Dudley LOC
local optical committee

Minutes for the Dudley LOC Virtual Committee Meeting held at 6.30p.m. on MONDAY 28th September 2026

Held as a zoom meeting

Committee in Attendance

Paul Sidhu (Secretary), Shamina Asif (Chair),Mark Tuffin (Treasurer), Charles Barlow, Shazad Mahmood , Ameerah Riaz Ahmed, Qadar Baz, Rosie Birhah, Sonia Tyrell, Chandni Sharma, Amir Afzal, Dan Wright , Hussnan Ejaz, Gurdeep Dosanjh, Jasheen Mangat

1. Apologies

Nicky Ferguson.

2. Declarations of Interest

No new declarations of interest were made.

3. Minuets of the previous meeting

Proposed by SA and seconded by HE.

4. Matters arising from the previous minuets

Actions
QB and SA to run SWOT anaylsis for next meeting with input from all committee members/done
DW to send MT bank details to enable payment for meetings as new committee member/ done
DW to attend meeting with SA tomorrow night from OFNC in relation to support from the LOC's regarding GOS negotiations/ done

5. Co-opting on Members

Sonia Tyrell is currect co-opted DO and is happy to carry on, voted on and carried unanimously

6. Election of Officers

Committeee members were asked if anyone who wasn't the encubant wanted to stand for an officer role.

Nobody put themselves forward. All encubants expressed a desire to continue in role. A vote was held that all the current officers carry on for another year. This was carried unanimously. Therefore the officers remainas The officers are Shamina: Chair, Paul: Secretary Mark: Treasurer and Shazad: Vice Chair.

7. Gos Updates

PS had nothing to report

CB reported some further news regarding our FNC negotiations and discussions and some other data that's been submitted to the government on the wider thing, but nothing locally that is not already put it into his report: that the reorganisation of the team that does our contracting, the GRS contracting, is pretty much finalised. It's called the Office of the West Midlands.

CB understands the senior members of the team will be the same. but are waiting to have all that clarified. He understands there are job changes and some people have been laid off.

8. Primary Eyecare Update

Report from CB:

Dudley LOC Meeting Report for 28th Sep 2026

Birmingham, Black Country and Solihull Workforce Development Project

Last Meeting 22nd Sep 2026

Stream 1. Higher Qualifications

- £175,000 = Total project funding received from NHS for Higher Qualifications since 2022
- 271 Grant Applications received in total (32 new applications since last LOC meeting)
- 108 Grants have been paid out totally £111,345 grant payments
- £35,895 has been offered as grants, but not yet claimed

26/27 Grants available:

- £800 for Prof Cert Glaucoma
- £1500 for IP (including any placement fees)

Outstanding LOC Action since last meeting – have we ensured we have the WOPEC Paediatric Course Codes

Stream 2. Core competency development

- £175,000 = Total project funding received from NHS for Core Competency Development since 2022

Balance remaining – £100,967

Delivered to date:

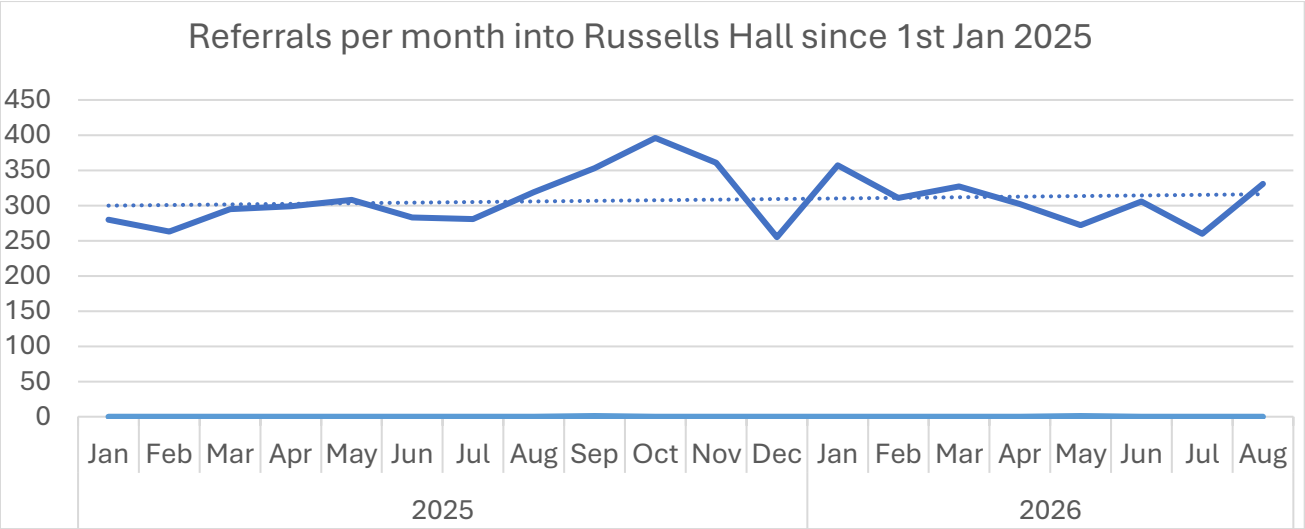
- 4 Online peer discussion events
- 3 Goldmann/FB events
- 4 D.O. Paediatric Upskilling events
- 1 Grand Rounds Training
- 3 Paediatric Ophthalmology Workshops
- 1 Neuro Ophthalmology event
- 3 VR event
- 1 Medical Retina Event
- 1 AMD Event
- 1 Whole day conference

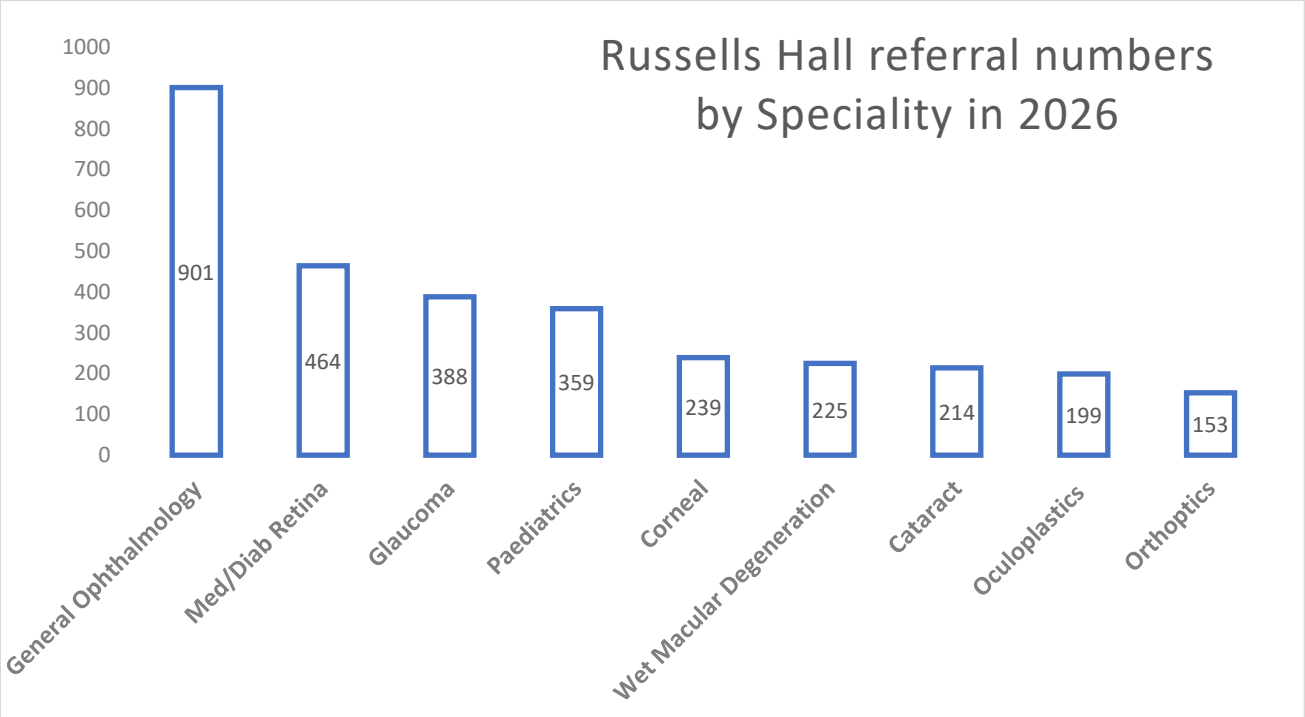
Workstreams in progress are:

- D.O. upskilling – including Low Vision training
- OCT workshops
- Paediatric Workshops, to include Retinoscopy & Peer Discussion
- Vitreo-Retinal Training
- Glaucoma – including OCT fields and peer review sessions
- Neuro Ophthalmology Training
- Oculoplastic Event
- Binocular Vison virtual event

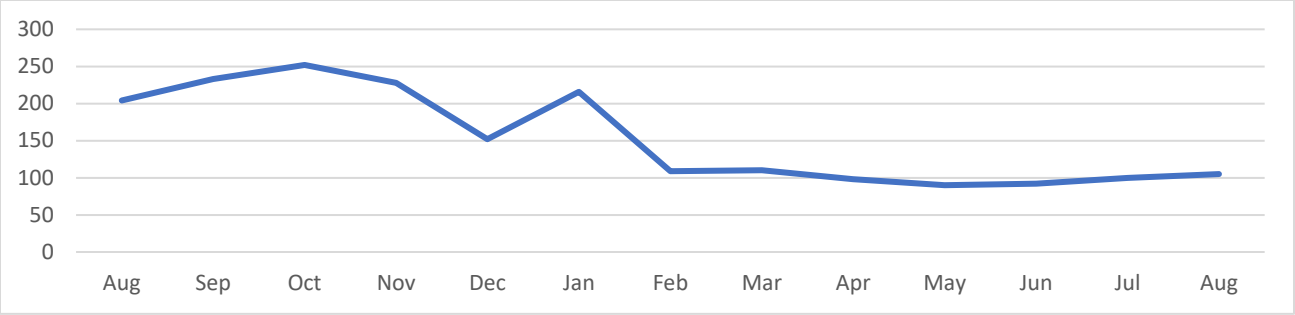
Other – call for volunteers – additional support is required to support the work

EeRS (Cinapsis)





Impact on numbers of Glaucoma Referrals into Trusts since introduction of Black Country wide GERS in January 2026



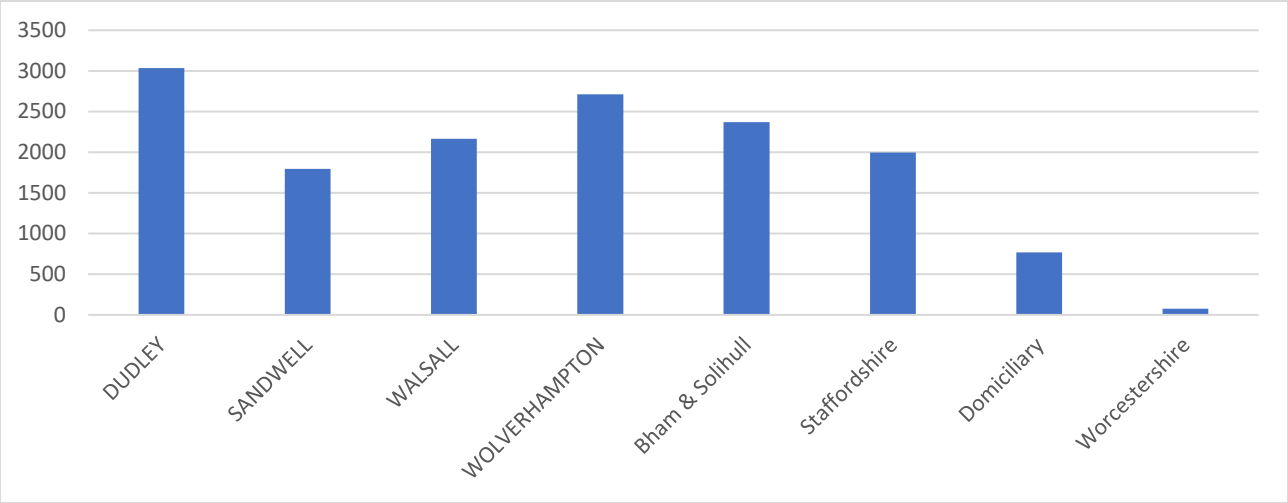
Black Country EeRS

42,721 Referrals to date into BlackCountry Trusts since service started.

327 Practices have referred via Cinapsis in 2026 – **BUT** -only 131 are Black Country Practices

50% of referrals have been sent from just 21 practices (6%)

Where are the referrals into Black Country Trusts coming from in 2026



What Black Country referral pathways are being used most often in 2026

Referral Pathway	Number of Referrals	Percent of total
General Ophthalmology	5233	35%
Paediatrics	1906	13%
Glaucoma	1502	10%
Med/Diab Retina	986	7%
Wet Macular Degeneration	914	6%
Cataract	850	6%
Laser (YAG capsulotomy)	781	5%
Emergency Eye Clinic	738	5%
Corneal	641	4%
Orthoptics	496	3%
Oculoplastics	391	3%
Vitreoretinal (16 or over)	259	2%
Contact Lens/Low Vision/General Optometry	89	1%
Retinal Vein Occlusion (18 or over)	77	1%
Low Vision	28	0%
Uveitis / Inflammatory Eye Disease	27	0%
Total Number of Referrals:	14,918	

Current EeRS Cinapsis Workstreams

- Surveys for Optometry feedback on Trust Management of Cinapsis referrals
- Cross Border Commissioning and Integration

    - Deployment of a new Cinapsis service access logic allowing practices to offer patients all referral pathways they are eligible for, irrespective of geographic location.
    - This is already successfully operating in the East Midlands
    - Work commencing to review all pathways and potential impact on Trusts
- Non-Clinical Services Signposting – to vision support services e.g. Beacon

Primary Eyecare Services

Black Country

- Monthly meeting with commissioner
- Twice yearly meetings with Contract Managers
- Commissioner very supportive of CUES and willing to look at service expansion.
- No risk to Black Country CUES from Indicative Activity Plans
- Draft glaucoma monitoring service specification shared; rollout expected late 2026/early 2027.
- Paediatric service discussions ongoing; progress delayed due to orthoptic contract issues.

Engagement with Trusts

- Proposal for promotional sessions with RWT, Russell Hall, and BMEC regarding CUES.

Other

- Long-term aim remains harmonisation of services across BSOL and Black Country.
- BSol FP10 for IP optometrists remains blocked by pharmacy policy.

Regional Optical Committee

Last Meeting 17th September

Apart from matters already reported above, matters arising were:

- Meeting between the LOCs and the new Birmingham. Black Country & Solihull ICB primary care team is scheduled, but has been delayed.
- There are delays in the ICB management of Change Process with the NHS Office of the West Midlands – the team that carries out all GOS contract management.
- ICB intend to appoint **Claire Roberts** as LEHN Chair across multiple regions.

9. Chairs Buisness

SA presented the following report:

RHH Audit meeting
Presented at the RHH audit meeting on 03/09/2026 about the importance of IP optometrists. Explained what we can manage in the community as IP Optometrists and what we cannot as well as associated fees for GOS and also CUES.
Pradip Karamjit and Jenny Workman are both part of FIT for future programme and were impressed with the presentation and their presentation which followed just spoke about how to use community Optometrists to ease the pressures in ophthalmology. The key take home point was millions have been invested in ophthalmology and yet productivity has decreased by 22% since covid and that things need to be done differently.
I have requested that we are present at the FIT for future ophthalmology programmes.
As a result of this audit meeting I am hoping that staff will help IP Optometrists more.
PCC meeting – I have presented data on number of IP Optometrists most were unaware that IP optometrists existed.
As part of the primary care strategy there will be involvement of dental and optometry in the second workshop – I will keep you updated on when this happens
There is 9 million underspend that is being used for Projects – I asked about involving us in projects so we can make suggestions on how to utilise the money – smoking cessation and cues leaflets is what I mentioned.
I spoke to the Frailty board about including eye test in their strategy and for those that are housebound and have dementia.
Walsall is currently working on projects using funding in neighbourhood projects – Aisha I will get you a lead and Walsall need to be involved in this
The new blood pressure scheme for pharmacists includes referrals from Optical practices – unsure what this looks like we are waiting for final specification
IP placements – PCC have agreed to draft a letter to chief executives of trusts telling them the importance of Having IP placements for Optometrists

Sarbjit to organise a separate meeting to get Optometrists as part of the ophthalmology transformational plan.

Strategy day smoking cessation

£844,00 has been invested in Dudley Stop smoking services – most of this has gone to helping pregnanat women stop smoking and also to ABL – private company. I happened to sit next to the commissioner who was working on a small project and I highlighted using MECC and using Optical practices to sign post patients as well as using Optometrists to help quit smoking as well. **Wayne Sheargold** commissioner has agreed to look into using Optical practices in the future to bring smoking targets down. I did my job of highlighting the importance of smoking and blindness to everyone in that room and all the other presenters. I am looking for a committee lead to lead on the healthy living optical practices.

Email from Mr Chung regarding pictures for oculoplastic referrals

I received an email from Mr Cheung explaining how pictures attached to referrals can make a big difference to triage and referrals. I spoke to Grace (the commissioner with Charles) on how this could work – she has asked for a service specification on this and can add onto the CUES contract.

She also said other pathways could be considered so discussions with other Chairs we have come up with wet AMD referrals must have an OCT scan attached, Optic disc referrals need certain number of tests done, and choroidal naevus pathway which already exists.

I am meeting LOCSU and PES to see how these pathways can be implemented

Shamina asked Chandni Sharma about her experiences at the hospital on her IP placement

- Chandni reported excellent support following Shamina's engagement with consultants.
- Significant number of triage cases could be redirected to CUES.
- Consultants now more aware of optometry prescribing capabilities.

10. Regional Update

10.1 Workforce Development

10.2 EeRS update

10.3 HWMROC (including federation)

See cb report in section 8

11. Hospital Liaison Buisness

Issues raised:

- **Fast-track cataract referrals** experiencing long delays (appointments in March for September referrals).
- **Glaucoma referrals** also delayed.
- Chandni to investigate referral pathways and identify responsible managers.

LOC to escalate concerns formally to Trust management.

12. Social Media Officer Update

- Engagement increased significantly during National Eye Health Week.
- Followers increased from 41 → 70.
- Posts reached 268 users.
- QR codes to be added to LOC banner and event materials.

13. Secretary's Business

13.1 LOC cloud file storage
13.2 Model Consitution : Elections and lengthof terms
13.3 IP specialty CPD

- LOC Cloud File Storage now active; officers to upload documents.
- Constitution review ongoing — concerns raised about:
    - DO elections: voting not by DOs
    - Non-prescriptive officer term lengths open to abuse
    - Performer/contractor voting structure removed with all performers and contractors voting for the same pool of candiates

Paul to re-engage with LOCSU

14. CPD Officer's business

- Sandwell & Dudley CPD Day successful (109 attendees; £500 raised).
- Glaucoma half-day scheduled for 8 October.
- IP CPD provision required — survey to be issued to IP group.

15. Treasurers business

Dudley Loc treasurer's report for 28/09/2026
Current balance £77,425
EERS £18,238K
LOCSU levy outstanding £ 1817

HMRC outstanding £221
We are also holding approx. £3416 of the Clair project
We also hold £6000 from Taurus Healthcare
True balance therefore £47733 up from March 2026 report by just over 1K this should be enough to cover 1 years operating costs as previously discussed
Currently the levey sits at 1.75%
Just a reminder that all expenses are to be submitted to me as soon as possible at the end of the month as the deadline for submission is the 7th of the following month.
I attended the last LOCSU treasurers meeting on 18/06/26 lead by Louise Robinson
Items discussed:
Corporation Tax and liabilities that LOCs may face
Petrol rate for expense has now increased from 45p per mile to 55p per mile (to be increased further) this should be adopted by Dudley LOC
Reminder of link on members area of website to accounting policies
Issues with Locum Kit and payslips (not an issue for Dudley LOC) can I remind members to check payslips at each payment
Confirmation of cost to audit accounts of £350 using Locum Kit this compares to £660 that we paid for last years accounts with EM Grove

16. Authorisation to act and email conversations

The motion from previous meetings was put to the committee (*the committee give continued permission and authority for officers to deal with and make decisions on matters that arise that need urgent attention. When this occurs, wherever possible a discussion by email with the Committee should take place before a decision is made. Whenever possible and reasonable officers should bring all matters that require decisions to the next committee meeting, and decisions will only be made outside meetings where waiting is not a realistic option.)*

Agreed unanimously

17. Authorisation to act on ROC

The motion from previous meetings was put to the committee (*the committee give continued permission and authority for officers to deal with and make decisions on matters that arise that need urgent attention. When this occurs, wherever possible a discussion by email with the Committee should take place before a decision is made. Whenever possible and reasonable officers should bring all matters that require decisions to the next committee meeting, and decisions will only be made outside meetings where waiting is not a realistic option.)*

Agreed unanimously

18. Authorisation to act on Black Country Alliance

The motion from previous meetings was put to the committee (*the committee give continued permission and authority for officers to deal with and make decisions on matters that arise that need urgent attention. When this occurs, wherever possible a discussion by email with the Committee should take place before a decision is made. Whenever possible and reasonable officers should bring all matters that require decisions to the next committee meeting, and decisions will only be made outside meetings where waiting is not a realistic option.)*

Agreed unanimously

19. Any other business

- Nasir expressed interest in joining committee as performer member; to attend next meeting with camera on.
- Foreign body kits requested; Shamina to distribute once received.
- Healthy Living lead role to be offered to committee due to increasing workload.

20. Dates of next meetings

18th January 2027 @6.30 face to face

Action	Owner	Deadline
Investigate cataract & glaucoma referral delays; identify Trust managers	Chandni	Before next meeting
Escalate referral delays formally to Trust	Shamina	ASAP
Develop oculoplastics / lesion triage pathway with PECS & LOCSU	Shamina	In progress
Meet BMEC A&E re: IP placements	Shamina	October 2026
Add QR codes to LOC banner	Chandni / Qadir	October 2026
Update Healthy Living contracts on LOC Cloud	Shamina	October 2026
Constitution concerns to be raised with LOCSU	Paul	Next LOCSU meeting
IP CPD preference survey	Shamina	October 2026
Workforce Development volunteers to contact Charles	Committee	Ongoing
Book venue & catering for January meeting	Rosie	December 2026