

## **POLICY NOTE**

### **THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (OPTICAL CHARGES AND PAYMENTS) (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 2014**

**SSI 2014/61**

**The above instrument was made in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 70(1), 73(a), 74(a), 105(7) and 108(1) of, and by paragraphs 2 and 2A of Schedule 11 to, the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978. The instrument is subject to negative procedure.**

#### **Policy Objective**

The purpose of this instrument is to amend the National Health Service (Optical Charges and Payments) (Scotland) Regulations 1998 (“the 1998 Regulations”) (SI 1998/642) to increase optical voucher values and supplements.

#### **Optical Vouchers**

Optical vouchers provide help towards the purchase of new, or repair or replacement of existing glasses or contact lenses for certain categories of people, including children under 16, those aged 16 to 19 in full-time education and those who require complex lenses. For adults, other than assistance for complex appliances, help is income related with those in receipt of certain benefits being automatically entitled to a voucher while others on low incomes may be entitled to help under the NHS Low Income Scheme.

#### **Increase**

Voucher values are normally increased on 1 April each year.

Regulation 2(2) of the instrument amends regulation 19 (redemption value of voucher for replacement or repair) of the 1998 Regulations to increase a) the redemption value of a voucher for the replacement of a contact lens; b) the maximum value of a voucher for the repair of a frame; and c) the maximum supplement for small glasses and special frames.

Regulation 2(3) of the instrument amends Schedule 1 (voucher letter codes and face values – supply and replacement) to the 1998 Regulations to increase the value of vouchers issued towards the supply and replacement of glasses and contact lenses.

Regulation 2(4) of the instrument substitutes a new Schedule 2 (voucher values – repair) to the 1998 Regulations to increase the value of vouchers issued towards the repair of an optical appliance.

Regulation 2(5) of the instrument amends Schedule 3 (prisms, tints, photochromic lenses, small glasses and special frames and complex appliances) to increase the supplement values, which can be paid in addition to the voucher value.

The voucher values and supplements are increased by 2%.

## **Consultation**

No consultation has taken place on the preparation of this instrument. Optometry Scotland has been made aware of the increase.

## **Impact Assessment**

The Minister for Public Health confirms that an equality impact assessment is not required as there are no equality impact issues.

## **Financial Effect**

The Minister for Public Health confirms that no BRIA is necessary as the instrument has no financial effects on local government or on business. The financial effect on the Scottish Government will be met from the General Ophthalmic Services budget.

## **Consolidation**

The Scottish Government is aware of the desirability of consolidating regulations when an instrument has been amended on a number of occasions. However, the time and resources required to consolidate an instrument has to be balanced against the other demands being made on the Directorate. Bearing those demands in mind, it has been decided not to consolidate these particular regulations nor are there any immediate plans to do so.

Scottish Government  
Health and Social Care Integration Directorate  
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