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February 2017 Newsletter

New QIO site set to go live

The screenshot shows the Quality in Optometry website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'GOS Contracts', 'NHS Contracts', 'Practitioners', 'Staff', 'Audit', 'Policies', and 'QIO in English'. The main content area features several sections: 'Quality in Optometry' (a toolkit for clinical governance), 'GOS Contract in England checklist', 'NHS Standard Contract in England checklists', and 'Clinical Governance in Wales'. A small inset image on the right shows Richard Knight, Head of Policy, speaking at a podium.



■ Users will notice benefits – Head of Policy, Richard Knight

THE new Quality in Optometry (QIO) is about to be rolled out with a host of improved features, LOCSU's Head of Policy, Richard Knight has revealed.

Final user testing and finishing touches are being made to the platform which is used by all optical professionals involved in GOS and community services.

Announcing the improvements, Mr Knight said: "The QIO site has been comprehensively overhauled with a fresh new look and feel.

"All users will benefit from a

refined appearance, new linear navigation and the removal of outdated content and unnecessary clutter.

Logical

"QIO's main purpose – to host clinical governance compliance toolkits for optical professionals – remains unchanged. But we are confident that users will find the new platform offers a much more logical and intuitive overall experience."

LOCSU's Head of Policy said that a new user guide will be hosted on the new

QIO platform for use by GOS contractors, Primary Eyecare companies/practices contracting directly and PE company sub-contractors.

Changes to the QIO site, which is funded by LOCSU, began last summer, marking 10 years since it was introduced. It allows contractors and performers to access toolkits developed by the leading optical professional bodies to become models for clinical governance. LOCSU will alert users when the platform goes live at www.qualityinoptometry.co.uk via LOCs.

Leadership module draws in DOs

Half of 2017-funded candidates list are Dispensing Opticians

■ Around 60 candidates have now successfully completed the leadership module. A special presentation was made at NOC 2015 by WOPEC's Barbara Ryan (far right).



LOCSU has announced the list of successful candidates who will receive funding for this year's Leadership Skills module. Around half of the 2017 cohort is made up of Dispensing Opticians.

It reflects a growing number of opticians who are getting involved in LOCs and now moving into leadership roles, said LOCSU's Learning and Development Consultant, Gill Brabner.

"LOCSU has been promoting the involvement of Dispensing Opticians on LOCs for a number of years now," Gill said.

"They bring something different to the table; business acumen, communication, motivation, persuasion and people skills which are a crucial part of the mix to develop successful pathways.

"And hopefully we are now seeing that filter through to leadership roles in optics which are so important for the sector."

The four DOs are Richard Rawlinson (Walsall LOC), Saima Naroo (Sandwell LOC) Simone

Mason, (Solihull LOC) and Rob Rohu (East Lancashire LOC).

Funded

In addition, optometrists Terence Evans (Bexley, Bromley & Greenwich LOC), Azzam Schweiki (Kensington, Chelsea, Westminster, Hammersmith & Fulham LOC), Habiba Bham (Leeds LOC) and Mark Simpson (Cheshire LOC) along with Jonathan Drew, business manager from Devon LOC, form the 2017-funded group.

LOCSU's Leadership Skills for Optical Professionals is a 20-credit postgraduate module and is part of WOPEC's MSc programme at Cardiff University. For more information, visit the [Learning & Development](#) pages of the LOCSU website.

Potential candidates can also read the Case Study on page 9 of the [2015-16 LOCSU Annual Report](#) in which Divya Sudera gives a personal perspective on the benefits of participating on the module.



■ Some of the successful candidates from last year's cohort receive their certificates at NOC 2016 from (far right-left) course tutor Jane Gray, Alan Tinger and Barbara Ryan.

Boardroom Roundup

■ This month, LOCSU Board Representatives Trevor Warburton (AOP) and Mike Cody (ABDO) offer a personal perspective for LOCSU News.

Re-accreditation needs to be readily available, flexible and on-demand

SEVERAL years ago accreditation requirements for extended primary care services varied from area to area. This lack of uniformity was a particular problem for practitioners working in multiple areas. Most commissioners now accept the LOCSU/WOPEC courses as accreditation for their extended primary care services and so these problems have largely disappeared. However, a new one is rearing its head – that of re-accreditation.



Trevor Warburton, AOP

Many commissioners wish to see something in the contracts about keeping up to date. This isn't something we should worry about – we effectively have to re-accredit our core competency in order to continue practising as optometrists at all, by virtue of the GOC CET scheme. However, we are finding different requirements in different areas, taking us back to the original problem.

Just as first time accreditation needs to be available more or less on demand (via distance learning), so re-accreditation needs to be readily available. It is no use putting on one lecture and saying everyone must attend, because no single date will suit everyone. As the services are core competency, it would seem logical to use the existing framework for core competencies, which is the GOC CET scheme, with specific learning objectives. So LOCSU, ABDO, AOP, FODO and the College are all discussing how to create a simple re-accreditation specification such that appropriate education could be available from multiple providers in a way that is not onerous and uses the existing points scheme.

Watch this space...

ABDO dispensing with old set up to mirror NHS

THIS year is sure to be busy at ABDO. Our new organisational structure is now in place, replacing the old areas with regions that closely align with the current NHS set-up.

In parallel with this new structure, we have recruited Regional Leads to help and support Dispensing Opticians who sit or would like to sit on LOCs. Indeed, one of our main objectives is to ensure that we have ABDO representation on every single LOC.

This help and support will ensure that DOs are actively involved and bringing a dispensing angle and insight to all aspects of LOC and Primary Eyecare Company activities.

ABDO is also playing a leading role in the GOC Education Review to ensure that any proposed changes help to enhance the skills of Dispensing Opticians.

Hopefully this year will see the beginning of Contact Lens Opticians being involved in MEC Services and step-down care, such as repeat measures pathways. With their experience and skills CLOs are ideally placed to help deliver the service. ABDO will continue to be one of the biggest providers of CET with the new regions and the CET Office working together to ensure that all competencies are covered and standards maintained.



Mike Cody, ABDO

Venerus' View

FOR the LOCSU team and LOCs, the start of a new year is always a time for renewed optimism and planning what the big opportunities for progress will be in the coming months.

For 2017, the focus of the NHS is on Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs). These are the 44 local plans (average population of 1.2m) that aim to improve health and care.

NHS England's website tells us "STPs have been produced collaboratively by local NHS organisations and local councils, they set out practical ways for the local NHS to improve NHS services and health outcomes for people in every part of England."

The jury might be out in some areas with regards to how the STPs have been drawn up but at the heart of each plan is the aim to help meet the 'triple challenge' set out in the **NHS Five Year Forward View** – better health, transformed quality of care delivery, and sustainable finances.

So where does eye care fit into STPs?

Back in April 2016 when the first group of STP leaders was announced, I wrote a **blog** for the NHS Confederation to highlight the opportunity for the transformation footprints to add a new dimension to the commissioning landscape – one that, in my view, CCGs have struggled with so far: enabling provider engagement over a wider footprint.

However, to date, only one or two STP areas have included eye care in their plans so we need to renew our efforts with other key stakeholders to raise awareness of the opportunities for transformation of eye care at scale.

The collective influence point chimes with what Fazilet Hadi, Lead Officer of the UK

Vision Strategy said at last week's England Vision Strategy Conference: "ask what you can achieve together that you cannot achieve singly".

It is great to see at a national level, the Clinical Council for Eye Health Commissioning (CCEHC), which brings together leading organisations from across eye health (including LOCSU and the Optical Confederation), has sprung into action by writing to STP leaders and CCGs.

The letter from the CCEHC highlights that "working at Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) level has significant potential to improve care and prevention, and enable commissioners to transform services at scale within likely available resources." But it goes on to say "the risk is that opportunities to

transform and modernise these impactful and resource intensive services will be overlooked simply because eye disease is not in the news headlines like A&E waits."

It also reminds local commissioning leaders that the CCEHC has already designed commissioning frameworks for primary eye care and community ophthalmology services for them to use.

At a local level, LOCs in the same STP footprint are working closely with each other (and their Local Eye Health Network), supported by Richard Whittington and the LOCSU Commissioning Leads.

In my new role of Clinical Director at LOCSU, I look forward to another busy and exciting year supporting the sector at national and local level.

Your comments and suggestions are always welcome: katrinavenerus@locsu.co.uk or [@katrinavenerus on Twitter](https://twitter.com/katrinavenerus).



Revised Model Constitution published for LOCs

NHS England has approved a revised LOC Model Constitution proposed by LOCSU on behalf of ABDO, AOP and FODO.

The new constitution reflects improvements suggested by LOCs through a consultation exercise conducted by LOCSU in early 2016.

The changes include election of officers at the first committee meeting rather than at the AGM itself and a recommendation that co-opted committee members should include at least one locally practising Dispensing Optician.

The newly-published constitution also states that all LOCs should establish a website where contractors and performers can obtain information.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the LOC and Primary Eyecare Company has been included under a new section in the constitution called "LOC Provider Company". This section should be deleted if there is no PE Company in place.

Adoption of the revised LOC Model Constitution LOCs should be included as an agenda item at all 2017 LOC AGMs.

The LOC Model Constitution can be found at via this [link](#) to the LOCSU website.

LOCs can also find more information on the running a transparent and successful AGM on the same page and in a [2015 Blog](#).

Preparation for LOC AGM season



LOCSU is aiming to attend as many AGMs as possible in 2017 to hear the views of LOCs and the contractors and performers they represent.

If you have not yet advised of your AGM date please email info@locsu.co.uk with the details. You will find details of all the AGMs we know about on the [LOCSU Calendar](#) or on the alphabetical list of LOC AGMs [via this link](#).

Dates for your Diary

- 6–9 Feb, [100% Optical](#), ExCel London
- 8 Mar, [World Glaucoma Week](#),
- 8 Mar, No Smoking Day
- 1–3 Apr, [Optrafair](#), NEC, Birmingham
- 7 Apr, [World Health Day](#)
- 8 May, Sun Awareness Day
- 12 June, [Carers' Week](#)
- 12 June, [Diabetes Week](#)
- 9 June, [Glaucoma Awareness Week](#)
- 18 Sep, [National Eye Health Week](#)
- 9 Nov, [NOC 2017](#), Chesford Grange, Warwickshire

Event sponsor

ALTACOR, a UK ophthalmic company specialising in products that treat dry eye syndrome and eye health supplements would like to hear from LOCs interested in offering sponsorship opportunities for their LOC meetings and events. For more information contact Barrie Bell, National Account Manager, barrie.bell@altacor-pharma.com or 07912 379412.

If you have an item of interest for *LOCSU News*, contact Editor [Chris McGachy](#), Head of Communications. You are receiving this email from the Local Optical Committee Support Unit. If you would like to unsubscribe, please contact info@locsu.co.uk.