

Alette Addison  
Deputy Director – Pharmacy and Eye Care Services  
Department of Health and Social Care

Sent by email to [alette.addison@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:alette.addison@dhsc.gov.uk); copied to  
[communitypharmacyteam@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:communitypharmacyteam@dhsc.gov.uk) and [claire.osborne@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:claire.osborne@dhsc.gov.uk)

17 November 2025

Dear Alette,

**Re: Public consultation on extending the medicines available to optometrists and contact lens opticians across the UK**

I am writing to provide GOC's views on the public consultation on extending the medicines available to optometrists and contact lens opticians across the UK. Since the questions in the call for evidence relate mainly to the use of specific medicines, we have not completed the online template.

We are supportive of the government's intention to extend the range of medicines that can be sold, supplied or administered by optometrists and contact lens opticians, to reduce the need for patients to see other healthcare professionals in support of the ambition in all four nations of the UK to deliver more care in the community.

We agree with the government's analysis that optometrists and contact lens opticians have the clinical skills to be able to sell, supply and administer the medicines set out in the consultation document safely and effectively under exemption, without the need for any further additional training. We consider that the current education and training requirements for optometrists and contact lens opticians are sufficient to cover all the proposed additional medicines listed. We note that DHSC will work in collaboration with the Association of British Dispensing Opticians (ABDO), the College of Optometrists and the devolved governments to consider what further continuing professional development (CPD) materials may be provided to support this change. We are happy to be involved in these discussions if that would be helpful.

As you will be aware, we have the following safeguards in place as part of our system of regulation:

- We expect optometrists and dispensing opticians to adhere to our [Standards of Practice for Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians](#), which includes the requirement in standard 5 to 'Keep your knowledge and skills up to date' and in standard 6 to 'Recognise, and work within, your limits of competence'.
- We set [CPD](#) requirements for our registrants which ensure they keep their knowledge and skills up to date, as well as supports them to develop new skills in order to practise safely and protect patients. Our CPD system allows our registrants freedom to undertake learning and development which is relevant to their personal scope of practice and supports their career progression.
- While an optometrist or dispensing optician might be legally permitted to do something, they should only do so if they have the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience. Where a registrant's fitness to practise is called into question, we will investigate this through our [fitness to practise procedures](#). This provides appropriate regulatory safeguards where a registrant breaches our standards of practice.

We look forward to supporting the implementation of these changes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'S' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

**Steve Brooker**  
**Director of Regulatory Strategy**