

WEEU Contact Lens Service Information For Patients

The WEEU Optometry Department at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital runs a specialist contact lens clinic. It provides refraction, prescribing, fitting and aftercare service for patients of the Trust requiring clinically necessary contact lenses.

Patients who are likely to benefit from this service are:

- People with irregular corneas or scarring, for example – keratoconus, corneal trauma, corneal graft surgery, or after corneal infections.
- People with complex spectacle prescriptions – those who are highly short or longsighted, or have a large difference in prescription between their two eyes.
- People, who need lenses for therapeutic reasons, for example pain relief.
- People who require cosmetic lenses – if the eye has been unsightly due to congenital deformations or following damage from, for example, infection or trauma.
- People whose vision cannot be improved with spectacles but can be improved with contact lenses. (VA with both eyes worse than 6/9 with spectacles)
- People who need occlusion which cannot be achieved in other ways.

To be seen in the clinic you must be referred via your GP, or from an ophthalmologist within the RD&E. Some referrals can also be accepted from Ophthalmologists at other regional hospitals

The Department of Health has introduced a charge for each hospital contact lens new/spare/replacement supplied.

The current charge is £60.75 (April 2023) per contact lens or for a six months supply of disposable lenses per eye. This represents a subsidised price for most lenses.

This is reviewed annually by the Dept of Health. The same charges apply to lens breakage outside the manufacturer's warranty period.

A charge of £5.00 is added to the cost of the lenses for postage. Special Delivery charge is payable with some very high value lenses.

- There is no exemption from payment for spare contact lenses

EXEMPTIONS

Plano lenses used as a therapeutic bandage, occlusive or non-powered prosthetic contact lenses are exempt from the charge. However, patients wearing cosmetic lenses will receive a maximum of 4 lenses per year and if more lenses are required the statutory fee (above) will apply. (Subject to financial exemptions detailed below):

Prosthetic lenses containing an optical correction are chargeable. (Subject to financial exemptions detailed in the list below):

PATIENTS ENTITLED TO HELP WITH MEETING THE COST OF HES CONTACT LENSES

People falling within the categories below are exempt from the cost of their contact lenses.

1. Children under 16 years of age;
2. Patients 16 or over but under 19 and still in full-time education;
3. The patient or their partner get:
 - Income Support
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Pension Credit guarantee credit
 - are named on a Tax Credit Exemption Certificate
4. They, or their partner are on a low income and are named on a valid HC2 (full help) or HC3 (partial help) certificate.
5. A prisoner.
6. Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
7. They or their partner are claiming Universal Credit

Proof of exemption eligibility needs to be provided before each order. Please also bring this to your next aftercare appointment so that your records can be kept up to date.

Orders:

To order new lenses by phone, ring 01392 406037. Please state your name, date of birth, and/or hospital number if known. Lenses cannot be ordered if you are overdue for your aftercare appointment or have been discharged. An invoice will be generated by the accounts department as soon as the lenses have been received and checked by the Optometry department. The lenses can be posted to you for the postage fee or you can arrange collection.

Most lenses will take between 2 to 6 weeks to be ordered, manufactured, checked and posted. Please therefore consider a spare pair in case of loss.

How to Pay:

Invoices will be generated by the accounts department. You will be given 30 days to pay via the methods indicated on the invoice. No new or replacement contact lenses will be ordered or supplied if there is an outstanding unpaid invoice.

Spare lenses:

To avoid the problems of contact lens loss we advise that you keep a spare. There is no exemption from payment for spare lenses.

Appointments:

If you are unable to keep your appointment please phone the Optometry Secretary on **01392 406037** to arrange an alternative date.

Patients who fail to attend two consecutive appointments will not be supplied with contact lenses and will be discharged. **Please make sure you attend your appointment for a contact lens aftercare.**

Emergencies:

In case of emergency (e.g. Pain, sudden loss of vision, and redness with discharge) contact the Optometry department within office hours or call **NHS 111**

Solutions:

Only use solutions recommended by the Optometrist. Some solutions can be purchased through the Optometry Department and some patients may be exempt from the fee. Please ask

Contact Us:

OPTOMETRY DEPARTMENT - Tel: **01392 406037**

EMERGENCY - Tel: **111**

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by Royal Devon staff undertaking procedures at the Royal Devon hospitals.

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