

DEPARTMENTAL APPOINTMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

CHAIR OF THE OPHTHALMIC COMMITTEE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION

The Department of Health is looking for an experienced Optometrist to lead the Ophthalmic Committee of the Business Services Organisation (“the BSO”).

The BSO was established in 2009 to provide a broad range of regional business support functions and specialist professional services to the whole of the Health and Social Care sector in Northern Ireland. Under the General Ophthalmic Services (GOS) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007, the BSO is required to constitute a Committee, known as the Ophthalmic Committee, to advise and assist the BSO and Strategic Planning Performance Group (SPPG) in the duties assigned to it. The Committee’s role includes:

- Considering, on a regional basis, the **implications of changes** to the GOS contract, commissioning proposals and regulations governing sight tests, spectacle vouchers, repairs and replacements for GOS practitioners in Northern Ireland.
- Advising on matters concerning General Optical Council registration and de-registration, and issues related to the Ophthalmic List and Ophthalmic Practice List.
- Advising on regional Continued Optometric Education, Continued Professional Development and Clinical Governance matters.
- Advising on GOS Clinical Practice trends and probity issues and possible reasons for changes in statistical trends.
- Advising on clinical matters where a regional perspective may be helpful and on any other matters in respect of GOS professional issues and payments as required.
- Providing an interface between Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners and GOS Optometrists, and facilitating discussions on matters of common concern.

Chair

The Chair of the Committee is appointed by the Department of Health and will have to devote around 10 days per annum to the appointment. Duties will include regular meetings with the Assistant Director (Family Practitioner Services), and liaison, together with BSO AD FPS, with the Head of Ophthalmic Services, Strategic Planning and Performance Group, Department of Health.

In performing the role, opportunities for personal and professional development arise through contacts with HSC bodies, the Department and other professions. Remuneration is £290 per day with travel and other allowances also payable in accordance with the HSC rates set out in the Departmental Circular HSC (F) 14/2024 - *Payment of Travelling and Other Allowances To Members Determination (Northern Ireland) 2024*. A copy is available from [hscf-24-2024.pdf](https://www.hscni.net/hscf-24-2024.pdf)

Essential Criteria

The Chair must be a practicing Ophthalmic Optician with at least 5 years' experience, currently registered with the General Optical Council and engaged in the provision of GOS in Northern Ireland. The Chair must also have had previous committee work experience and be able to demonstrate involvement in optometric service development at a regional or national level.

General Criteria

In general, a candidate would be expected to meet the following criteria:

- **Leadership** - Acting as Committee leader to ensure focus, direction and results.
- **Making an impact with others** – Developing and maintaining co-operative working relationships to achieve results.
- **Committing to the non-executive role** – Understanding the environment in which you are making a contribution.
- **Analytical thinking** – Making decisions and solving problems in a team and organizational environment.
- **Learning and self-development** – Able and willing to further develop as a Committee Chair.

Expressions of Interest

If you have the relevant qualifications and experience, and feel you could make a positive contribution to the work of the Ophthalmic Committee, please email for a nomination form and further details about the appointment, quoting reference number BSO 1/26 to:

Email: gdoscorrespondence@health-ni.gov.uk.

Completed nomination forms must be received at the above address by 5:00 pm on Wednesday 18th February 2026.

**Nominations received after the closing date will
not be accepted by the Department.**