



21st December 2017

Dear Colleague

Implications of NICE Guideline (NG 81) for IOP (GAT) Refinement Service and OHTMS – interim advice

As you may be aware NICE published a new [glaucoma guideline \(NG 81\)](#) on 1 November 2017. The revised guideline has been extended to cover referral and case finding.

The following recommendations regarding referral have implications for our Referral Refinement Tier 1 (GAT) and OHT monitoring services.

- If sight test findings show optic nerve head damage, a visual field defect consistent with glaucoma, or IOP 24 mmHg or above, the patient should be referred to the hospital eye service for diagnosis.
- Where elevated pressure of 24 mmHg or above is the only finding (normal disc and field) then a Goldmann-type pressure should be measured prior to referral to the hospital eye service.
- The accuracy of test results should be checked before referral for diagnosis of COAG or ocular hypertension (OHT) via repeat measures, enhanced case finding or referral refinement.
- Specifically, before deciding to refer, consider repeating visual field assessment and IOP measurement on another occasion to confirm a visual field defect or IOP of 24 mmHg or more, unless clinical circumstances indicate urgent or emergency referral is needed.
- People with IOP below 24mmHg should be advised to continue with routine sight tests.
- Patients should not be referred solely on IOP measurement using non-contact tonometry.

We have contacted the commissioners of the service (Bradford CCGs), to propose the following changes to ensure the commissioned service is compliant with the latest NICE guideline:

1. An increase in the threshold for entering Referral Refinement Tier 1 from 22mmHg to 24mmHg
2. Removal of the age criteria that applied in the previous guideline (CG 85)
3. A requirement for non-participating optometrists to refer patients with IOP of 24mmHg and above to a participating optometrist of the patient's choice for Tier 2 to establish if referral to HES is required

Bradford Teaching Hospitals have confirmed that they are adhering to the new guidelines with immediate effect and any referrals that are not compliant are being rejected with instruction to conduct further investigation (using the Referral Refinement service) or to refer to a participating practice.

Yours sincerely

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Chair, Bradford LOC