist’s individual email addresses or personal home addresses.**
4. It is essential that the information provided in the application form is accurate, as incomplete or, incorrect applications will be returned to the contactor practice which has submitted and agreed to the application. **Incomplete or inaccurate applications will be returned to the practice HSCNI email account and it is the responsibility of the individual Optometrist to ensure that any queries in regard to the application are addressed.**

5. When a completed application is received the HSCB will review and validate the application and following approval, will request the establishment of an NIECR account for the Optometrist. This process will take a number of days but will generally take no more than one week.
6. When established, the details of the NIECR account and the password for the account will be communicated **BY POST**, addressed to the Optometrist, at the contractor practice that supported and agreed the application.
7. It is the responsibility of the individual Optometrist to check that this communication is received and it is recommended that should an Optometrist not receive information on their NIECR account **within two weeks** of submitting a complete and accurate application that they should contact the HSCB (contact details provided on the last page of this guidance document).

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### 3. The NIECR Terms of Use and other governance requirements

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The following important points should be noted and remembered when the Optometrist submits an NIECR application. In submitting an application for an NIECR account the Optometrist is:

- **Agreeing to the Terms of Use** of the NIECR which are noted on the application form. Before submitting the application the Optometrist **MUST** read the NIECR Terms of Use and understand that these are enforced by HSC organisations.

#### **In addition:**

- It is the responsibility of the individual Optometrist to access the NIECR Guidance training resources.
- Optometrists using the NIECR **must** adhere to the principals of patient consent and follow the NIECR guidance where consent to access the NIECR has **not** been provided by the patient.
- The Optometrist must also be compliant with and cognisant of the GOC Standards of Practice, and how use of the NIECR relates to these. The GOC Standards of Practice can be accessed at the following link, please [click here](#).
- It is the responsibility of the individual Optometrist to ensure that they inform the IT support service of any updates to their NIECR account information e.g. change of name, retirement etc....
- It is the responsibility of the individual Optometrist to communicate with the HSC IT support service if they encounter information about a patient's health and care, which is not of relevance and outside of the clinical care of an Optometrist.

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## 4. Support for Optometrists – HSC training materials and IT assistance

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### *(i) NIECR Training Materials*

As noted in section 3 it is an essential governance requirement of access to NIECR that the Optometrist accesses the NIECR training resources.

The Optometrist must read the NIECR Guidance notes **and** watch the NIECR training videos which are hosted at the following link (please [click here](#)):

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2974.htm>

### *(ii) IT Support for Optometrists*

Optometrists using NIECR have access to IT support services provided by the HSC; the IT help desk/support service is provided Monday – Friday (8.30am – 5.00pm).

The IT help desk contact details are:

Email @ [supportteam@hscni.net](mailto:supportteam@hscni.net)

t: 028 9536 2400

When contacting the IT help desk the Optometrist will be required to give details of name, their NIECR User ID, the name of contractor practice which they are working in and contact details. Without this information the support call cannot be processed.

The NIECR support team will formally communicate all non-verbal advice via the practice HSCNI email account for the relevant contractor practice.

The IT help desk can be used for:

- Requesting a password re-set
- Reporting that non-relevant information (as described in section 3) has been viewed by the Optometrist
- Reporting functional problems with the NIECR.

Please note: Problems which relate to the actual connectivity of a contractor practice to the actual FPS Optometry Portal (and **not** the individual applications hosted on the portal e.g. CCG, NIECR and HSCNI email) should be reported to BSO eBusiness team at: [eBusiness@hscni.net](mailto:eBusiness@hscni.net)

**PLEASE NOTE:** It is recommended that the Optometrist accesses NIECR on a Windows based operating system with the supported versions of Internet Explorer and Adobe Reader installed. *(At the time of writing this guidance the supported versions are Internet Explorer 11 and Adobe Reader 11.)*

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## Guidance on the completion of an Optometry-view NIECR application

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The Optometrist should read and consider all of the points below in advance of the submission of an NIECR application:

1. The Optometrist should **only submit ONE application** irrespective of how many practice(s) they work in. If an Optometrist works in more than one practice he/she is advised to consider which practice supports the application as this is the practice which HSCB will communicate with for any queries in regard to the application and for the issue of the NIECR account details (by post) following approval and processing by the HSCB.
2. Individual Optometrists should only submit the application with the **support and agreement** of the contractor / practice owner/ senior staff within the practice. Details of the name of the authorising member of staff in the practice are required for the application.
3. All fields which are annotated with an asterisk \* are mandatory fields.
4. The Optometrist should check the information provided before submission to avoid return of the application to the contactor practice HSCNI email account.



Family Practitioner Services Online eServices

### Ophthalmic NIECR Application

Step 1 of 3

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Please complete the following details to gain access to the Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record System:

Title \*

Mr

Name \*

Forename

Surname

**Mandatory Fields: Optometrist personal details**

**GOC Registration Number \***

**Mandatory Fields: Optometrist professional registration details – GOC and GOS**

**GOS Personal Code \***

This is required to create your NIECR account. Without this an account cannot be created

**Optometry Practice Telephone No. (mandatory) \***

Please provide full telephone number including area code.

**Mobile Telephone No. (optional)**

**Mandatory Field: This MUST be the registered HSCNI email address for the Optometry contractor practice which is supporting and agreeing to the application**

**Email Address \***

This must be the Contractor Practice hscni.net email address for the practice submitting the request. Information regarding this account will be returned to this address

**Role \***

**Mandatory Field: Please insert "Optometrist" in this field**

**Practice Name \***

**Practice Code \***

Name of Contractor / Practice Owner / Director \*

Next

## Ophthalmic NIECR Application

Step 2 of 3

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### Terms and conditions

As an NIECR user, I understand and agree to the following, that:

- I must not share my username and password details with anyone.
- I must log out when I have finished using NIECR, and lock my computer when I need to physically leave my screen.
- I must only view records of patients or service users where: \*\*\* I am part of the team providing care to that patient or service user, and \*\*\* I need to view the NIECR record to assist with providing that care to the patient or service user.
- Audit logs are kept of all activity within NIECR and are regularly reviewed. If requested, I must provide information and assistance with any investigations into the use of NIECR.
- If a patient or service user has not already consented to their record being viewed by the team providing their care, I am required to ask the patient if they are content for their clinical information to be viewed through NIECR and respect their right to withhold access to their NIECR record should this not be the case.
- If I have NIECR permissions to access a patient or service user's record prior to permission to view being gained (e.g. I need to review referrals, patient is unconscious or distressed, medical emergency), I will make sure that they are made aware of the use of their information in NIECR at the earliest appropriate opportunity.
- Consent decisions are recorded in NIECR but should be noted in the local record in exceptional circumstances e.g. if there has been any issue with that patient/service user's consent, or consent to view has been withheld.
- Patient searches are only to be used when I have a valid reason for looking for that

I have read the above and agree to the terms of use:

Applicant Declaration \*

I confirm that I have read and agree to the terms of use

Date \*



Previous

Next

**Mandatory Fields: The Optometrist  
MUST READ AND AGREE to the NIECR  
Terms of Use**

# Ophthalmic NIECR Application

Step 3 of 3

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Authorised by: \*

This should be your line manager

**Mandatory Field: The is the name of the contractor/practice owner/senior staff member who is supporting and agreeing to the application**

Previous

Submit

## Contact Details

### *HSCB Optometric Clinical Advisers*

**Monday & Tuesday:** [janice.mccrudden@hscni.net](mailto:janice.mccrudden@hscni.net) 07827 803866 / 028 9536 2855

**Tuesday /Wednesday & alt Friday AM:** [fiona.north@hscni.net](mailto:fiona.north@hscni.net) 07900 260752 / 028 9536 3347

**Tuesday /Wednesday / Thurs AM/ Friday:** [margaret.mcmullan@hscni.net](mailto:margaret.mcmullan@hscni.net) 07900 260312 / 028 9536 3239

### *HSCB Business Support*

[keith.mcknight@hscni.net](mailto:keith.mcknight@hscni.net) 028 9536 3202

### *BSO IT Support*

[supportteam@hscni.net](mailto:supportteam@hscni.net) 028 9536 2400