



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

PCCC Directorate, Dublin North East
Primary Care Services
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**Ms Victoria McLeish
McLeish Optometrists
Church Street
Kingscourt
Co Cavan**

14th May 2012

**Re: Health Board Community Ophthalmic Services Scheme
(HBCOSS)**

Dear Ms McLeish,

It has come to our attention that some opticians are providing treatment prior to receipt of Health Board authorization and charging applicants on the understanding that when and if authorization is obtained, a refund shall be issued.

This practice is causing many problems and is in breach of your agreement with the Health Board. It is also causing difficulties for those opticians who are abiding by the terms of their contract/agreement, which states the following:-

“Eligible persons will apply to the Health Service Executive in their area to have their applications under the Scheme authorised. It is intended that such application will be approved or rejected within one month.”

“The Contracting Optician will be entitled to payment for the services undertaken on foot of this agreement by references to the agreed scale of fees and charges negotiated between the parties hereto. No charge shall be levied on the patient for such services”.

If this procedure is in place in your practice, I would ask that it be discontinued. I appreciate your co-operation in ensuring that this scheme is operating within the terms of your contract as outlined above.

In the interest of providing an efficient and effective service for medical card holders I would like to draw your attention to the Application Form.

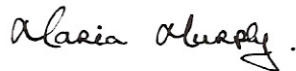
Please ensure that applicants are made aware of the highlighted section on this form which states:-

“An applicant must not arrange to have an eye examination or to obtain glasses until HSE approval has been received”.

Fewer problems will arise if the above is adhered to, as in many instances the applicant may not be eligible for the service. Should the service be provided ***prior to HSE approval*** and the applicant is ***not eligible***, a refusal letter is issued to the applicant and any cost incurred relating to a service being provided ***prior to HSE approval must be borne by the Ophthalmologist/Optician***. However, should an applicant upon receipt of Health Board approval opt for more expensive Optical Appliances, i.e. Frames/Lenses other than those listed under the schedule of fees, the ***applicant is liable for the balance of the cost incurred.***

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours sincerely,



**Maria Murphy
Section Officer
Primary Care Services**