

# Primary Care Solutions

## The role of community optometry

Katrina Venerus, Managing Director  
Local Optical Committee Support Unit (LOCSU)



SUPPORT FOR PRIMARY  
EYE CARE DEVELOPMENT

# What optical practices provide

**Health professionals** 10,800 optometrists, 5400 dispensing opticians

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**High street locations** 6,000 practices in community settings

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**Nationwide coverage** From city to town to countryside

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**7-day and extended opening** Many open at weekends at with early and late appointments

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**Dedicated staff** Passionate about eye health and public health. Keen to make every contact count.

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## What optical practices provide

**NHS Sight Tests** 12.8million

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**Domiciliary Sight Tests** 420,000

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**NHS Vouchers** 4.7million

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**Private sight tests** 5.8million

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**Referral to ophthalmology** 1million

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# NHS needs to reform



Financial pressures



Aging Population



Capacity pressure

▶ Five Year Forward View

▶ More community services



# NHS needs to reform



Financial pressures



Aging population



Capacity pressure



Multispecialty Community Provider



Primary and Acute Care Systems



Enhanced health in care homes



Urgent and emergency



Acute care collaborations

▶ **Vanguards and New Care Models**

▶ **Five Year Forward View**

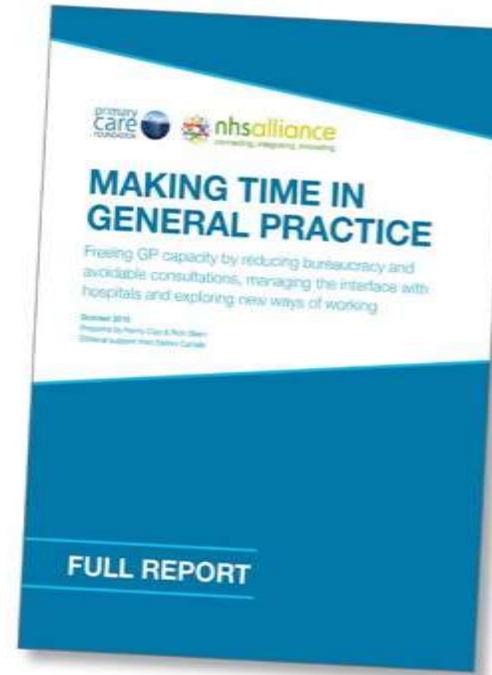
# GPs under pressure



**5m**  
**EYE RELATED  
GP APPOINTMENTS  
PER ANNUM**



**1m**  
**OPHTHALMOLOGY  
REFERRALS FROM  
OPTOMETRISTS  
VIA GPs**

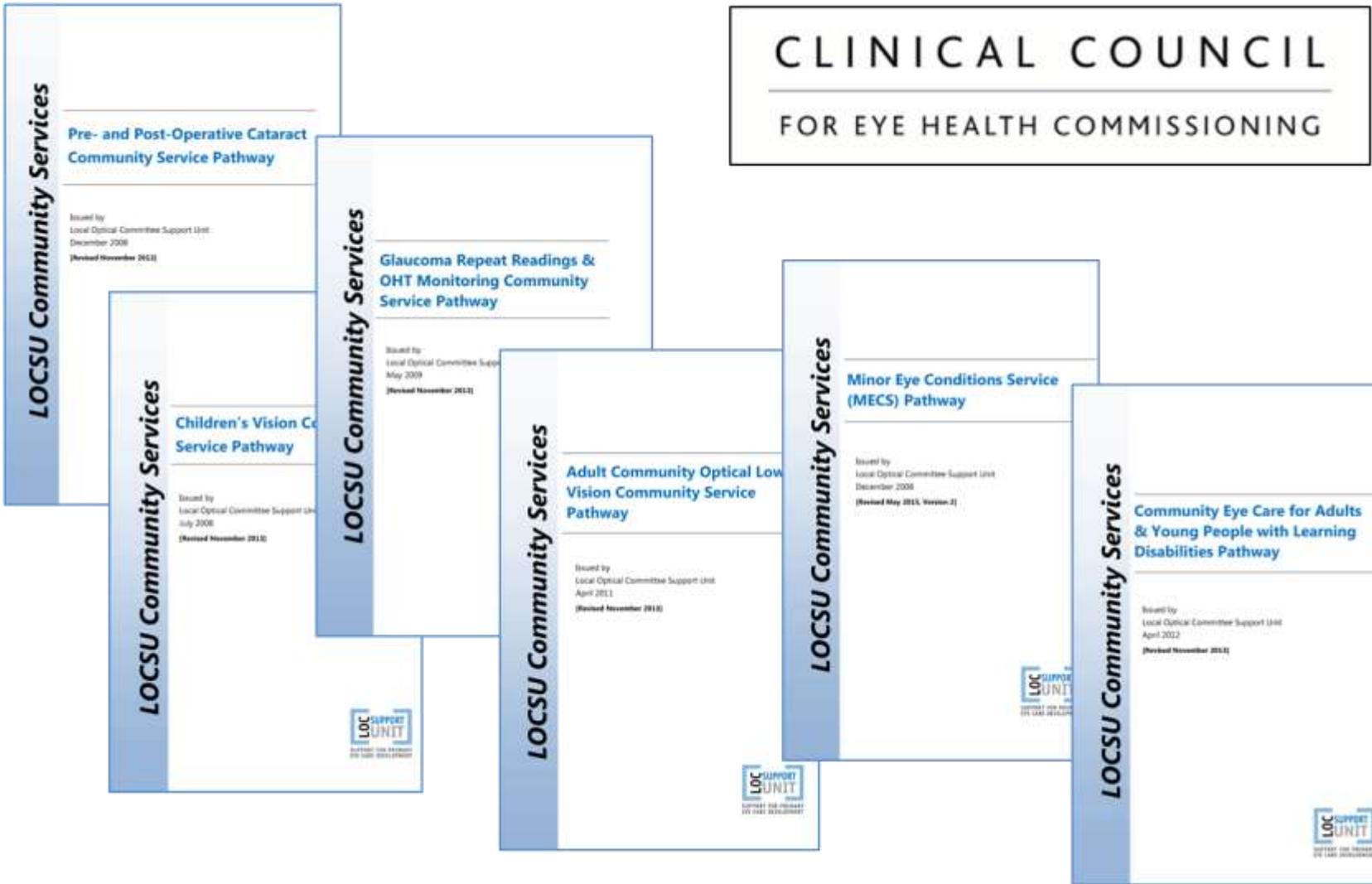


# Pathways and accreditation

- Minor Eye Conditions Service
- Glaucoma Repeat Readings and OHT Monitoring
- Pre/Post-Operative Cataract Pathway
- Children's Vision (post screening)
- Low Vision
- Learning Disabilities
- Glaucoma Monitoring

# Accredited pathways

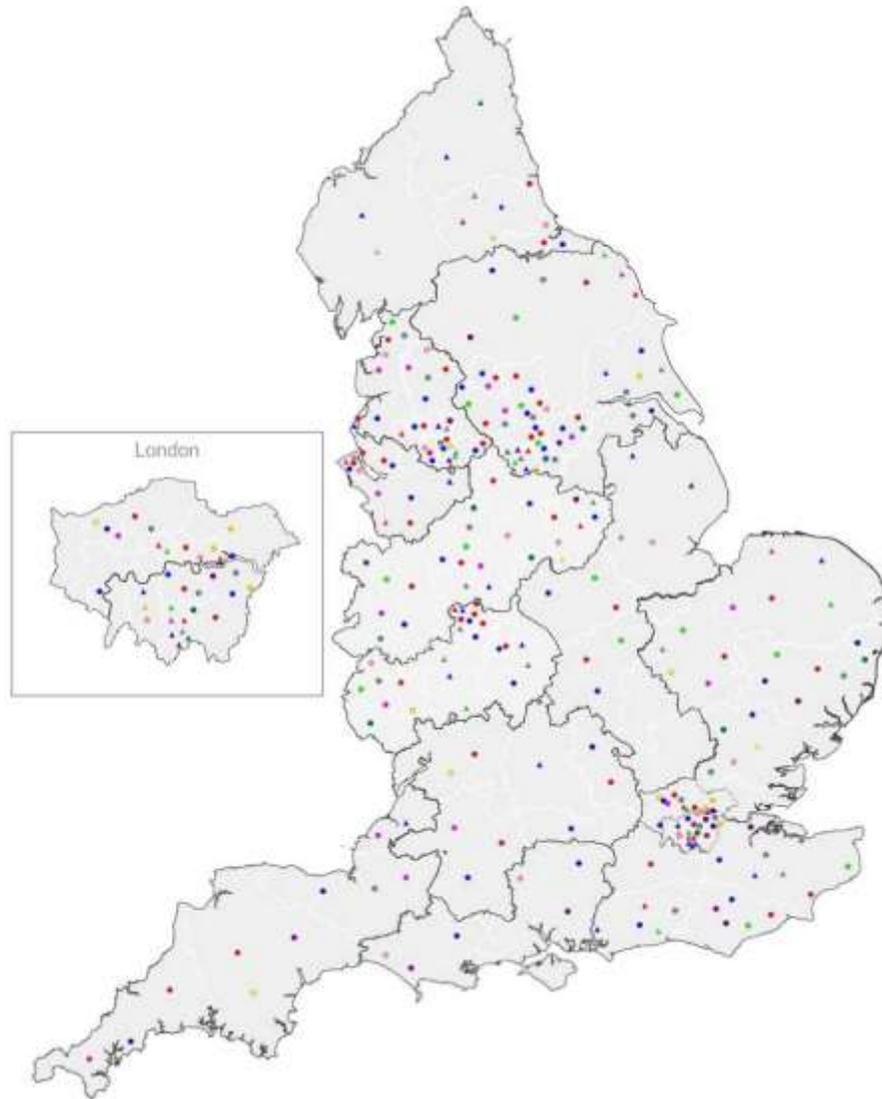
## CLINICAL COUNCIL FOR EYE HEALTH COMMISSIONING



# Commissioning Landscape



500+  
services  
across  
England  
...but



# Piecemeal commissioning results in postcode lottery in primary eye care provision



# Benefits of Minor Eye Conditions Service

## Manage patients in practice

70-80% patients retained and treated in high street without onward referral

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## Reduces pressure on secondary care & A+E

14% - 18% reduction in HES first appointments shown

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## Overwhelmingly popular with patients

Patient testimony over 90% positive. Convenient, easy to make an appointment, friendly, professional service.

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## Cost effective

Primary care fees less than ophthalmology outpatient tariff

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## Quality of care

Robust clinical governance framework and performance monitoring

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# Current coverage

500+ eye services in place

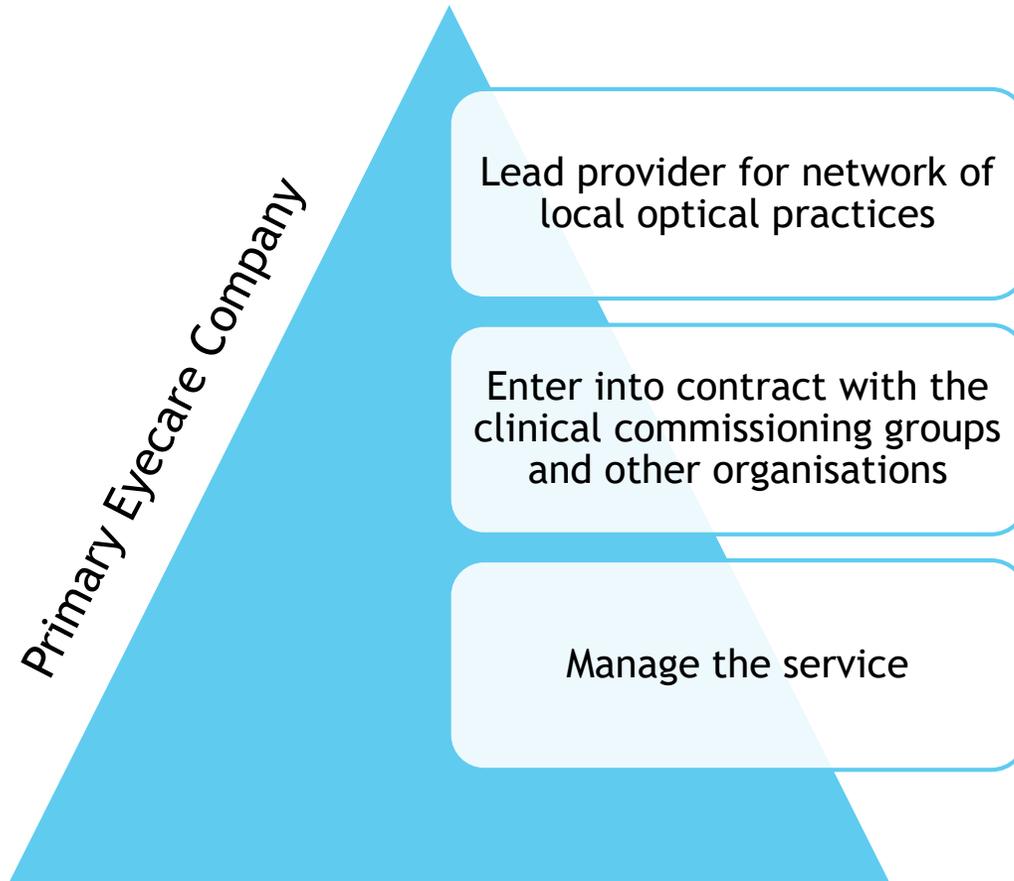


150 in the last year



111 through the LOC Company model

# Single Provider Contracting vehicle



# Support for CCGs

## Commissioners' Guide to Primary Eyecare Companies

The Single Provider Model for NHS Community Eye Health Services



### Introduction

The purpose of this Guide is to explain the benefits to commissioners of the single provider model developed by the Local Optical Committee Support Unit (LOCSU).

It describes how commissioners can utilise their local *Primary Eyecare Company*<sup>1</sup> as the Prime Contractor to allow them to work with all optical practices in their area to give patients the best access to community services and choice of provider, without the complexity or cost of having to manage individual practitioner contracts.

The Guide also summarises how commissioning community eye health pathways can reduce pressure on existing NHS services and help prevent avoidable sight loss.

This is essential information for all commissioners who are involved in planning eye health or ophthalmology services.

### Why should commissioners be interested in eye health services?

Eye health services currently have a low profile, yet involve a high volume of patient episodes. Commissioning effective and efficient services is an increasingly important way of reducing avoidable sight loss. Eye health problems and sight loss increase with age<sup>3</sup> and with more than 10 million people in the UK currently aged over 65 – with that number predicted to nearly double in the next 30 years – growing numbers of people will be affected. Currently around two million people are living with sight loss in the UK, yet it is estimated that up to 50% of sight loss is preventable. There is a clear economic case for early and effective intervention to prevent vision impairment.<sup>2</sup>

This rising number of older people living with eye health problems, combined with the availability of new treatments for conditions such as wet AMD has increased demand for hospital eye services. In England, ophthalmology has the second highest number of outpatient attendances for any speciality in the NHS.<sup>2</sup>

Patients with eye health problems can also create extra pressures on already stretched Accident and Emergency

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**Clinical commissioning groups are able to commission eye care services over and above the sight test where they judge them to be needed in their areas. This could include post cataract surgery reviews, glaucoma monitoring and low vision services which may reduce pressure on hospital eye departments, reduce waiting times and make patient care pathways more accessible in the community. There is scope for further work to be done by community optometrists.**

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Alistair Burt, Parliamentary Question answer, April 2016

# Contact

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