

General Ophthalmic Services Memorandum

13 December 2018

**To all Optometrists,
Dispensing Opticians and
Ophthalmic Medical Practitioner
Providing General Ophthalmic Services**

Data Protection Guidance

This MOS provides guidance on the updated General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which came into effect on 25th May 2018, and the responsibilities for General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) contractors. Please ensure that all clinical and other practice staff are made aware of this MOS and their individual responsibilities in regards storing and using patient information, aligned to the new GDPR.

The changes to GDPR facilitate more control over how data is handled and improved awareness for individuals on how their data is used. The changes are also aimed at providing better protection of personal data.

The updated regulations aim to ensure that all organisations have arrangements in place to protect any personal information they hold for individuals and to act appropriately if something goes wrong.

In relation to any patient information GOS contractors may capture and hold as part of providing General Ophthalmic Services or Ophthalmic Enhanced Services (e.g. NI PEARS), all contractors are responsible for ensuring that patients are aware of what personal information is held and used for and when, and why, that information may be shared with other HSC organizations. Some examples of when information is shared may be in the submission of claims, for probity purposes or for audit of an enhanced service.



Patients should be advised of this information by way of a Privacy Notice. This can be provided as an individual leaflet given to each patient or, as a poster displayed in the practice which patients are directed to read before they receive a service.

An example of a Privacy Notice poster is available on the BSO website at the following link:

<http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2376.htm>

This poster may be adapted for your own practice and displayed. Other examples of both privacy notice posters and leaflets and further guidance on Data Protection are available from other professional organisations including the College of Optometrists and the Association of Optometrists.

Please Note: The patient declaration and practitioner declaration have been updated on Enhanced Services forms to include a statement that the patient has been made aware of how their information is used.

The Health and Social Care Board recommends that you ensure your practice is compliant with GDPR and, if required, seek further advice from your professional body and/or IT provider.

Ophthalmic Services

