Dear Colleague

GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES

OPTOMETRY INDEPENDENT PRESCRIBING

Summary

1. This letter advises NHS Boards and NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) of the procedures for optometrists who are recognised by the General Optical Council (GOC) as independent prescribers (IP) to obtain NHS prescription stationery.

Background

2. Optometrists who have completed a GOC approved training course and had the IP speciality entered against their name in the Optometrist’s Register are able to prescribe any licensed medicines for ocular conditions affecting the eye and the tissues surrounding the eye, within their recognised area of expertise and competence.

3. Those optometrists recognised by the GOC as independent prescribers will be able to prescribe under the NHS and a new prescriptions form GP10OP(5) has been produced for this purpose.

4. Optometrist independent prescribers will be issued with one prescribing code and prescription pad for use in any area in Scotland. Optometrists should apply to a host...
Board for registration as an independent prescriber and to order a prescription pad. The host Board is the NHS Board on whose ophthalmic list they are included or where they are included on the list of more than one NHS Board, the Board for the area in which they undertake general ophthalmic services for the largest percentage of time. On receipt of a request for registration as an optometric independent prescriber the host Board should:

4.1 confirm that the optometrist is recognised by the GOC as an independent prescriber;

4.2 complete the optometric prescriber registration or change of circumstances form (ISD (OPT) 1), which is attached to this letter, and send this to Information Services Division of NSS;

4.3 on receipt of the optometrist’s prescriber code complete the independent prescriber order form (PSD GP10OP), which is attached to this letter, and send this to Practitioner Services Division of NSS.

5. Practitioner Services will arrange printing of the prescription pads and deliver these to the NHS Board for onward transmission to the relevant optometrist.

6. A prescription stationery optometric prescribing service flowchart is attached at Annex A to the Memorandum to this letter.

Action

7. NHS Boards and NSS are asked to note that while a prescription may be written following a general ophthalmic services (GOS) eye examination, prescribing will not be undertaken as part of GOS arrangements. Optometrists will not therefore be able to:

- undertake a primary or supplementary eye examination only for the purposes of writing and issuing a prescription;
- claim a fee under GOS for writing and issuing a prescription;
- currently refer a patient under GOS to an optometrist independent prescriber for the purposes of writing and issuing a prescription.

8. NHS Boards are asked to copy and issue the Memorandum to this letter to all optometrists and ophthalmic medical practitioners on their ophthalmic lists.

Yours sincerely

Margie Taylor
Deputy Director
**Form: ISD (OPT) 1**  
**OPTOMETRIC PRESCRIBER**  
**REGISTRATION OR CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES**

**Return form to:** eVADIS Team, Data Management, Information Services  
Area 151c, 1st Floor, Gyle Square,  
1 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9EB  
(Tel 0131 275 6972)  
Mail to nss.evadis@nhs.net

Please tick appropriate box:
- [ ] New Prescriber  
  (Complete all sections)
- [ ] Change of name / GOC Number  
  (Complete sections A and C)
- [ ] Prescribing activity In Health Board ends  
  (Complete all sections)
- [ ] Change of host Health Board  
  (Complete all sections)

**SECTION A: Prescriber Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>New Prescriber Registration</th>
<th>Change of Circumstances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Surname</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Forename and Initials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>GOC Professional Registration Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unique Prescriber Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Prescribing planned start date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Prescribing end date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SECTION B: NHS Organisation Details**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>New Prescriber Registration</th>
<th>Change of Circumstances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Host Health Board *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Host Health Board Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Host Telephone Number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The Prescribers principal prescribing location, ie where the majority of patients for whom they prescribe are seen.

**SECTION C: To be completed by Health Board Official responsible for notifying registration:**

Name (capital letters please): ____________________________________________

Telephone number: ________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________
  ________________________________________________________________
  ________________________________________________________________

Signature: .........................................................................................

Date: .................................................................................................

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HiG use only</th>
<th>Prescriber code:</th>
<th>Date issued:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


PSD GP10OP

INDEPENDENT PRESCRIBER: ORDER FORM for GP10OP for OPTOMETRIC PRESCRIBERS

Form to be completed by Authorised Signatory and returned to:

Practitioner Services, Kirkton Campus, 3 Bain Square, Livingston, EH54 7DQ
Tel: 01506 705 101 Fax: 01506 705 191 e-mail: psd-pscriber-statnry@nhs.net

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Prescriber Code for Host NHS Board (7 Digit) Professional GOC Registration No.

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Surname: ........................................... Initial: ...........

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Prescription Pads

Host NHS Board Address (for pre-printing on pads)

...............................................................

...............................................................

...............................................................

Post Code:......................

Contact Telephone Number:.........................

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From:

Address for delivery of pads: (NHS organisation stores or pharmacy department or direct to the prescriber’s address where agreed with PSD by NHS Board’s Finance Manager):

...............................................................

...............................................................

...............................................................

Post Code: .........................

Signed: ........................................... (Authorised Signatory) Date: .........................

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Print Name: ................................. Telephone Number: ..............................
NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE
GENERAL OPHTHALMIC SERVICES

OPTOMETRY INDEPENDENT PRESCRIBING

1. This Memorandum advises of the procedures for optometrists who are recognised by the General Optical Council (GOC) as independent prescribers (IP) to obtain NHS prescription stationery.

2. A number of optometrists have successfully completed an independent prescriber education and training programme accredited by the General Optical Council (GOC) and have had the IP speciality entered against their names in the GOC’s register. Those optometrists recognised by the GOC as independent prescribers will be able to prescribe under the NHS and a new prescriptions form GP10OP(5) has been produced for this purpose.

3. Optometrist independent prescribers will be issued with one prescribing code and prescription pad for use in any NHS Board area on whose ophthalmic list they are included in Scotland. Optometrists should apply to a host NHS Board for registration as an independent prescriber and to order a prescription pad. The host Board is the NHS Board on whose ophthalmic list they are included or where they are included on the list of more than one NHS Board the Board for the area in which they undertake general ophthalmic services for the largest percentage of time.

4. A prescription stationery optometric prescribing service flowchart is attached at Annex A to the Memorandum to this letter.

5. GP10OP(5) Prescribing Guidance is attached at Annex B.

6. While a prescription may be written following a general ophthalmic services (GOS) eye examination prescribing will not be undertaken as part of GOS arrangements. Optometrists will not therefore be able to:
   - undertake a primary or supplementary eye examination only for the purposes of writing and issuing a prescription;
   - claim a fee under GOS for writing and issuing a prescription;
   - currently refer a patient under GOS to an optometrist independent prescriber for the purposes of writing and issuing a prescription.

7. The attached Annex C provides guidance on the administrative and procedural steps needed to enable registered optometrists to act as independent prescribers.

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

Scottish Government Health and Social Care Integration Directorate
August 2013
Optometric Prescriber
Requests Optometric Prescriber Registration or Change of Circumstances Form ISD(OPT)1 from host NHS Board, or download from http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Prescribing-and-Medicines/Community-Dispensing/Prescriber-Codes/.

Sends completed form to host NHS Board.

Host NHS Board
Authenticates information provided.

Sends completed form to the Evadis Team, Data Management, Information Services at nss.evadis@nhs.net (0131 275 6972).

ISD
Allocates prescriber code. Confirms registration. Registers prescriber with EVADIS. Under normal circumstances, the Host NHS Board will be notified of the prescriber code within 24 hours.

Host NHS Board

Prescription forms should be ordered by an authorised NHS Board contact and completed order forms sent to NSS.psd-pscriber-statnry@nhs.net.

The website highlights ordering timescales for fortnightly ordering. Please ensure orders are submitted by midday on the allocated order date.

PSD
Arranges printing of prescription pads. Orders are usually delivered within four weeks of ordering.

Host NHS Board
Receives prescription pads. Forwards pads to prescriber.
Ms Janet Smith
1 Any Street
Any Town

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE in SCOTLAND

Latanoprost Eye Drops
50 mcg/ml
Send 2.5 ml
As directed

A Smith
Signature of Prescriber
01/04/2013

7 Digit Prescriber Code
(identifies prescriber and Host NHS Board)

Host NHS Board Address

Prescriber Qualification

GCC Number

Contact telephone number for enquiries from dispensing pharmacy
A GUIDE TO INDEPENDENT PRESCRIBING WITHIN THE NHS BY OPTOMETRISTS IN SCOTLAND

Scope of this guidance

This guide sets out the steps required to enable registered optometrists to act as independent prescribers (IP) within the NHS in Scotland. Medicines legislation permits the introduction of optometrist independent prescribing across the UK.

Definition

Independent prescribing

Independent prescribing is prescribing by a practitioner responsible and accountable for the assessment of patients with undiagnosed or diagnosed conditions and for decisions about the clinical management required, including prescribing.

In partnership with the patient, independent prescribing is one element of the clinical management of a patient. It requires an initial patient assessment, a diagnosis through interpretation of that assessment, a decision whether to prescribe a medicine or not. If a medicine does need to be prescribed, then the most appropriate, effective and safe medicine should be considered for the patient. The prescriber will need to be aware of any monitoring which needs to be carried out and to take appropriate steps.

Extent of prescribing powers

Optometrist IPs may prescribe any licensed medicine for ocular conditions affecting the eye and the tissue surrounding the eye, within the recognised area of expertise and competence of the optometrist. Optometrist IPs may not prescribe controlled drugs or drugs for parenteral administration. Optometrist IPs must only ever prescribe according to their experience and competence.

Training, Qualifications and Requirements for IP Status

Training

Optometrists wishing to become IPs will require to complete a GOC accredited education and training programme. Information about IP training in Scotland is available on NHS Education for Scotland’s website at:


Qualification

An optometrist IP must be a registered optometrist whose name is held on the register of the General Optical Council (GOC) with an annotation signifying that the optometrist has successfully completed an education and training programme accredited by the GOC and is qualified as an IP.
Requirements for independent prescribing under the NHS

To prescribe under the NHS an IP optometrist must be on an NHS Board’s ophthalmic list in Scotland, have the IP speciality entered against their names in the GOC’s register and have been issued with a prescribing code.

Administration Arrangements

Registering for IP under the NHS

Optometrists wishing to prescribe under NHS arrangements will require to apply to a host NHS Board for registration as an independent prescriber.

Prescribing code

Optometrist IPs will be issued with one prescribing code for use when prescribing under NHS arrangements in any NHS Board area on whose ophthalmic list they are included in Scotland.

Prescription pads

Optometrist IPs should use a prescription pad GP10OP(5) for any NHS prescriptions. Optometrist IPs will not be issued with a separate prescription pad for every NHS Board area on whose ophthalmic list they are included but will be issued with one prescription pad which they can use in an area.

The NHS Scotland Security of Prescription Forms Guidance document discusses a range of measures available to prevent and tackle the problem of prescription form theft and misuse at a local level and outlines the recommended action when an incident occurs.

It is important that all staff handling prescription forms understands how important it is to have robust procedures in place to prevent the possibility of theft or abuse of the forms. http://www.psd.scot.nhs.uk/professionals/pharmacy/documents/security_of_prescription_form_guidance-final_Jan2013.pdf

Patient Care, Clinical Governance and Prescription Guidance

Responsibility for prescribing decisions

An optometrist IP can only prescribe medicine for a patient whom he/she has assessed for care. Optometrists should only write prescriptions on a prescription pad that bears his/her own unique GOC registration number and prescriber code.

Optometrist IPs need to recognise that they will accept clinical, professional and medico-legal responsibility for their prescribing decisions. They should therefore ensure that they do not prescribe medicines with which they are not familiar.

Prescribing within competence

Optometrist IPs must work within their own level of professional competence and expertise and must seek advice and make appropriate referrals to other professionals with different expertise. Optometrists are accountable for their own actions, must be aware of the limits of their skills and knowledge and should only ever prescribe medicines with which they are
familiar for medical conditions that they have the competence to manage. They should only prescribe those medicines they know are safe and effective for the patient and the condition being treated. Where they believe they are not competent to manage a specific condition, they should refer the patient to the most appropriate health professional.

*Informing patients*

Optometrist IPs must ensure that patients are aware that they are being treated by a non-medical practitioner and the scope of the limits of their prescribing.

*Prescribing for self, family and friends*

Optometrist IPs must **not** prescribe **any** medicine for themselves. Neither should they prescribe a medicine for anyone with whom they have a close personal or emotional relationship, other than in an exceptional circumstance.

*Liability of prescriber/professional indemnity*

All optometrist IPs should ensure that they have sufficient professional indemnity insurance.

Optometrist IPs may only prescribe within the limits of their registration and must comply with statutory requirements applicable to their prescribing.

*Continuing Professional Development (CPD)*

All optometrists have a professional responsibility to keep themselves abreast of clinical and professional developments. Optometrist IPs are expected to keep up to date with evidence and best practice in the management of the conditions for which they prescribe, and in the use of the relevant medicines.

*Unlicensed medicines (products without a UK marketing authority)*

Optometrist IPs are **not** permitted to prescribe unlicensed medicines.

*Borderline Substances*

Optometrist IPs should **not** need to prescribe any items on the Advisory Committee of Borderline Substances list.

*Controlled Drugs*

Optometrist IPs will not be able to prescribe controlled drugs independently.

*Miscellaneous Aspects*

*Patient records*

Optometrists are required to keep proper, accurate and up-to-date records. Although prescribing will not be undertaken as part of GOS arrangements optometrist IPs should enter the details of any prescription, i.e. date of prescription, name of the prescriber, name of the item prescribed, together with the quantity or dose, frequency of treatment duration and a review date, when the patient’s treatment will be reviewed if required.
To aid safe administration of medicines, the record should include the name of the item prescribed, the strength (if any) of the preparation, the dosing schedule and route of administration.

In the case of topical medicines the name of the prescribed item, the strength (if any), the quantity to be applied, and the frequency of the application should be indicated. For dressings and appliances, details of how they are to be applied and how frequently changed, are useful.