

# OFNC

Association of British Dispensing Opticians  
Association of Optometrists  
British Medical Association  
Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians

## Optometric Fees Negotiating Committee

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Chair: Trevor Warburton Secretary: Ann Blackmore

### MEDIA RELEASE

9 March 2018

#### OFNC seeking NHS eReferral grant for optical practices

The Optometric Fees Negotiating Committee (OFNC) has been in negotiations with NHS England to secure funding to provide IT connectivity between optical practices in England and the rest of the NHS. It had been hoped that this could come from an underspend elsewhere in primary care which has been widely reported in the media. Unfortunately at the last minute this proved not to be possible.

Trevor Warburton, OFNC Chair, said: "It is extremely disappointing that we have not been able to secure funding to connect optical practices with the NHS this year. However, NHS England do now seem to accept that investment in this area is needed, which is progress, and have committed to continue working with us on this in 2018-19, although no budget has yet been allocated. It is essential that NHS England do now work with us to deliver on this long overdue modernisation."

Ann Blackmore, OFNC Secretary added: "NHS England have confirmed that the requirement for all primary care referrals to be electronic from October will not apply to optical practices. Nevertheless, however we look at it, this change is likely to result in more work for some practices and GPs which could have been avoided. Looking ahead our shared aim with NHS England must be to develop a simple and straightforward system of IT connectivity as soon as possible and we will continue to press NHS England hard on this.

Ends

#### Notes for editors:

1. The Optometric Fees Negotiating Committee (OFNC) is the community eye health equivalent of the BMA's and BDA's General Practice Committees and community pharmacist's pharmaceutical services negotiating committee (PSNC). It is the recognised negotiating body for fees for the professions. Its members include the ABDO, the AOP, the BMA, and FODO.
2. The Chair and secretariat to the OFNC are provided by AOP and FODO.
3. The current membership of OFNC is Trevor Warburton (Optometrist, AOP – Chair OFNC), Henrietta Alderman (AOP CEO), Richard Edwards (Optometrist, FODO), Claire Slade (Optometrist, FODO), Gordon Ilett (AOP), Ian White (Optometrist AOP), Simon Longstaff (OMP BMA), Kim Fowler

(BMA), Professor Nagasumbramanian (OMP BMA), Sir Anthony Garrett (CEO ABDO), David Hewlett (CEO FODO). Secretary: Ann Blackmore (FODO).

4. Further information can be obtained from the secretary at [Ann@fodo.com](mailto:Ann@fodo.com) or on 020 7298 5156.