



The Voice and Values of Independent Practice

Association for Independent Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians

AIO STATEMENT

Monday 22nd June 2020

AIO met with Lesley Longstone, Chief Executive and Registrar at the GOC on Thursday 18th June and agreed the following statement:

- The GOC position as laid out in their circular to all Registrants on 23rd March 2020, which stated ‘In light of concerns regarding the provision of eye services in England, we have issued a statement in support of suspending routine services and limiting registrants to only providing essential and urgent, emergency or acute care’ was confirmed as applying equally to NHS and privately provided care.
- That position, in support of professional guidance from The College of Optometrists, ABDO, AOP and OFNC remained unchanged until their further statement issued on the 12th June 2020.
- Paragraph 4 of the GOC statement issued on 12th June, which reads ‘in our view this means that registrants are able to deliver private eye care including private sight tests / eye examinations and aftercare appointments’ still has to be delivered in accordance with professional guidance including “amber phase” College guidance effective from 15th June
- The recommendation that private eye care services could be expanded beyond that which was urgent or essential, became effective from 15th June 2020 in England when the College changed from Red to Amber guidance. It did not change the position from 23rd March 2020 to 15th June 2020. It was accepted that this point could have been worded in more explicit terms.
- Fitness to Practice matters against individuals and businesses are always judged against the standards that were in place at the time of the alleged breach of GOC standards.
- The GOC is unable to make any public comment on any ongoing Fitness to Practice matter