

MECS

(Minor Eye Conditions Service)

A guide for Healthcare Professionals and Practitioners

Since 2017, the Minor Eye Conditions Service (MECS) has been commissioned for patients registered with an Essex GP. Delivered by Primary Eyecare Services, it is designed to support the wider health system, avoiding unnecessary referrals to secondary care and hospital appointments, reducing pressure on GP and hospital services, whilst providing high-quality care close to home.

- MECS is a symptom-based service for patients of any age with a recent onset eye problem, such as sore eyes, red eyes or a visual disturbance.
- MECS is provided by accredited optometrists in local accredited optometry practices/opticians.
- Ask the patient to telephone a MECS-accredited optometry practice of their choice, for triage and an appointment. MECS is not a walk-in service.
- Patients triaged as eligible for the service will be seen within 24 hours if urgent and a few days for a routine appointment.
- Children under 16 will need to be accompanied by an adult.
- Accredited practices details can be found on the [Primary Eyecare Services website](#).
- A downloadable MECS leaflet is available on the website here: [PES-MECs-A5-Leaflet-Jan26.pdf](#)

Patients can be signposted to MECS by GPs, GP practice staff, Pharmacy and 111

Eligibility Criteria

MECS is only for patients with a recent onset symptoms.

✓ Inclusions are:

- Loss of vision including transient loss
- Ocular pain
- Differential diagnosis of red eye
- Corneal abrasions
- Foreign body and emergency contact lens removal
- Dry eye
- Blepharitis
- Epiphora
- Trichiasis
- Differential diagnosis of periorbital lumps and bumps
- Flashes/floaters
- Patient reported sudden onset of field defects
- Sudden onset of blurred vision (consider if a sight test would be more appropriate)

✗ Exclusions are:

- Minor symptoms that may respond to initial self-care
- Patients identified as having severe eye conditions e.g. orbital cellulitis, temporal arteritis
- Eye problems related to herpes zoster
- Adult squints, long standing diplopia
- Removal of suture
- Symptoms that indicate a sight test is more appropriate
- Repeating field tests to aid diagnosis following an eye examination
- Suspected cancers of the eye
- Dry age related macular degeneration
- Diabetic Retinopathy
- More significant ocular pathology requiring specialist referral
- Patients on Hydroxychloroquine treatment

Resources

For Professionals:

[Primary Eyecare Services for Professionals](#)

Local Optical Committee:

Essex LOC – Focusing on a clearer future

Scan the QR code to find your nearest optometry practice providing Minor and Urgent Eye Care Services, or visit: primaryeyecare.co.uk/find-a-practice

