

#YourLOC

Case Study

Why Get Involved?

Learning, Contributing, Making a Difference, Having a Voice

Becoming a Local Optical Committee member is interesting and rewarding, but what is it like when you're just starting out? We asked a couple of LOC newcomers to explain why they decided to join their LOC and what they're getting out of it so far ...

Krupa Mistry – Coventry and Warwickshire LOC

Krupa Mistry qualified as an optometrist in 2016 and divides her time between her hospital optometry role at University Hospital Coventry and Warwick, locum work in Nuneaton and Warwick and clinical supervision at Aston University.

Krupa became a member of Coventry and Warwickshire LOC in May. Before this, she had attended AGMs every year since qualifying and worked alongside several LOC members. "I spoke to one or two colleagues who encouraged me to put myself forward," she says, recalling, "the LOC was keen to recruit younger members onto the committee."

In terms of the skills Krupa felt that she could offer the LOC, one of the areas she was keen to work on was communications and documentation: "During my hustings I talked about the website and the potential for documenting the hospital referral process on the LOC website. This is something I've been able to follow up on and complete now I'm on the LOC."

"Being on the LOC gives you an insight into what's going on within your local area in terms of optometry. You can find out about the extended services that should be rolled out into the community and you can really make an impact voicing your opinion about something you feel should be changed, based on your experience in practice."





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Steve Roberts (above) – Hertfordshire LOC

Dispensing Optician Steve Roberts was lending a hand at a Hertfordshire LOC meeting when his interest was sparked, he says, “I first attended a meeting to help set up the IT for a presentation. The owners of the practice where I work (as a DO and look after the IT) asked for my help with the meeting and I found it really interesting and so spoke to them about joining.”

Steve says the main benefits he has experienced since becoming a committee member are: “Representing DOs on the committee and helping the practitioners of Hertfordshire at this difficult time. I’ve also learned a lot about the industry and I’m proud to be on the committee.”

It is essential that a broad range of perspectives is included in the makeup of the LOC, as different specialisms can contribute alternative insights, as Steve explains: “I offer a DO’s outlook, which can be different to the many Optometrists’ voices. I have knowledge of different areas of the practice as I’m out on the “shop floor”.” The different patient relationship is also useful; patients sometimes speak differently to DOs compared to Optometrists, they can be more in awe of Optometrists and the clinical experience, but may feel more able to discuss problems with a DO rather than their “eye doctor”. My opinion is valued in LOC meetings and although there is a lot of clinical discussion, I feel DOs have a lot to offer and we are a vital part of the LOC team when we are discussing practice matters and patient care.”

Encouraging his fellow DOs to join their LOC, Steve says: “Get involved! DOs matter – it’s important to be heard. It’s a great way to support the profession, learn and help others.”

The LOC Induction Course – Setting You Up for Success

Joining the LOC has been a learning curve for Krupa and Steve and they recently took part in the [LOC Induction Course](#), which explains how LOCs work and what they are aiming to achieve.

Both Krupa and Steve found the course useful in broadening their understanding. Steve says: “As a DO I sometimes felt that the LOC meetings were full of clinical discussions and I wasn’t always able to keep up. I also wanted to learn more about the LOC, the why and the how, as I thought it would make me a more effective committee member.”

Krupa also felt the induction course helped her find her feet: “At LOC meetings before I attended the course I didn’t feel like I was adding a lot and there was a fair amount of jargon, but the induction course was really helpful and informative. It was great to chat to other members – especially to get the perspective of DOs and CLOs who were also taking the course.”

Steve found that, “the course gave me much more knowledge about the LOCs, what we are there for and how we can help represent practitioners more effectively. This also gave me more confidence to get involved and speak up.”

The LOC induction course is run by LOCSU and is perfect for new LOC members, or those who’d like to refresh their knowledge and make connections across the LOC community.

[Find out more about LOCs and how you can get involved](#)