

BSO OPHTHALMIC COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The HSC Business Services Organisation (BSO) is responsible for providing a broad range of regional businesses support functions and specialist professional services to the health and social care sector in Northern Ireland and is established under the Health and Social (Reform) Act (NI) 2009 (The Reform Act). To discharge its functions effectively, the BSO has established a number of Committees to engage its key stakeholders in the development and delivery of its business.
- 1.2 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 the Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG) in the duties assigned to it.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The BSO Ophthalmic Committee is a Statutory Committee constituted for the purposes of carrying out duties assigned to it by the Health and Personal Social Services (General Ophthalmic Services) Regulations (NI) 2007 and is appointed by the Business Services Organisation.
- 2.2 Its main role is to consult and engage with practising Community Ophthalmic Practitioners (Optometrists, Ophthalmic Medical Practitioners and Dispensing Opticians) on the services provided by BSO.

3. REMIT and SCOPE

Members will:-

- 3.1 Consult with and canvas opinion from community ophthalmic practitioners in their Local Commissioning Group areas, or areas of practice.
- 3.2 Consult and advise on queries on ophthalmic payments, shaping future payment processes and how any change may affect daily practice.
- 3.3 Consult and advise on system developments regarding potential impacts for contractors.
- 3.4 Feedback/advise on activity trends, flagging potential probity issues and possible reasons for changes in statistical trends.
- 3.5 Consult and advise on enhanced service claiming mechanisms, regarding potential impacts for contractors.
- 3.6 Advise on process for opening/closing practices and changes of services, personnel, ownership or relocation.
- 3.7 Consult and advise on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 The term of office shall be determined by the BSO. The Chair is a Departmental appointment. This process is administered by the Department of Health, NI (Secondary Care Directorate).
- 4.2 Where the committee Chair has to temporarily step down i.e. medical reasons the vacancy shall be filled in the interim by the BSO from the existing membership and any person so appointed shall hold the office for time the Chair is unavailable to attend or until the Department of Health decide to replace the Chair.
- 4.3 The BSO deem that in the interests of equity, the term of office is to be set at four years.
- 4.4 Each member can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms.

- 4.5 Any member wishing to resign must give written notice to the Chair of Committee. The minimum notice period shall be three months, and the maximum notice period that is required shall not exceed six months, unless otherwise agreed by both the committee and resigning member.
- 4.6 Should a member's post become vacant and following the usual methods of advertising the post, the BSO is unable to fill the post then the following interim arrangements will apply. With the agreement of the Chair and lead from BSO, a committee member may be offered a further supplementary 4 year term to fill the vacancy. At the end of that term the post would then be advertised in the normal way.
- 4.7 The Regulations allow for the BSO to appoint members to this Committee after consultation with the SPPG and representative organisations of ophthalmic medical practitioners and ophthalmic opticians/optometrists and such other bodies as appear to it to be concerned.
- 4.8 Members are entitled to an attendance fee in accordance with Schedule 5 of Circular HSC (F) 24-2024 (No. 2). Members are also entitled to deputising expenses/financial loss allowance in accordance with Schedule 4 of the Circular.

5. FREQUENCY AND TIMING OF MEETINGS

- 5.1 The Ophthalmic Committee usually meets 4 times per year.

6. COMMITTEE AGENDA

- 6.1 The BSO will support the arrangements for the Ophthalmic Committee meetings by providing the secretariat who will arrange for the distribution of agendas, papers and taking a note of meetings.
- 6.2 Format as dictated by the terms of reference
- 6.3 A quorum will consist of the Chair and 3 members.
- 6.4 Declaration(s) of Interest to be declared at each meeting.

- 6.5 Setting of agenda items – Items to be submitted, at the latest, 14 days before the meeting. Agenda to be confirmed with Chair and then issued 7 days before the meeting.
- 6.6 Draft minutes to be disseminated 4 weeks after the meeting to the Chair and the Committee within 8 weeks. Final minutes to be issued with papers 7 days in advance of the meeting.

7. ENDORSEMENT

- 7.1 These Terms of Reference were approved by the Ophthalmic Committee on **23 September 2025**.

Due to be reviewed September 2027