



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Health Department
Directorate of Service Policy & Planning

St Andrew's House
Regent Road
EDINBURGH
EH1 3DG

Dear Colleague

GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION OF PENSION CREDIT
2. REVISED GOS(S) FORMS

1. This letter advises NHS Boards, Primary Care Trusts and Practitioner Services of a change in entitlement to free NHS sight tests and vouchers toward the cost of glasses or contact lenses as a result of the introduction of Pension Credit with effect from 6 October 2003.

Action

2. NHS Boards, Primary Care Trusts and Practitioner Services are asked to note the content of the Memorandum to this letter.
3. Copies of the [NHS \(General Ophthalmic Services\) \(Scotland\) Amendment \(No 2\) Regulations 2003](#) and the [NHS \(Optical Charges and Payments\) \(Scotland\) Amendment \(No 3\) Regulations 2003](#), which bring the new eligibility category into effect, will be sent to NHS Boards/Primary Care Trusts in due course. NHS Boards/Primary Care Trusts are asked to send a copy of the NHS (Optical Charges and Payments) (Scotland) Amendment (No 3) Regulations 2003 only to all optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners on their lists. If an optometrist or ophthalmic medical practitioner practices from more than one address within a NHS Board/Primary Care Trust area he/she should only be sent one copy of the Regulations.
4. Forms GOS(S)1, 2, 3 and 4 are being revised to reflect the new Pension Credit. Supplies of the revised forms, which can be identified by the revision date 10/03, will be issued to NHS Boards/Primary Care Trusts in due course for onward distribution to optometrist and ophthalmic medical practitioners by 1 October 2003. The current version of the forms should not be used after 6 October and should be destroyed as soon as possible after that date.

22 September 2003

Addresses

For action
Chief Executives,
Primary Care NHS Trusts and
NHS Boards

Director,
Practitioner Services

For information
Chief Executive, NHS Boards

Chief Executive,
Common Services Agency

Enquiries to:

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5. There is an error in the revised forms GOS(S)1, 2 and 3. The new entitlement category should read “Pension Credit guarantee credit” but instead reads “Pension Credit guarantee”. This error will be corrected on re-print.

6. Copies of the Memorandum to this letter are being sent under separate cover for **urgent** distribution to all optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners on Primary Care Trust/NHS Board lists.

Yours sincerely

DR HAMISH WILSON
Primary Care Division

**NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE
GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES**

**1. INTRODUCTION OF PENSION CREDIT
2. REVISED GOS(S) FORMS**

1. This Memorandum advises of changes in entitlement to a free NHS sight test and voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses as a result of the introduction of Pension Credit with effect from 6 October 2003.

Pension Credit

2. From 6 October 2003, Pension Credit will replace Minimum Income Guarantee, which is currently paid as Income Support, for people aged 60 or over. Pension Credit consists of two elements – guarantee credit and savings credit. There will be three types of Pension Credit award: guarantee credit on its own, saving credit on its own or guarantee and savings credit paid together.

3. People aged 60 or over in receipt of Pension Credit guarantee credit (paid on its own or with savings credit) are already entitled to an NHS sight test because of their age. However, their partners *if aged under 60* will also be entitled to an NHS sight test via the partner's Pension Credit guarantee credit.

4. People getting Pension Credit guarantee credit (paid on its own or with a savings credit), and their partners, will be entitled to a voucher towards the cost of glasses/contact lenses. In addition, their partners, if aged under 60, will also be entitled to an NHS sight test. The recipient will need to check their award notice as this will tell them what type of Pension Credit they are receiving, which will determine whether or not they and their partner are entitled to a voucher and, in the case of a partner, an NHS sight test. ***Only the award notice will be proof of entitlement to a free NHS sight test and voucher towards the cost of glasses/contact lenses for the purposes of the Point of Service checks.*** Although the Pension Credit payment books which recipients receive contain an exemption certificate these books do not say which element of Pension Credit the recipient is entitled to. Even though the exemption certificate makes it clear that savings credit on its own does not entitle the recipient, or their partner, to help with health costs this is not acceptable proof of entitlement to a free NHS sight test and voucher. If a person getting savings credit on its own wants help with their health costs, they may make a NHS Low Income Scheme claim in the normal way.

4. Amended pages, to reflect the introduction of Pension Credit, for the loose-leaf binder "Optical Point of Service Checks in Scotland – A guide for optical practices and their staff", will be issued in due course.

Form GOS(S)1, 2, 3 and 4

5. The GOS(S)1 (Application for NHS sight test), GOS(S)2 (Patient's optical prescription or statement), GOS(S)3 (NHS optical voucher and patient's statement) and GOS(S)4 (NHS optical repair/replacement voucher application form) are being revised to reflect the new Pension Credit. Supplies of the new forms will be issued to ophthalmic contractors by NHS Boards/Primary Care Trusts by 1 October.

6. The revised forms should have contained the new entitlement category "I/my partner receive(s) Pension Credit guarantee credit" or in the case of the GOS(S)1 "I have a partner who receives Pension Credit guarantee credit". However, there is an error in the revised forms GOS(S)1 and 3 and the entitlement category mistakenly reads "Pension Credit guarantee". This error will be corrected on re-print.

7. Current versions of the GOS(S)1, 2, 3 and 4 should not be used after 6 October 2003 and should be destroyed as soon as possible after that date.

Enquiries

8. Any enquiries arising from this Memorandum should be taken up with your Primary Care Trust/NHS Board.

Scottish Executive Health Department
22 September 2003