Public perceptions 2026

Northern Ireland

93%

satisfied with overall experience of the opticians / optometrist practice

93% white vs **100% ethnic minority**

97% with no 'vulnerability markers'* vs **63% with four or more**

75%

have had a sight test / eye examination in the last two years.

70% of patients with **four or more 'markers of vulnerability'*** had their sight tested in the last two years, compared to **85%** **with none.**

*Markers include financial (eg low income), going through a difficult life event (eg bereavement), disability, and low confidence in managing your own eye health.

If you woke up tomorrow with an eye problem...where would you go or who would you speak to first?

47% Opticians / optometrist practice

21% GP practice / surgery

17% Pharmacist

14%

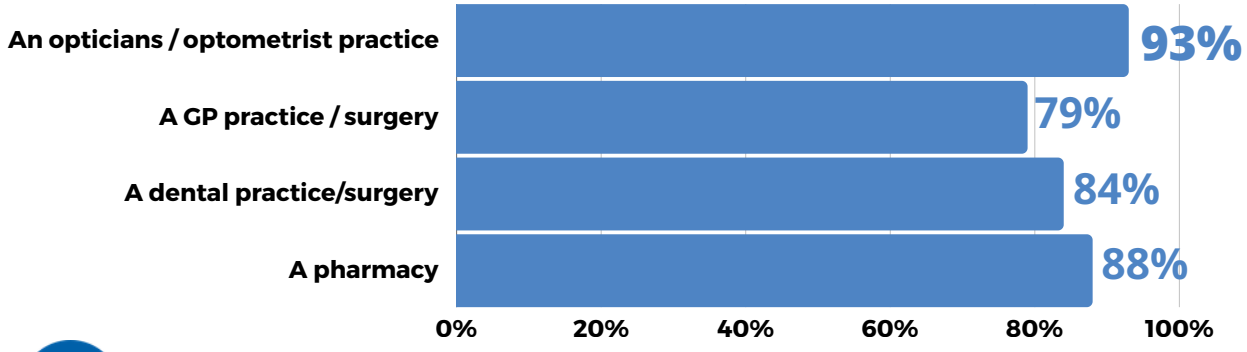
felt pressured to purchase specific brands or types of glasses or contact lenses

10%

felt **uncomfortable** about visiting an opticians / optometrist practice because of the **cost of the sight test / eye examination**

25% said the same about **the cost of glasses / contact lenses**

Confidence in receiving a high standard of care from healthcare services



General Optical Council

Explore the full findings at optical.org