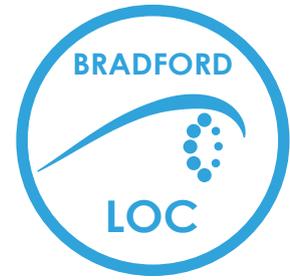


Commissioning of a Minor Eye Conditions Service (MECS) In Bradford and Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven



March 2019

Dear Colleagues

I am pleased to announce that the Bradford City; Bradford Districts; and Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven (AWC) Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have agreed to commission a MECS service for patients registered with their GP practices and are hoping that practices are able to start delivering this service very soon.

We are in a fortunate position in this area as the majority of practitioners in the area undertook the WOPEC training to be able to provide this service a couple of years ago and most of these also passed the OSCE exam which completed the accreditation requirements.

The fees payable for the first appointment will be the same as those paid for our other enhanced services.

Contracts will be organised with the CCG in the next few weeks – if your practice already holds an enhanced services contract with the CCG then you will automatically be contacted by the CCG with the offer to add a MECS service to your contract.

If your practice does not currently hold an enhanced services contract (and you would like to offer a MECS service) then please get in touch with Surinder Garcha at the CCG in the first instance and she will be able to assist with getting a contract set up.

Surinder's email address is Surinder.Garcha@bradford.nhs.uk

The contract will obviously contain a full service specification, but below are a couple of pages lifted from the specification which show the conditions that can be investigated and managed under the MECS service for Bradford and AWC and also a list of the equipment requirements for the service and the accreditation requirements.

The criteria for inclusion of patients may include the following:

- Loss of vision including transient loss
- Sudden onset of blurred vision where a sight test would not be appropriate
- Ocular pain or discomfort
- Differential diagnosis of the red eye (second opinion)
- Foreign body and removal (NB contact lens removal should be directed the patients contact lens provider)
- Flashes/floaters (covered by the existing service Referral Refinement enhanced service)
- Dry eye
- Epiphora (watery eye)
- Trichiasis (in growing eyelashes)
- Chalazion/Stye

Special Requirements – Competencies

All participating optometrists will have the core competencies as defined by the GOC and may require some extra training or updating of skills.

In addition the following apply:

- Aware of own limitations.
- Does not compromise patient safety.

Training and accreditation for participating optometrists to perform within MECS will include demonstrating the ability to identify and manage a range of ocular abnormalities and proficiency in the use of certain elements of the above-mentioned equipment.

Participating optometrists must complete the Wales Optometry Postgraduate Education Centre WOPEC/LOCSU (MECS) Distance Learning modules (Part 1) and the associated Practical Skills Demonstration (Part 2). In order to progress to the second element of the accreditation process, a candidate must have successfully passed the first.

An optometrist who has a relevant higher qualification and experience may be exempt from the MECS Distance Learning and/or the Practical Skills Assessment at the discretion of the Clinical Lead.

Participating optometrists will also be registered with the GOC and consequently participate in annual CET requirements.

Special Requirements – Equipment

All practices contracted to supply the service will be expected to employ an accredited optometrist and have the following equipment available:

- Access to the Internet
 - Means of binocular indirect ophthalmoscopy
 - Slit lamp
 - Tonometer
 - Distance test chart (Snellen/logmar)
 - Near test type
 - Equipment for epilation
 - Threshold fields equipment to produce a printed report
 - Amsler Charts
 - Equipment for FB removal
 - Appropriate ophthalmic drugs
 - Mydriatic
 - Anaesthetic
 - Staining agents
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If your practice would like to deliver a MECS service and be a point of referral for local health professionals (so local pharmacists, A&E, NHS 111 and GP's etc can refer patients with these signs/symptoms to your practice) then the first stage is to inform the LOC of this.

The LOC will be hosting a register of accredited practices on their website and this will be the list that all local health professionals will access in order to direct patients for a MECS examination.

The LOC is also organising an event at Bradford University on the evening of **Wednesday April 17th** where full details of the scheme will be unveiled as well as clarification on protocols and claiming procedures.

Attendance at an annual LOC organised event will also be required to maintain accreditation (This is not on the list above but will be included in the service specification in the contract).

Please ensure that at least one optometrist from your practice attends this meeting in order to be included on the register of accredited practices. Further details on this will be distributed towards the end of March but please keep the date free.

Please also complete the form below so that the LOC is able to accurately provide your practice details on the LOC website.

The LOC does not hold a list of contractors but a list of practitioners so it would be very helpful if you could forward this letter to the contract holder or practice manager so that they are aware of its contents.

Please complete the form below and return this (preferably electronically) to secretary@bradfordloc.co.uk

Many thanks

Ravi Naru & Raj Billoo
Bradford LOC
