

6th July 2020

Dear GP / practice manager

COVID -19 Urgent Eyecare Service (CUES) delivered by Primary Eye Care Service

We would like to inform you that the COVID -19 Urgent Eyecare Service (CUES service) has now been launched in Milton Keynes.

This service is commissioned by Milton Keynes CCG and is provided by local optical practices via the optometry federation, Primary Eyecare Services Ltd (PES) with the support of Buckinghamshire Local Optical Committee. It is for all patients registered with a Milton Keynes CCG GP practice.

The primary aim of this service is to ensure people can access urgent eyecare within primary care, utilising the established trained workforce in optical practices. This is essential to reduce demand on primary care and hospital eye services during the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

The service will provide initial contact, telephone triage, remote consultations and where necessary face to face assessments providing management of recent onset symptomatic or urgent ocular presentations. We have included a one-page service summary with this communication for your information.

Patients will be able to contact our single point of access on **0333 015 1844** from 8am to 8pm or see our list of accredited optical practices currently providing the service at www.primaryeyecare.co.uk using the 'Find a practice' tool. For your reference we have included a current list of optical practices delivering the service with this correspondence, but please note, the list is being updated regularly as more optical practices join the service, so for the most up to date information it is advisable to view the list on the website.

We would appreciate your support in promotion of the CUE service to patients, to ensure we can support the wider healthcare system as much as possible during this difficult time. Our communications will include spreading the word via social media so if your practice has a Twitter account please retweet the service information we post. Our Twitter handle is: @EyecareServices

We are very happy to answer any queries you or your colleagues may have about the service – please send any queries to UEC@primaryeyecare.co.uk

Yours sincerely,



Richard Alsop
Director of Commissioning and Contracting
NHS Milton Keynes CCG



Dharmesh Patel
Chief Officer
Primary Eyecare Services

Urgent Eyecare Service (CUES)

Inclusion criteria & Red Flags

The aim of the Covid-19 Urgent Eyecare Service (CUES) is to ensure people can access urgent eyecare within primary care during the coronavirus pandemic. **Presenting symptoms will typically include a red or painful eye, foreign body, sudden changes in vision, or flashes and floaters.**

Patients with any of the following symptoms should be sent directly to the emergency eye service at the hospital:

- **Chemical or penetrating injury**
- **Severe pain**
- **Sudden complete loss of vision in last few hours.**

Referral & Entry points

Patients will be able to contact our single point of access on **0333 015 1844** from 8am to 8pm or see our list of accredited optical practices currently providing the service at www.primaryeyecare.co.uk.

Access to the service is restricted to telephone booking only to:

- Identify people with Covid-19 symptoms, at risk /self-isolating people to signpost to appropriate services
- Offer telephone/ video consultation and self-care advice or provide signed orders remotely, where appropriate
- Offer face to face appointments with optometrist following telephone/video consultations for those who are presenting with urgent and higher risk symptoms (observing PPE guidance and social distancing advice)
- Signpost to emergency services, as appropriate.

Consultation outcomes

- The practitioner manages the condition and offers the patient advice and/or prescribes/recommends medication. Management may include a minor clinical procedure e.g. foreign body removal. A remote follow-up consultation may be necessary.
- Referral to eye casualty at the local hospital eye service.
- The condition (and subsequent referral) is non-urgent and is safely delayed until following the pandemic. A further appointment is recommended e.g. 4-6 months.
- The practitioner has concerns that the patient may have a systemic condition and makes a referral to their GP.
- Patient referred non-urgently for further investigation and/or treatment in line with local referral pathways and protocols. Managing the patient expectations relating to appointment availability in the current pandemic.
- Where appropriate patients given advice on self-care.

Supply & Use of Medicines following consultation

- Where a medicine is required, this will normally be supplied or prescribed by the optometrist, as part of the consultation, through the issue of a signed order for supply by the community pharmacist of the patient's choice; or by directly supplying or selling (where appropriate), "Pharmacy only" (P) medicines and General Sales List (GSL) medicines, and the following POMs: chloramphenicol, cyclopentolate hydrochloride, fusidic acid and tropicamide.
- Independent optometrist prescribers will ideally have access to FP10 prescription, for dispensing by a community pharmacist.
- An approved list of medicines has been agreed. All participating clinicians will only prescribe, supply or issue signed orders for medicines included on the approved formulary, unless there is a clinical reason not to do so.