

Optometry Services

Policy Number 1.303

Policy Function Continuum of Care

Issue Date 15 January 2018

Summary This policy outlines the processes for the provision of optometry services to patients in Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network facilities.

Responsible Officer Executive Director Clinical Operations

Applicable Sites

- Administration Centres
- Community Sites (e.g. Court Liaison Service, Community Integration Team, etc.)
- Health Centres (Adult Correctional Centres or Police Cells)
- Health Centres (Juvenile Justice Centres)
- Long Bay Hospital
- Forensic Hospital

Previous Issue(s) Policy 1.303 (June 2011; July 2014)

Change Summary

- Update to appointment waitlist procedure;
- Procedural update; and
- Non Prescription Spectacle Program form is updated.

TRIM Reference POLJH/1303

Authorised by Chief Executive, Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network

1. Preface

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN) provide equitable and appropriate optometry services for patients located within centres operated by Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW), Juvenile Justice New South Wales (JJNSW) and patients within the Forensic Mental Health Network, within available allocated resources.

2. Policy Content

2.1 Mandatory Requirements

The delivery of a high quality and equitable optometry services throughout JH&FMHN requires:

- That optometry services be provided by optometrists regulated by the [Health Practitioner Regulation \(Adoption of National Law\) Act 2009](#).
- The Non Prescription Spectacle Program (NPSP) is utilised, if appropriate, instead of placing patients on the optometry waiting list.
- That the Operations Manager, Primary Care – Services & Programs (OMPC-S&P) determines the schedule of frequency and duration of clinics at each location.
- That waiting lists are kept and subject to six monthly reviews.
- That optometrists provide services as per the approved hours of the Service Level Agreement.
- That optometry consultation, examination, and prescription are retained in the patient's Health Record.

2.2 Implementation - Roles & Responsibilities

The **Operations Manager, Primary Care- Services & Programs** is responsible for the implementation of this policy including: preparation and review of Service Level Agreements with Optometry service provider/s, determining the schedule of frequency and duration of optometry clinics at identified sites, maintaining and reviewing patient waitlists, assessing and accepting referrals, approving the replacement of lost or damaged spectacles and resolution of complaints.

JH&FMHN Primary Care Administration Staff are responsible for monitoring the Optometry email address, and the ordering and distribution of Non-Prescription Spectacles.

The **Nursing Unit Manager** is responsible for consulting with the OMPC-S&P in relation to urgent optometry services on a case-by-case basis and confirm the completion of services on the Optometrists Service/Attendance summary form.

JH&FMHN Nursing staff are responsible for performing eye examinations using the Non Prescription Spectacle Program assessment package, placing patients onto the optometry or Medical Officer waiting list, organising appointments for young people at an approved generic outsourced provider.

The **JH&FMHN contracted Optometrist** is responsible for providing Optometry services to patients in accordance with the Service Level Agreement, complete clinical correspondence for the patient health record and consult with the OMPC-S&P relating to the provision of service under this policy.

3. Procedure Content

JH&FMHN provides optometry services to Correctional Centres, Juvenile Justice Centres, Long Bay Hospital and the Forensic Hospital through the contracting of optometry service providers. Optometry services will be provided by optometrists regulated by the [Health Practitioner Regulation \(Adoption of National Law\) Act 2009](#).

The practice of optometry within JH&FMHN settings involves service provision, attendance or procedure, or the providing of advice, which includes one or more of the following:

- Examination of the eye for the purpose of diagnosis and/or treatment of conditions of the eye and the ocular adnexa; including the prescription and administration of ocular medications. Only optometrists endorsed by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) may prescribe and use approved drugs for therapeutic purposes.
- Diagnosis and treatment of conditions affecting vision, including employment of all methods for the measurement of refractive errors and binocular vision disorders.
- Prescription and dispensing of optical devices and optical appliances used to correct, remedy or relieve defects of the eye/vision.
- Prescription and fitting of contact lenses (subject to specific criteria).
- Enhanced services including vision therapy in specific clinical circumstances.

3.1 Adult Optometry Services

The frequency of adult optometry services is dependent on the size and presenting need of the facility population. Where an urgent patient need is identified applications can be sent directly to the OMPC-S&P.

The optometrist Service Level Agreement outlines agreed hours to provide services to JH&FMHN. The OMPC-S&P will determine the schedule of frequency and duration of clinics at each location, including new locations once commissioned.

Patients remanded or sentenced to custody for short periods (i.e. less than six months who are returning to the community) will be provided optometry services only in urgent situations, where their health or well-being may be significantly impacted. This need is assessed on a case-by-case basis with treatment options approved by the OMPC-S&P or Service Director, Primary Care (SDPC), in consultation with the Nursing Unit Manager (NUM) and the optometrist.

3.1.1 Accessing Optometry Services

Patients may make a standard application for an optometry examination or to access optometry-based service.

Nursing staff should perform an eye examination in conjunction with the reading chart provided in the NPSP assessment package to evaluate the patient. If the NPSP will assist the patient with short term relief for near vision tasks, appropriate application process should commence as per Section [3.1.3](#) of this policy.

If the NPSP is not appropriate for the patient, nursing staff should place the patient on the Optometry waiting list or if the patient presents with an acute visual health issue then the patient is to be placed on the Medical Officer waiting list. Where replacement spectacles are sought as a result of loss or damage to lenses and/or frames a further eye examination may not be required. Refer to Section [3.1.6](#) of this policy for details.

3.1.2 Provision of Spectacles

The range of approved frames and listing of approved spectacle lenses must be made available by the optometrist at JH&FMHN locations. These will be dispensed with an approved spectacle case. Where clinically indicated, patients are entitled to receive at no cost; one pair of distance, and one pair of near spectacles, or a pair of bifocals; with standard plastic lenses in a program approved plastic or metal frame.

Spectacles will be provided under the following circumstances:

- When deemed clinically appropriate by the treating optometrist to assist with vision correction.
- The patient's current spectacles (complete units, lenses or frames) have been lost or damaged beyond repair.

The Program will provide:

- Single vision lenses or bifocals only.
- Plastic or metal frames from within the approved range of frames. Patients are not permitted to use existing (own) frames or purchase frames outside of the approved range as part of their order for spectacles.

All other prescriptions will only be provided by JH&FMHN, when deemed clinically necessary by the optometrist and only with the prior approval of the OMPC-S&P in consultation with the SDPC.

In the event that special approval or non-program lenses are prescribed prior approval should be sought from the OMPC-S&P.

3.1.3 Non Prescription Spectacle Program (NPSP)

The NPSP assists patients with short term relief for near vision tasks. One pair of non-prescription reading glasses is available to all patients if required.

Prior to testing, check with the patient to ensure that they do not have a pair of prescription glasses that can be brought or sent into the centre via *Medical and Nursing Certificate form (JUS200.025)* or *CSNSW Inmate Request Form*. If the patient has a recent prescription (within 12 months), the OMPC-S&P can be contacted regarding re-dispensing the prescription.

If the above is not applicable, commence an eye test using the Optometry Assessment Package:

- Complete the *Non-Prescription Reading Glasses Form (JUS060.406)*.
- Using the reading chart located in the Optometry Assessment Package, hold 40 cm from eye level to read – try different strength glasses in the pack until the patient is happy with the result and reading is clear.
- Once the strength of glasses has been determined, email the completed form to the OMPC-S&P at: optometry@justicehealth.nsw.gov.au.

Short sighted patients (who have good vision at short distance but poor long distance vision) receive no benefit from non-prescription glasses and therefore will not be eligible for supply. The patient should be referred to the optometry waiting list for assessment.

Prior to issue of non-prescription reading glasses to the patient, the following steps should be completed:

- Place 'Visual Impairment' alert onto Patient Administration System (PAS)
- CSNSW/the private operators' Property Form completed

- Ensure that the patient signs the disclaimer on the *Non-Prescription Reading Glasses* form (JUS060.406)

Approved Spectacles via the NPSF will be sent via external mail to rural and remote health centres, and via JH&FMHN courier for metropolitan centres. The application form should be signed by the patient acknowledging receipt of the spectacles and placed in the patient's health record. Glasses must not be issued from the Assessment Kit.

3.1.4 Contact Lenses

JH&FMHN will only provide contact lenses where medically indicated and supported by the OMPC-S&P, in consultation with the optometrist and the appropriate JH&FMHN Clinical Director.

For those patients who enter custody with contact lenses, all associated costs including lenses and cleaning solutions will be the responsibility of the patient. No responsibility will be accepted by JH&FMHN to replace contact lenses which are lost, damaged or out of date. In this instance, the patient should be reviewed by the optometrist for a spectacle prescription.

3.1.5 Repairs

The optometrist will not generally recommend repairs of broken frames as it is not economical or time efficient to repair damaged frames.

3.1.6 Lost or Damaged Spectacles

Where a patient has lost or damaged spectacles (complete units, lenses or frames), and the patient's prescription is current (less than twelve months old) the patient is not required to undertake a further eye examination. The NUM may provide the optometrist with a copy of the patients' previous prescription from their Health Record. In some cases, depending on the patient's age and visual status, an optometrist may recommend that glasses more than twelve months old be re-ordered without the need for re-examination. Replacement spectacles are to be approved by the OMPC-S&P.

3.1.7 Health Record

Optometry consultations must be recorded in the patient's Health Record, together with examination and prescription details.

If spectacles must be ordered for a patient, an optometrist must complete all details on the *Optometrists Service/Attendance Summary* form and submit the order to the NUM. If either special approval lenses or non-prescription lenses are prescribed, the appropriate JH&FMHN authorisation must be obtained prior to submission of the order.

3.1.8 Transferred and Released Patients

When spectacles are approved at one facility and the patient is subsequently transferred or discharged, the local facility must make arrangements for the spectacles to be forwarded to the patient. Details must be noted on the *CSNSW/the private operators' Property Form*, with instruction for the patient to seek professional advice if the spectacles were not fitted prior to transfer. It is the responsibility of the patient to provide the correct forwarding address to the facility on release.

3.1.9 Delivery of Spectacles

Spectacles are generally made available between two and four weeks from the application, provided all appropriate approvals have been obtained. The Eyecare Program Administrator or the optometrist must arrange for the spectacles to be delivered to the Health Centre of the facility. JH&FMHN staff will arrange for

the patient to receive the spectacles. The spectacles should arrive with a copy of the original application and the patient must sign to acknowledge receipt. This form should be retained in the patient's Health Record.

3.2 Adolescent Optometry Services

Optometry services for adolescents are provided when a clinical need is identified during an assessment. Optometry services are provided by local private optometry services; thus all requests for an Adolescent Health patient to access these services must be approved by the Network Director of Nursing and Midwifery Services (NDONMS). Requests are received by completing the *Local Private Provision of Health Services* form (JUS200.040) and faxing to the NDONMS on 02 9700 3734. Refer to JH&FMHN policy [1.253 Local Private Health Services](#) for more information.

Once access to optometry services has been approved, an appointment is made on PAS. If the Health Centre conducts an optometry clinic the appointment is made to this clinic; otherwise the appointment will be made to an approved generic outsourced provider.

3.2.1 Provision of Spectacles

Spectacles will be provided when deemed clinically necessary by the optometrist, or when existing spectacles are lost or damaged beyond repair, noting that Optometrist will not generally recommend repairs of broken frame. An appointment must be made on PAS when fitting the spectacles for the young person while they are in custody. If the young person has been transferred, the spectacles must be sent to his/her location. If the young person has been released, the spectacles must be sent to his/her discharge address.

3.2.2 Contact Lenses

JH&FMHN does not provide contact lenses to a young person unless it is clinically necessary and approved by the NDONMS. Payment for contact lenses for a young person who comes into custody with contact lenses; or elects to wear contact lenses whilst in custody, should be discussed with the NDONMS and the outcome decided on a case-by-case basis.

3.2.3 Health Record

Correspondence received from the optometrist must be filed behind the clinical correspondence divider in the Health Record. In circumstances where the Health Centre runs an optometry clinic, the optometrist must have access to the Health Record and make an entry in the progress notes. If any concerns are identified relating to the eyes and/or spectacles provided to the young person, this must be noted on the *Health Summary Front Sheet* form (JUS001.008) under 'Ophthalmology Issues'.

3.3 Additional Information

3.3.1 Optometrist's Service / Attendance Summary Form

The NUM (or other authorised JH&FMHN officer) must sign the *Optometrist's Service/Attendance Summary* form to confirm the completion of service provision by the optometrist. This form should be forwarded to OMPC-S&P by The Eyecare Program Administrator.

4. Definition

Must

Indicates a mandatory action to be complied with.

Should

Indicates a recommended action to be complied with unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action.

5. Legislation and Related Documents

Legislation [Health Practitioner Regulation \(Adoption of National Law\) Act 2009](#)

JH&FMHN Policies, Forms and Documents [1.253 Local Private Health Services](#)

JUS001.008 Health Summary Front Sheet

JUS060.406 Non-Prescription Reading Glasses form

JUS200.025 Medical and Nursing Certificate form

JUS200.040 Local Private Provision of Health Services form

Optometrists' Service/Attendance Summary form