



NHS Devon, NHS Plymouth, Torbay Care Trust & Devon Local Optical Committee (LOC)

Partnership Agreement

This document sets out the philosophy which governs the relationship between the following 3 Primary Care Organisations (PCOs) NHS Devon, Torbay Care Trust and NHS Plymouth, and the Local Optical Committee (LOC) and may be amended with the agreement of all parties.

1. All parties share the common principles of equity, compassion, courtesy, openness and honesty
2. Therefore, all parties will be honest and open with each other at all times. All contacts should be made in a professional manner and neither party will engage in conduct likely to bring the other into disrepute. When an issue of a confidential nature impinges on the relationship, the fact that there is such a potential conflict will be disclosed but the confidentiality will be respected
3. The PCOs recognises the role of the LOC in the continual development of policy and will commit to involving them at the earliest opportunity
4. The LOC recognises the legitimate interest of the PCOs in development plans put forward by the LOC. The LOC will, whenever possible, seek to involve the PCOs in the formulation of such plans
5. All parties will meet regularly, at least (once/twice) a year, either directly or via an Ophthalmic Contracting group to be established
6. All parties will work to develop a joint communication mechanism allowing the free transfer of papers and other documents by secure electronic methods.
7. The LOC recognises that the PCOs may have other legitimate sources of advice on Optometry practice matters. Any sources of advice and supporting documentation should be disclosed.
8. If the PCOs requests the attendance of an LOC member at a meeting to assist them in developing or adjusting policy they will pay the appropriate attendance fee. If the LOC wishes to send a representative to attend a meeting; the LOC will pay the appropriate attendance fee.
9. Where changes to existing arrangements are necessary these will be discussed between the parties at the earliest opportunity and the reasons for change will be given.
10. In the event of conflict between the LOC and any of the PCOs any such matters will be discussed at a meeting of the two parties. It is the intention of all parties that matters of dispute should be settled by consensus. Where this is not possible then NHS conflict resolution documentation will apply, where this is not prejudicial to individual LOC members' rights to pursue other courses open to them.
11. Matters will only be said to have been consulted on by the LOC when documents have been ratified in writing and signed by the Chairman, stating 'noted', 'recommended' or 'not agreed'.
12. Formal negotiation meetings will be attended by people from both organisations who are mandated to make binding agreements, and an agreed agenda will be produced with correspondingly agreed minutes.

13. Papers for discussion will be shared before meetings and whenever possible not tabled at a meeting.

P Adams
Chair
Devon Local Optical Committee
Date:

A James
Chief Executive
NHS Devon
Date:

NHS Plymouth
Date:

Torbay Care Trust
Date: