

Healthwatch South Tees: Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO) Service
Summary of recommendations and responses from commissioning and provider organisations

<p>Recommendation 1. That a recognised pathway be implemented so that all patients with a sight loss diagnosis are referred to an ECLO. Best practice indicates that all patients who receive a diagnosis of sight loss should be offered support to ensure early referral to services and emotional support. Our research has shown that there are inconsistencies with regards to referrals to the ECLO service within JCUH. Where an individual feels that they do not require the service, they should be provided with information in an appropriate format so they know how to access the service in the future if they wish to do so. It is important that family members and carers are also made aware of this service as they may also require support.</p>	
<p>Middlesbrough Council</p>	<p>Middlesbrough Borough Council adhere to the Adult Sight Loss Pathway and would welcome a consistent approach to communication between the ECLO and James Cook University Hospital.</p>
<p>NHS South Tees CCG</p>	<p>It is clear that patients and carers, as well as professionals delivering eye care services at JCUH value the service provided by the ECLO.</p> <p>The CCG will work collaboratively with LA colleagues who commission this service through the BCF programme to ensure there is consistency in referrals by professionals from related hospital services.</p> <p>We will also ensure the ST IEG receives a copy of this report.</p>
<p>Redcar & Cleveland Council</p>	<p>The Council has an established pathway for sensory impairment that includes support through its commissioned Visual Impairment Support Service and Eye Clinic Liaison Service at James Cook University Hospital.</p>
<p>South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust</p>	<p>All the consultant rooms have yellow information cards with Angela Bedingfield's email and details and these can be given to patients to take home if they feel at that point they do not wish to be referred. Angela attends the junior doctor induction to inform them of her role and how to refer. I will ensure the Healthwatch report is put on the agenda for the next consultants audit meeting to discuss feedback and recommendations. Angela has put new posters up in department and information cards are now stored at the front desk. We will be installing computer screens in the new AMD service we will put relevant information on for patients to view in the waiting area.</p> <p>Angela attends staff hub weekly to brief teams and encourages staff to identify patients. We employed a Specialist Nurse for the injection service in January 2017. This role will provide a better link for all newly diagnosed patients and the ECLO service. All news will also be given card and patient information following first attendance.</p> <p>There is also a new registration document (certificate of visual impairment) that the consultant signs when patients meet criteria to be registered this now has a prompt 'has patient been referred to ECLO' this should improve referrals to ECLO. These forms will be kept in all clinic rooms as from today.</p> <p>Angela feels that staff are on board and are supportive of the ECLO service. It is valued by the department and is a huge benefit to patients.</p>

Recommendation 2.	
Funding for the ECLO service at JCUH is continued in the long-term for the benefit of patients. At present, funding is awarded on an annual basis, preventing the necessary long-term service development. Funding for ECLO services elsewhere are also inconsistent. As we have identified this service is accessed by patients from across the region, funding should be sought from the relevant commissioning bodies - including local authorities and clinical commissioning groups.	
Middlesbrough Council	Funding for the ECLO service was a pilot scheme funded by the Better Care Fund, to service Middlesbrough residents for an additional 2.5 days per week for 1 year. Due to the nature of the Better Care Fund commitments cannot be made regarding long term funding however we will continue to support and work with Action for Blind in the future.
NHS South Tees CCG	The service is commissioned by the LA and funded through the Better Care Fund programme. The CCG and local authorities are notified on an annual basis regarding the total amount of funding; plans are then developed to make most effective use of this resource. As with previous years, the 2017/18 BCF plans do include the provision of the ECLO. Due to the annual nature of NHS funding, longer term commitment to services such as this one is not possible. However, it is noted that decisions regarding the future of the service should be made with appropriate notice and effective communication with staff and stakeholders. This will be raised with the IEG.
Redcar & Cleveland Council	As part of its commitment to joint working with its health and local authority partners, we continually seek to identify joint commissioning opportunities. We will ensure that the findings from this report are specifically considered in this workstream.
South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	The issue of funding will be highlighted to our internal contracting team to begin discussions with local commissioners. Also, funding was discontinued by Middlesbrough Council June 2017 this has been provided by RNIB who have given a bridging loan to allow a 4 day service to be maintained the trust are still funding 1.5 days of this.
Recommendation 3.	
In terms of patient experience, dedicated space for the delivery of the ECLO service should be identified. At present the ECLO has a daily challenge of finding space to conduct patient appointments. Although we appreciate that space at the hospital is limited, this would enhance patient experience and consistency - particularly for vulnerable patients - and support service development beyond its present capacity. It will also help to raise the profile of the ECLO further with other professionals within the Department.	
Middlesbrough Council	Middlesbrough Borough Council are unable to comment on the availability of dedicated space for the ECLO within James Cook University Hospital and this would be a matter for the local Trust.
NHS South Tees CCG	Commissioners are unable to determine the specific location from which the service will be delivered. However, the CCG is currently working with South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to review capacity for ophthalmic service, particularly outpatient services, and as part of this work we will explore the space available for the delivery of the ECLO service.
Redcar & Cleveland Council	No response.

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	<p>The Ophthalmology department was designed for approx.. 40,000 outpatient appointments P/A when the department was relocated from NRI to JCUH. During the 13 years following relocation to JCUH referrals to the department have grown to approx. 90,000. (Excl. eye case referrals 11,000 15/16). For this reason, the area is very overcrowded, leading to excessive queues and limited room space and availability.</p> <p>In July 2016 a second area opposite the existing ophthalmology outpatient department was secured. Funding was obtained to adapt this area to a clinical environment. This area will then allow for the relocation of the Medical Retina Service from the existing ophthalmology department. This will reduce the volume of patients through the current department and increase clinical room capacity.</p> <p>There has been a delay in the completion of the work due to staff vacancies and the wait for equipment but a room has been allocated for the ECLO service within the main dept. once the Medical Retina Service moves into the new dept.</p> <p>There is also a proposal from the Friarage Hospital Northallerton to develop a full Ophthalmology Service within a new area. I have also factored in the ECLO service into the room allocation for this area in the hope we can have a comparable service there.</p>
Other responses	
NHS Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group	<p>I understand that South Tees Clinical Commissioning Group (STCCG) have provided you with a response, therefore we have liaised with them as the lead commissioner for South Tees NHS Foundation Trust to ensure a consistency in response and views.</p> <p>Due to the local commissioning arrangements STCCG has in place and as outlined in their response, NHS Hartlepool and Stockton-on--tees CCG will work collaboratively with colleagues in relation to determining future commissioning arrangements of the ECLO service.</p>
Stockton Borough Council	<p>Overall, we support the report recommendations but would like this to be discussed more fully at the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p>