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IMPORTANT UPDATE: For the attention of the Practice Manager and all Clinical Staff including locums regarding patients with a Stockport GP

Dear Colleague

I wrote in November 2013 regarding reduced capacity for new ophthalmology referrals and cataract surgery at Stepping Hill. In addition in 2014 a large number of patients were overdue for follow up. These included patients with glaucoma and diabetic eye disease. Extra clinics have been used to clear the backlog seeing the longest waiters first and it is hoped this will soon be resolved.

NHS Stockport CCG would like to thank Stockport Optometrists for reducing new referrals by providing primary care additional services and for using alternative providers such as Optegra for adult referrals. There is now additional provision for **adults** with certain eye conditions with SpaMedica and I have attached details with this letter. This includes referral criteria as they cannot accept some complex patients. SpaMedica will provide patient transport if needed for patients registered with a Stockport GP. Urgent referral pathways including wetAMD to the Alexandra are unchanged, as is the choice of providers for cataract surgery.

Please could you note the following some of which is learning from incidents / complaints:

- If you are seeing patients on hospital follow up please ask them if they are overdue and if so ask the patient to contact the hospital or do this yourself by phone or letter. It is advisable to note this on the patient record. If you feel they may have come to harm please write to the consultant copying to the GP.
- If you are seeing patients with long term conditions such as glaucoma please make sure they are still actually attending for follow up and if not write to their GP to flag this up. Keep a record of your actions.
- Please ensure that where patients meet the criteria for a primary care service such as Minor Eye Conditions they see an accredited primary care practitioner to reduce

Mrs. Jane Crombleholme – Chair
Dr. Ranjit Gill – Chief Clinical Officer
Mrs. Gaynor Mullins – Chief Operating Officer

new referrals. It is a GOS (General Ophthalmic Services) contract requirement to use local referral pathways.

- When referring please discuss different providers with patients and the length of time they may wait. If referring via GP please make this choice very obvious at the top of your letter so GP's and their admin staff will see it. Also advise patients to check it is with the correct hospital when they get an appointment.
- Please see the LOC (Local Optical Committee) website for the most up to date information on all referrals including consultant names and area of interest for named consultant referrals and waiting times. www.stockportloc.co.uk
- If referring to SpaMedica and the patient needs transport please note this on your referral.

Thank you for your help in trying to ensure patients have the best information to choose their pathway for eyecare. If you have any questions with regards to this information or referrals please see the LOC website or contact myself or the LOC for advice.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SN' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that curves upwards at the end.

Susan Parker
NHS Stockport CCG Clinical Lead for Eyecare