

Date: 20 March 2014



Greater Manchester Area Team
4th Floor, 3 Piccadilly Place
London Road
Manchester
M1 3BN

AGM.optometry-pharmacy@nhs.net

Dear Colleague

Re: GOS4 Applications for Repairs/Replacements

The Area Team receives large numbers of GOS4 applications for repairs and replacements from GOS contractors across Greater Manchester. In order for appropriate and consistent decisions to be made, please note that the following information must be provided as a minimum, either on, or attached to, the GOS4:-

- Where the patient has a medical condition / illness, please
 - (a) advise what the medical condition / illness is, and
 - (b) provide details of the specific event which has led to the loss/breakage. eg “patient has epilepsy and has broken glasses” is insufficient, as it does not demonstrate that the patient’s condition is directly linked to the loss/breakage. Please provide further detail i.e. “Patient has epilepsy and their glasses were damaged beyond repair during a seizure”, which will demonstrate that the patient’s condition directly caused the breakage.

Patients are not automatically entitled to repairs/replacements based solely on having a medical condition – the condition must have led directly to the loss or breakage, and this should be clearly explained in the application.

- Where the patient is a care home resident and has a condition such as Alzheimers / Dementia, as well as confirming that the patient’s condition has led directly to the loss / breakage, please provide details of any steps taken by the care home to locate the glasses.

The Area Team needs to be assured that reasonable attempts have been made by care home staff to locate the lost glasses before the application can be considered.

- When submitting GOS4s for replacements, it is helpful if the form indicates “broken beyond repair” rather than simply “broken”.

The lack of detail on some applications has meant that the Area Team has been unable to determine whether or not repairing rather than replacing could have been an option. On some GOS4s neither box has been ticked. Where a replacement is requested due to broken (rather than lost) glasses, assurances are needed that a repair has been considered, but was not possible.

If this information is not provided, it is likely that the application will be refused on the grounds that there is insufficient information to allow an appropriate decision to be made. Please therefore provide as much relevant detail as possible.

For further details, please refer to the Greater Manchester procedure for second pairs, non-tolerance and repairs and replacements which was previously circulated.

GOS4s should be submitted to the Area Team prior to replacements being issued. Decisions are made within a few working days once the form is received, so there should be no undue delay caused to patients. Many GOS4s are being submitted for authorisation several weeks after the date of the patient's signature Under Part 2 "Patient's Declaration". If the patient has been without glasses for such a prolonged period of time, this could suggest to the Area Team either that:-

- (a) the patient does not receive any significant benefit from wearing glasses; or
- (b) the patient does benefit from wearing glasses and their quality of life could be suffering because of the delayed request for authorisation

Many GOS4's are being submitted well outside of the submission timescales detailed in the Regulations. Please be aware that GOS4s submitted "out of time" will be refused.

Finally, GOS4s, non-tolerance and spare pairs applications should be sent to the Greater Manchester Area Team (Optometry & Pharmacy Team), 4th Floor, 3 Piccadilly Place, Manchester M1 3BN. The Preston Office (formerly known as LaSCA) is still receiving applications from Greater Manchester contractors and is having to re-direct these, which can lead to unnecessary delays in applications being processed.

We appreciate that some patients need their replacement glasses as soon as possible, and such delays could be avoided in future if applications are sent to the correct address and with sufficient detail being included.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

The Optometry & Pharmacy Team
Primary Care Support