



Association of British Dispensing Opticians
Association of Optometrists
British Medical Association
Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians

Optometric Fees Negotiating Committee

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OFNC STATEMENT: RESUMPTION OF GENERAL DENTAL SERVICES – IMPLICATIONS FOR OPTICAL SERVICES IN ENGLAND

29 May 2020

On 28 May NHS England [announced](#) that it was asking all dental practices in England to commence opening from Monday 8 June for face-to-face care, subject to having the necessary infection control measures and PPE in place. The announcement makes it clear that the goal for patients and professionals is to resume the safe and effective provision of the full range of care in all practices, as rapidly as practicable. Dentists are also being asked when scheduling treatment to take into account the urgency of patient need, the unmet needs of vulnerable groups, and the capacity available to provide care.

The OFNC continues to work urgently with NHS England to agree appropriate arrangements for optical practices to provide more face-to-face care as soon as possible. As with dentistry, the need for infection control and social distancing will reduce the number of patients that practices can safely see face-to-face. The OFNC notes that the current temporary financial arrangements for dentistry are to be maintained initially and is similarly discussing with NHS England how the financial impact on optical practices of the necessary changes in the way care is delivered can be mitigated.

In the meantime, optical practices remain open to provide an inevitably widening scope of essential care as described in the [OFNC statement](#) issued on 27 May. We urge those practices that are open to continue to meet their patients' evolving needs for essential care, and we encourage all practices to continue prepare for a wider resumption of face-to-face care in the near future.

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The Optometric Fees Negotiating Committee (OFNC) is the national negotiating body for eye care in the UK and England with the Westminster Parliament, the Department of Health and Social Care, and NHS England-NHS Improvement. It comprises the leaders of the UK representative bodies: ABDO, AOP, FODO and BMA (for OMPs) and works in partnerships with the College of Optometrists and the General Optical Council.