You and your vision:

a charter for eye care and sight loss services

UK Vision Strategy

“You and your vision” tells you what you should expect from eye care and sight loss services.

1 You should be able to arrange a regular sight test with ease. The results should be explained to you, including whether you need glasses or contact lenses. If you need to be referred to a specialist, your optician or GP should give you a clear explanation.

2 Most people who visit opticians or eye clinics do not have any permanent sight loss. Any problem with your eyes should be explained clearly, with respect for your feelings. You should be told how you can help manage your condition and about any treatment which might help. You may ask questions about anything you don't understand. You can also have someone with you (you may need to say this is what you want).

3 You should be given all the information you need in a way that is right for you. You should be asked whether you would like letters and leaflets in alternative formats such as large print or audio.

4 You may have to see a number of different professionals to get the treatment and support you need. You should always know what the next steps will be. If you are unsure, you can ask the health professional who is supporting you.

5 Finding out that you have a problem with your eyes can be worrying. You should be offered the chance to talk with someone who understands what you are going through and can answer your questions. This might be someone who has had a similar experience, a counsellor or someone who can give you emotional support.

6 If you are one of the few people who have serious sight loss, you may benefit from being on your local authority's sight loss register. You should be advised how to register, and what the advantages are, so you can make a decision about it.

7 If you lose any of your sight, you may need support to learn new ways of doing things like getting around town, cooking meals or using a computer. You should be given information on local and national support services. Your family, friends or carers should be given the help they need to support you, if you say you would like them to be involved.

If you feel you are not getting the service you need, you can contact:

England – your local PALS office (Patient Advice and Liaison Service): www.pals.nhs.uk

Northern Ireland – the Patient and Client Council: www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net

Wales – the Community Health Council: Tel. 0845 644 7814

Scotland – RNIB Scotland: Tel. 0131 652 3140

For more information on:

- eye health, visit www.nhs.uk
- eye conditions and sight loss, visit www.rnib.org.uk or call 0303 123 9999
- services in your area, visit www.visionary.org.uk or www.guidedogs.org.uk/guidetoservices

Your local organisation:

"You and your vision" is an initiative of the UK Vision Strategy and its partners and will be reviewed in 2012.

www.vision2020.uk.org.uk/UKVisionstrategy

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The text of this leaflet is also available in other formats. Please call 0303 123 9999.

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supporting blind and partially sighted people

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