

Flashes and Floaters Service Patient Information Leaflet

The Flashes and Floaters Service

This is a new eye health service provided by Gloucestershire CCG in collaboration with community Optometrists. The service provides urgent eye assessments for people complaining of sudden onset of flashes and/or floaters. The service aims to provide easily accessible care closer to home for patients, avoiding a trip to the eye casualty department for patients who do not require emergency care.

Why have I been referred into this service

You may have been referred into this service by 111, your GP, pharmacist or the hospital, or by your Optometrist. That's because you have reported symptoms of flashes and/or floaters in your vision. Symptoms of flashes and floaters require urgent assessment to rule out possible sight threatening causes. In the overwhelming majority of cases flashes and/or floaters are caused by a common non-sight threatening eye condition, however an eye examination is necessary to rule out the rare sight threatening causes.

Your community Optometrist has all the necessary equipment to carry out a thorough assessment of your eyes to find the cause of your symptoms and provide you with the relevant care and advice.

What assessments will the Optometrist make?

The Optometrist will ask you a lot of relevant questions about your recent and past history, family history and about your vision.

They will examine your vision and your eyes using various techniques.

They will also use drops to dilate your pupils to get a good view inside your eyes. The drops may affect your vision for a few hours (possibly up to 6 hours for some people). You cannot drive or undertake other hazardous activities whilst your vision is affected by the drops. Therefore it is best not to drive to or from your appointment with the Optometrist.

What happens then?

The Optometrist will:

a) Reassure you that your symptoms are due to a common, non-threatening sight condition, give you advice and either discharge you or book a follow up appointment to see you within four to six weeks,

or

b) Refer you to an eye consultant at the hospital for further assessment and/or treatment. The Optometrist will explain why the referral is necessary and what will happen next.

About your records

Primary Eyecare Gloucestershire collects the details of the optometrists' referrals and keeps the record of them secure on a web based system. If you are referred to other health professionals, these details may be shared with them to ensure you receive the best care. Some information is also used to check how the service to the patient is working, make improvements and administer finances.

Personal details are not shared with any other groups or individuals.

If you do not wish Primary Eyecare Gloucestershire to hold and use your details in this way, please tell the optometrist who will arrange for the details to be removed from the computer system.

Patient Satisfaction

We would like to hear of your experience with this service. Therefore, we would be most grateful if you would complete the short survey that the optometrist will give you today.

Your feedback is valuable and will help us continually monitor and develop the service.