



MINUTES of the LOC COMMITTEE MEETING

Held virtually on Wednesday 29th January 2025 at 6.30pm

Attendees

Emma Spofforth (ES)	Sheila Purser (SAP)	David Dixon (DD)
Nick Hagan (NH) (6.40pm)	Maggie Glover (MG)	Vickie Hamilton-Barr (VH)
Reshma Patel (RP)	Pooja Bij (PB)	Kiran Lal (KL)
Mark Carhart (MC)	Chris Rushen (CR)	Sara Porter (SP)
Philip Bridgford (PB)	Jasraj Bhangra (JB)	Katie Kingcott (KK)
Bhups Battu (BB) (arrived at 6.50pm for 10 minutes, then re-joined at 8.25pm)		

PES: Sana Asif and Pratik Patel (arrived 9.14pm)

Minutes taken by KK

25/01 Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

Welcome from SAP. Apologies from Hayley Moore who is unable to attend. Bhups will be late to the meeting. Chris is starting a day at Optegra next week – redo form and send to KK.

25/02 Minutes of last meeting agreed

No amendments. Proposed as true by PB, seconded by VH. SAP to electronically sign and return to KK.

25/03 Action log – sent out ahead of meeting

Standing items, no.7 – needs analysis date to be updated.

292 – ongoing

304 – ongoing

324 – closed, remove

326 – ongoing

330 – process started and underway, review at later stage. Close action.

331 – open

333 – ongoing

334 – closed, remove

335 – action complete, closed

336 – ongoing

337 – closed, remove

338 – closed, remove

339 – closed, remove

340 – closed, remove

341 – action complete - review July 2025. Close action.

342 – open

25/04 NOC

NOC is on the 18th and 19th May in Birmingham. PB, KL and HM interested in attending. VH and

SAP would like to also attend. More details will follow once received from LOCSU.

25/06 Vice Treasurer

DD – succession planning in the LOC, hoping to get someone to shadow the treasurer. DD proposes a good stepping stone would be to have a different person join him (online) for an hour a month to go through what is involved within the treasurer's role. Officers agreed with this. RP volunteers to be the first person – to be done at the end of Feb. DD volunteers BB to go second.

25/07 Update on the stat levy misappropriations

ES – verbal update. At ROC ES spoke to contact in LOCSU and asked for latest on issues with the stat levy. Process started 18 months ago. Nothing happened since then. LOCSU's levy payments have been reduced by Essex LOC to make up for some of the misallocated money.

[REDACTED]. Need to find out where the missing levy has gone and get back from the other LOC's. One payment we do know about has gone to Gloucestershire LOC. £10,000 missing domi levy – nothing we can do about this. CR suggests we could use small claims court with Gloucestershire LOC - on BMA website it gives advice on GP's who have taken PCSE to small claims court. ES states this would be something the officers would need to discuss if they decide to go down this route. SAP has previously written to them; they said they hadn't received the email. SAP to check email address and resend email, giving them a month to respond.

25/08 Update on Single Point of Access (SPoA) and constitution

ES – update on SPoA is around NHS East of England region team. NHS England had an away day 9 months ago and talked about helping out with issues around referral pathways. Team have been working on this since. Delays due to staff changes. Work has been ongoing. Very early draft business case has been released. [REDACTED]. LOC's able to feedback on this. Supported by ICB's – 4 have shown interest.

SNEE have delayed referral system discussions. HWE looking at options regarding referral document for SPoA. Lots of talk regarding AI options. Constitution – lots of work at the ROC. ES has asked repeatedly to be included in LOCSU mailing list. Still not heard back from them. VH to email LOCSU regarding this.

Q: NH - we refer direct to the hospital. who does SPoA benefit? ES – not everywhere has direct referrals. West Essex have most referrals via GP. Lots of CCG's have referral via GP. Mid and South Essex have referral into SPoA and where px can be seen in community pathway they will be seen here. Up to 60% of patients after glaucoma referral are redirected back into the community for their GOS recall because the referral was deemed unnecessary. SPoA also helps with patient choice.

Q: CR – can we still refer direct to hospital for urgent and emergency? ES – yes, SPoA would normally be for routine referrals.

Discussion over SPoA continues – concerns regarding this.

Q: PB – is there a theme which runs through the referrals which needs feeding back to optometrists? ES – CPD event is ongoing with PES regarding referrals. SAP has found in clinical lead role that optometrists who are receiving referrals from other optometrists, through enhanced services, are more confident to feedback on the quality of referrals to SAP.

CR – great for optometrists being told individually, but all information needs to be fed back to everyone. Suggests would be helpful if PES could feedback monthly.

Q: MC – if someone gets referred as urgent and gets downgraded, how does the patient get informed of this? ES – as general rule patients have no idea how long they are expected to wait for an appointment. If patient is given choice, then they will be given details on how long a wait each hospital currently has.

25/09 CPD for 2025

VH - have had some contractors saying what they would like to see: Med ret vs vit ret with LV charities to speak/Myopia management.

June AGM will be Low Vision. SP to help with organising this. KK to look into sponsorship.

Last year we donated money to LV charities. VH suggests doing this again. Previously we donated £500 to the four charities, with slightly larger amount to BASIS.

ES happy to support charities, however, don't want to set a precedent every year. Next year maybe look to donate to different charities.

DD suggest £500 donation to LV charities. All agreed. Donations to be done after June event.

Q: NH – WOPEC MECS/Glaucoma OSCE – is there an appetite for this? Not done one for a while. SAP – very difficult for practitioners who aren't with Specsavers to get MECS contract.

Very hard to organise these events. In the past have found practitioners sign up but then don't pay, meaning the fee must go up for individuals still wanting to participate.

NH says Specsavers are happy to run and support the OSCE's. HM has previously run these.

ES – historically have struggled to get people to sign up, or people sign up but don't attend and then want their money back. Other LOC's have similar problems.

MG – still does WOPEC codes. Lots of people ask for online codes, don't do it, then email Maggie again asking for code. Very few ask for OSCE's. MG suggest including something in the newsletter.

CR – Specsavers have been really good fitting practitioners in. CR thanks NH for his offer for running OSCE's.

Q: KL – told by PES that optometrists need accreditation to do CGS? ES – CGS is very different. KL to email Sana to double check this, copy ES and SAP in.

DD – last OCSE the LOC ran was Sep 2023. Total cost was around £3,000, took £2,000 from optometrists so LOC had to pay £1,000. Suggests in future everyone needs to pay a non-refundable deposit.

ES recommends doing more events to support practitioners. Should be looking at more 'off the wall' CPD content.

If anyone has any suggestions for CPD let VH know.

PB – some LOC's have a whole day of CPD and they are very popular events. Suggests we could do this.

JB offers to run a CPD presentation either for the whole of Essex or at Southend.

RP – at last few LEHN meetings there have been discussions with Suffolk and Norfolk and Wavenley LOC's regarding their study days. These have been tied in with their AGM's. Suffolk did one last year – held a study workshop providing 12 CPD points. Felt 9 CPD points should have been better. Ran from 2-8pm, charged £45 for this. Norfolk and Wavenley had foreign body workshop which was very popular. Also ran a study day alongside their AGM.

ES – talk of running foreign body workshop with Suffolk LOC.

25/10 Chairman report and questions – sent out ahead of meeting

No questions.

25/11 Secretary report and questions – sent out ahead of meeting

No questions.

25/12 Treasurers report and questions – sent out ahead of meeting

Q: MG – paragraph on expenditure. Typo error regarding payment to LOCSU? DD – this was reduced halfway through the quarter. One payment at £3000 and two at £1000. Continuing to pay LOCSU £1000.

ES - changes to NI in April which may have an effect on our finances. ES would be interested to

hear about this.

DD – our NI contribution is lower than would be expected. Gone up from 13.5% to 15%. DD will estimate some figures going forward.

CR – even if you're an exempt employee, the employer still has to pay the NI.

DD – changes have been made to the allowance. Not sure if it will affect the LOC directly. DD will check with accountants.

Discussions regarding pension contributions. Have been told previously we can't offer pensions.

DD – may need to change stat levy in the future to balance finances.

25/13 Clinical lead report and questions – sent out ahead of meeting

ES - lot of conversations tidying things up. Lots of stagnation. Have had some reengagement from BHRUT, first time in five years.

ES will be away for the next month – MG to be stand in whilst ES away.

Q: SAP – is there likely to be a national SPoA? ES – this is highly unlikely.

Q: RP – is there any update on the IP10's? SAP – just waiting for an official answer. SAP to chase this up.

25/14 AOB

RP – update from LEHN meeting 28th October. Someone from macular society said she's been hearing reports of significant treatment delays in some areas. Southend is one of the areas. Patients finding it difficult to get in contact with PALS to chase up treatment.. People waiting 15 weeks for injections, should be every 8 weeks.

ES aware of this in Southend. Huge issues in Southend hospitals with delays. Trying to sort this out. Up to 1000 patients DNA every month at Southend hospital. Southend is one of the biggest areas of certificate of visual impairment in the country and due to the high number of patients, busy phonelines and a new administrative system these have all caused extra pressures and delays.

ES received a letter of complaint from PALS three weeks ago regarding this.

Eye screening for schools – fee's been announced, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

SP – update from LEHN meeting 27th January. RNIB attended – putting ELCO's in lots of hospitals. Looking into primary care as well. Also working with Moorfields. RNIB going through transformation, will be redundancies. Looking at SPoA across whole of England.

Norfolk and Norwich can't have an ECLO as the ECLO has a guide dog, and the guide dog isn't allowed in the hospital due to of health and safety. Only 2 and a half LV clinics in the whole of Essex. Clacton is looking at an Eye Care Centre and a hydroxychloroquine pathway.

On college of Ophthalmologist's website, it states there are hardly any problems with post ops so don't require scheme.

Need to reapply for NHS email. Everyone who has an NHS email address will receive an email from LEHN regarding this.

Discussion around Optometry having full access to everything on patient's records.

Suggestion to do a newsletter about what the LEHN does. DD will be contacted regarding this.

ES discusses POCS pathways.

SAP thanks RP and SP for attending LEHN meetings.

25/15 Next committee meeting

April 23rd, AGM June 18th, July 9th, October 15th

Meeting finished at 9.54pm.

Signed

Sheila Purser

Chairman

30.3.2025