

Ophthalmology services



 **With you.
For you.**



NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is planning to test the market for the local tier 2 ophthalmology services. This means starting a procurement process which welcomes bids from both NHS organisations and the independent sector looking to provide our service locally in West Lancashire. This procurement will allow us to expand and improve on the existing service.

All NHS contracts are awarded for a specified period of time. This ensures that services are continually reviewed to ensure they offer patients the best possible care. Ahead of a contract's expiry date, commissioners are obliged to review and re-tender those services so they can be assured that healthcare services are the best they can be for the populations they serve.

The following information sets out what we are doing and invites any comments from members of the public, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

What do we mean by tier 2 ophthalmology?

Tier 2 ophthalmology is the treatment of eye conditions. The 'tier 2' means this is a community service for minor treatments only. (Regular eye checks will still take place at your local Optometrist (Tier 1))

Examples of the types of treatments offered within a typical tier 2 ophthalmology services include lids/lashes tares, red eye, corneal conditions, foreign bodies, corneal ulcers, contact lense-induced corneal infections and flashes/floaters.

Where its necessary for you to have more complex eye treatment you will still be referred to specialised in their field (Tier 3).

Where are we now?

The tier 2 ophthalmology service is currently delivered by Community Eye Care. The service is only available from one location in Ormskirk. If minor surgery is required, the service is provided at Preston.

The current provider has had this contract since 2012.

This service and this current set up was something the CCG carried over from NHS Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust, which was the commissioners prior to the formation of CCGs.

What will be included in the new service?

The finer details are not agreed at this stage but the new service specification will include many benefits for patients, especially around how the referral process works.

In the new service, there will be an introduction of a triage service which will take all West Lancashire ophthalmology referrals from GPs (and in future from opticians). The triage service will then assess the individual patient's needs and will make direct contact with them (approximately within 48 hours) to offer them a choice of suitable providers to deliver the treatment and care they need.

We know from conversations we have had with our community that they would like care closer to their own homes. This new look service will propose there are more sites delivering this service in West Lancashire meaning they are more accessible for everyone. It is hoped that minor surgery will also be something on offer locally, to reduce travel times for patients.

The expansion of this service will enhance patient experience through being able to access care in the community and offer a reduction in waiting times. It will also help clinicians such as GPs work more efficiently with a more seamless way thanks to the newly introduced triage element of the service.

Service provision will continue and will not be interrupted as a result of this procurement process. The services will remain free and delivered as part of the NHS.

What are the timescales and next steps?

We are currently planning a procurement to begin in May 2017 with a preferred provider to be announced in August/September 2017.

We plan to work with potential providers to discuss the service specification with them, and welcome views and ideas for improvements to meet the needs of our local population.

Sharing your views

If you have used the local services and have any comments on this, please contact us via myview@westlancashireccg.nhs.uk or 01695 588 000 quoting 'ophthalmology'.