



### **Community Pharmacy Scotland and Optometry Scotland Joint Working**

During recent months Community Pharmacy Scotland has engaged extensively with Optometry Scotland to discuss joint working initiatives to improve patient care of eye conditions. During these discussions common ground was found and it has been agreed that improving understanding of each other's contracts will improve care of patients with eye conditions across Scotland.

Community Pharmacy Scotland is keen to encourage its members to foster a referral pathway with their local optometrist to help patients presenting in pharmacy with red eyes. Recent evidence published by the British Journal of General Practice indicates that the use of chloramphenicol is not required in all cases of conjunctivitis. Community Pharmacy Scotland is keen that contractors are made aware that optometrists are keen to review patients with red eyes to support triage. To support this engagement a referral form has been produced for use by pharmacists. A copy of the referral form is attached for information and further copies can be downloaded from the Community Pharmacy Scotland website.

Once a patient has been referred providing they are a UK resident, they can get a free NHS eye examination in Scotland. This eye examination will be a thorough examination to check the health of their eyes, and will look for signs of other health problems. Community Pharmacy Scotland believes this examination will identify significantly dangerous eye conditions such as acute glaucoma which can be sight threatening

Optometry Scotland is also keen to inform pharmacy contractors of the increasing numbers of optometrists who are registered as independent prescribers. These prescribers may well approach you with signed orders for eye drops. Optometrists may well also prescribe using prescription pads in the near future and pharmacy contractors should dispense these and submit to PSD in the normal fashion.

As not all optometrists are qualified independent prescribers, Community Pharmacy Scotland has made optometrists aware of the Minor Ailment Scheme where qualifying patients could be referred to pharmacy quickly to receive treatment using this service. Community Pharmacy Scotland has produced enclosed laminated sheet outlining eye preparations which can be supplied on the Minor Ailment Service.

Further training on the management of eye conditions is on the NES programme for some Board areas this year. Frank Munro from Optometry Scotland will be giving the presentation and if you are keen to learn more about eye care you should look out for this on the NES programme.