



Chair's Report – AGM 2023

2022 to 2023 was the year of Optometry First, and as the Isle of Wight was one of the three early adopter sites in the UK this was a huge area of focussed work for the LOC.

As a summary of the Optometry First project, the LOC worked closely with the commissioners and Trust colleagues on the Isle of Wight to successfully implement a pre and post cataract pathway for NHS cataract services. We also continued to support and develop the CUES service with the introduction of a Primary Eyecare Service delivered centralised telemedicine service. As well as the achievements on the island to date, the rest of Hampshire watched closely to see how the relationship between primary care optometry and secondary care ophthalmology could grow and develop for the betterment of patient outcomes, and as a result of both the Optometry First initiative and the work of the LOC on the Hampshire wide Eye Health Alliance, dialogue is currently positive and collaborative.

Across the majority of Hampshire, CUES and Glaucoma services continue to support our patients and a number of “refresh and relaunch” evenings have occurred recently to support practitioners on the service specifics. In the Southampton area a brand-new Glaucoma Monitoring service went live, and the LOC has worked closely with PES to deliver this contract.

In the last few months we've successfully joined our Pharmacy and Dentistry colleagues in collaborating to promote primary care as not just GPs and are already finding that united, our voice is being heard more clearly by the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP). This will continue to be an area of work for the future.

Alongside these colleagues, we've attended a number of workshops with community stakeholders across Hampshire to work on local health and community priorities as part of the Hampshire Place and Hampshire Integrated Care Partnership.

In the last two years we completely overhauled our website and commenced a social media strategy. We hope the information shared is relevant and interesting to all those we represent and work weekly on the maintenance of these platforms to ensure all performers and contractors have the latest information readily available to them. We also have a regular newsletter with updates including CPD events. If you are not on the mailing list, but would like to be, please email isilk@hampshireloc.org.uk and ask to be included.

Just prior to this AGM we took another step in our engagement strategy and posted out flyers to all practices in Hampshire, which I hope all of you saw. Our goal is to

ensure every single person involved in primary care optometry in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight knows who and what the LOC is about and is aware how to reach out to us as and when needed. The LOC is not just for a small group of optometrists. The LOC is for everyone in optical practice be it Optometrists, dispensing opticians, contact lens opticians, practice managers or other optical support staff, engaged in NHS GOS.

As we look to 2023-2024, we will continue to work in representing optometry as part of primary care to NHS stakeholders and will continue to support practices across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to deliver on commissioned services. We will continue to enquire about and push for new services that will benefit our community, such as children's eyecare and services for people with learning disabilities, and explore how we can further support the ongoing education and professional development of all clinicians in the area.

I welcome any thoughts or comments so please do reach out at any time.

Bryony

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