**Chair’s Report**

2023 will hopefully see the roll out of the awaited electronic referral system allowing better connectivity between optical practices, GP surgeries and also the HES. The system is being trialled first in 3 other areas with Dudley roll out happening at the end of the Year. This will be a great opportunity for us to engage with optical practices providing support. I have been fortunate to be part of the meetings to keep my knowledge up to date to make sure that we are ready to help with implementation of this, so please watch out for newsletters and information we send out.

Through Ophthalmology away days, and ICB forum meetings I have been able to establish excellent relationships with key individuals within the ICB such as Dr Ananta Dave Chief Medical Officer for Black country ICB and recently Public Health officer for Black country ICB Taps Mtemachani. With John Barry and Ananta coming to my practice they experienced first hand how well we are placed in the community to deliver effective services.

This year I have managed to set up meetings with ICB boards trying to involve all LOCs and as I write this report, through the RHH away day, we have managed to start dialogue with the HES on commissioning post-cat assessments in the community. We are very hopeful that this will be rolled out in the next year.

The central purpose of ICSs is to address health inequalities in its region. West midlands is the second worse in the country for health inequalities. There are clear correlations between the outcomes of integration based on a regions deprivation level. Areas of higher deprivation have lower levels of integration and poorer heath outcomes at system level. Through consistent emails I have managed to present to the cardiovascular disease network to talk about HLOPs as well as promoting how blood pressure monitoring services can take place in optical practices across the black country. I am consistently trying to make sure that as part of any strategic planning involving the health inequalities fund optical practices are not missed out and are included in any pilots or schemes just like GP surgeries and pharmacists.

Charles has been working incredibly hard to make sure the services such as glaucoma monitoring and OCT monitoring etc are not just occurring in Dudley but across the whole region. He has been attending many meetings across all areas and ‘joining the dots’ together. We have been constantly updated at all LOC meetings on regional changes and information and this collaborative approach with the other LOCs is what will result in the success of schemes with no cross-border issues. Sheena has been able to establish relationships with PCN’s as well – so at place level we are gaining recognition.

Finally as part of the workforce development funds we have started organising paediatric workshops, had peer discussions online, and are working on FB workshops etc. We are very proud of the quality of applications we have had for higher qualifications from Dudley, and it’s great to see interest from our colleagues in wanting to develop themselves further.

Thank you to Mark for taking on the role of treasurer and taking on the changes that are happening in terms of payroll. Thanks to Rosie for organising the AGM and Paul for keeping up with the ever-increasing communication that is going out to our colleagues. Thank you to all committee members too for attaining and contributing to meetings.

Looking forward to big changes God willing!

Shamina Asif Chair 2022/2023