MOS/363

HSC Business Services Organisation

10th November 2026

General Ophthalmic Services

To all Ophthalmic Contractors providing General Ophthalmic services

ALLOCATION OF THE £1 MILLION CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL INSURANCE PAYMENTS

In May 2025, the Health Minister announced a £1 million investment in General Ophthalmic Services to support employers and ophthalmic practices in Northern Ireland with National Insurance costs.

Following consultation between the Department of Health (NI) and the contractor representative body, Optometry Northern Ireland, it has been agreed that this funding arrangement will continue for 2026/27.

The £1 million allocation will again be divided into two separate payments of £500,000, each covering a six-month period:

Period 1: 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026

Period 2: 1 October 2026 to 31 March 2027

As in previous years, BSO will use the total number of sight tests claimed by each practice during the relevant period to calculate that practice's proportion of all sight tests undertaken in Northern Ireland. This proportion will then be applied to the £500,000 allocation for that period to determine the payment due to each practice.

Payments will be made in November 2026 for Period 1 and May 2027 for Period 2, with relevant details included in the respective monthly payment reports.

Ophthalmic Services
10th November 2026

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