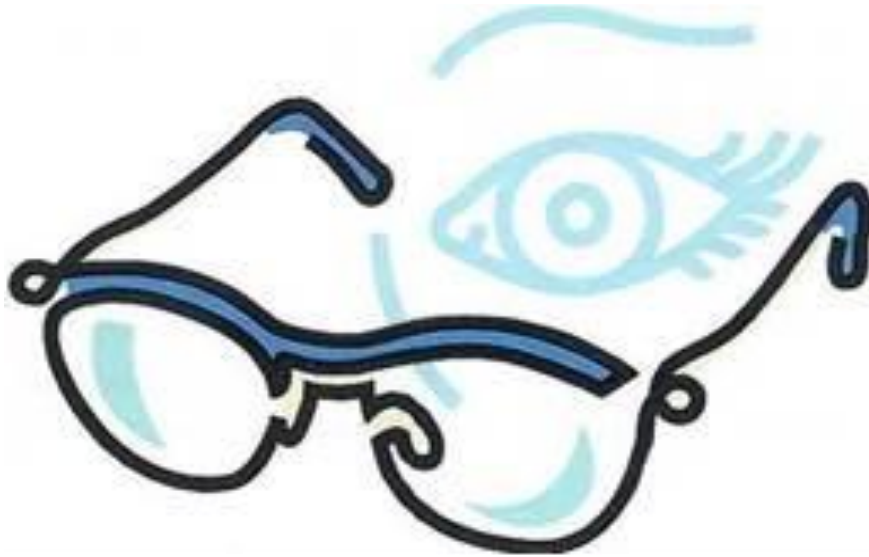




**Department of Health  
and Social Services**



**KEMH Optometry Services**

**A Brief Guide**

**2023**

For further information regarding the optometry services provided at the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital please contact:

**Practice Manager Tel 28021**

or

**Primary Care Medical Secretary 28006**

## **Introduction**

Optometry services in the Falkland Islands are provided by means of a visiting optometrist, contracted by the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital (KEMH). Between two and three visits are expected each calendar year. There is no permanent year-round service available. Services are currently provided from 8b St Mary's Walk.

All prices quoted in this leaflet are correct as of the 2022/23 financial year and are subject to revision on the 1<sup>st</sup> July each year.

## **Routine Sight Tests**

A routine sight (refraction) test appointment costs £38.

You are entitled to receive free routine sight test appointments at intervals determined by the optometrist if:

- You are aged 16 or under;
- You are aged 16, 17 or 18 and are in full-time education;
- You are aged 65 or over;
- You have been diagnosed with diabetes or glaucoma;
- You are in receipt of long-term welfare benefits (e.g. attendance allowance).
- At the request of a GP due to a medication that is prescribed.

**Note:** Unless you fall into one of the categories above, you will be charged for the routine sight test appointment even if you are referred to the optometrist via a GP.

## Recommended minimum sight test intervals

The recommended minimum intervals for sight testing, unless otherwise advised by the optometrist, are as follows;

Age	Clinical Condition	Interval
Under 7	Binocular Vision (BV) / corrected refractive error	6 Months
7 – under 16	Binocular Vision (BV) / or rapidly progressing myopia	6 Months
Under 16	All Patients	1 Year
16 – 74	All Patients	2 Years
75 and over	All Patients	1 Year
Any age	Diabetes	1 Year
Any age	Glaucoma	1 Year
40 and over	Glaucoma – family history*	1 Year
40 and over	Ocular hypertension*	1 Year

\*Patients in these categories are still required to pay for the routine sight test.

You may request to see the optometrist for a routine eye test without referral from a health professional, however appointments during optometry visits are prioritised. All the patients on the scheduled re-call list for the visit will be allocated appointments first. Any remaining appointments will then be offered to people in order from the waiting list.

If you would like your name to be placed on the waiting list to see the visiting optometrist please contact the Primary care Medical Secretary on Tel: 28004

**Please do not place yours or family member's names on to the waiting list unnecessarily.**

Please note the following regarding our appointment process once you have been invited to see the optometrist;

- Unless you are entitled to free routine sight tests you will be need to make payment to KEMH **before** an appointment is booked for you. Payment can be made by card, cash or local cheque at KEMH reception.
- If you are unable to attend your appointment once it has been booked AND you give the hospital at least 72 hours' notice, an alternative appointment may be given to you **if there are still empty appointment places available**. If there are

no appointment places available, your name will be put back onto the waiting list for the next optometry visit.

- If you have paid for an appointment and fail to attend without giving the hospital prior notice, you will need to ask for your name to be put back onto the waiting list. You may not automatically get another appointment during the same visit. You will not be reimbursed for the fee paid for the missed appointment and you will be expected to pay for any further appointment during the same or subsequent optometry visit.

### **Spectacle provision (frames and lenses)**

Charges for spectacles are made as follows:

Frames – cost price plus £5 handling charge

Lenses – at cost price

### **Entitlement to a voucher towards the cost of spectacles**

The following entitled patients are eligible to receive one **FREE** pair of **spectacles** (lenses and basic frames).

Or two pairs in the case of both distance and reading glasses being recommended by the optometrist.

- Children under 16 years – every year as necessary;
- Children 16, 17 or 18 in full time education – at the recommendation of the optometrist;
- People aged 65 or over – every 2 years as necessary;
- People under the age of 65 in receipt of long-term welfare benefits (e.g. attendance allowance) – every 2 years as necessary;
- People with complex eye conditions requiring frequent refraction changes – at the recommendation of the optometrist. This is defined as those with an over 10 dioptre prescription in any meridian.

The discount received will cover the complete value of a basic pair of spectacles. **If designer frames are chosen the difference in price to the basic spectacles will be payable.**

## **Repairs**

Some repairs that can be completed locally when the optometrist is out of the islands e.g. replacements screws, nose pads and minor adjustment to spectacle sides;

- All patients – free of charge

Repairs that have to be sent away to the UK;

- All patients – charged at full cost

### **Please be aware:**

The quality of spectacles and lenses that are available for purchase from 'on-line' sites vary considerably. Repairs to spectacles purchased in this way may not be able to be achieved either locally or by being sent away to UK.

## **Dispensing activities**

The visiting optometrist will undertake appropriate minor repairs and adjustments to existing pairs of spectacles. They will also take orders for new spectacles against an existing lens prescription if the optometrist considers it to still be a date. The optometrist assistant can advise on frame selection, no appointment is necessary.

**Note:** this type of appointment DOES NOT include any type of vision test.

## **Other optometry services**

As well as routine eye sight testing (refraction) the visiting optometrist provides other optometric services during their visits. These include screening and monitoring for patients suffering from medical conditions which can cause harm to their vision.

If you are eligible to be included in the screening or monitoring service you will automatically be invited to attend an appointment for the test either separately from your routine sight test or offered one during your routine sight test.

## Diabetic Retinopathy Screening/ Digital Imaging

If you are diabetic you will be invited to attend a diabetic retinopathy screening appointment as frequently as the optometrist recommends. This is usually once a year but, in some cases, may be every 6 months.

The screening test involves examining the back of the eyes and taking photographs of the retina, which is the light – sensitive layer of cells at the back of the eye that converts light into electrical signals. Poor control of blood sugar levels, cholesterol and blood pressure can cause damage to the blood vessels in the retina and stop it working properly. In extreme cases this damage can lead to blindness.

Although the screening itself is a relatively short process, around 10 minutes, you need your pupils to be dilated (opened) with drops before the screening procedure takes place. You will therefore be at the hospital for approx. **40 minutes** in total.

**Important:** You should not drive, due to the risk of vision distortion from your pupil dilation for around 3 hours following your appointment.

## Visual fields analysis

If you are known to have or suspected of having glaucoma, the optometrist will perform a visual field analysis test in addition to your routine sight test. The test takes between **10-15 minutes** and is performed as frequently as the optometrist recommends.

The screening tests are most commonly used to measure your peripheral (side) vision. This is because glaucoma usually causes vision to be lost from the outer rim of the eye, slowly working inwards towards the centre.

When giving this test, the optometrist will ask you to stare at an object in the centre of your line vision, usually their eyes. They will then ask you to say when and you see an object moving into your peripheral vision.

## **Contact Lens Service**

### **Introduction**

Contact lenses come in several types and modalities of wear. Hard, gas permeable, and soft materials; designed to be used occasionally, daily or continuously. They are manufactured all over the world to many different standards.

In the Falkland Islands contact lenses must be considered an optional secondary form of visual correction to spectacles due to difficulties of supply and continuing care. There is no permanent optometry service on the islands.

The service will be able to examine people wearing any type of lens but technical advice concerning the lens can only be done with lenses available in the UK and listed in the Association of Contact Lens Manufacturers year book.

Only soft, daily or occasional wear lenses can be supplied via KEMH. There is a limited fitting range at KEMH. for either refitting existing users or fitting new users.

### **Information**

All manufacturer's lenses are slightly different in design and material so it is unwise and possibly unsafe to swap lenses without professional advice even if the dimensions appear the same.

Contact lenses even though considered a safe form of visual correction do have risks associated with them. Misusing your lenses against manufacturers or professional advice increases these risks considerably.

Not everyone is suitable for contact lenses and not everyone finds them comfortable or convenient.

Loss of contact lenses or infection preventing wear usually happens at the most inconvenient time. Your glasses must be up to the job if you cannot use your lenses.

People who choose to wear contact lenses need be aware of the risks of wearing lenses in these circumstances and see the visiting optometrist for check-ups at the frequencies recommended.

It is recommended that contact lens wearer have a routine eye test on an annual basis

and an aftercare review either six-monthly or annually depending on the type of lenses they wear.

If you have made the informed choice and wish to wear contact lenses the visiting optometrist will provide the following services;

### Service

Three types of appointment are offered.

1; **Examination of current lenses in the eye**, lasting approximately 20 minutes. An up to date spectacle prescription is required and details (ideally packaging) of contact lenses worn, this must include, manufacturer, lens name, size and power. **The cost of this is £30.00**

2; **Refit new lenses for an existing contact lens wearer** (where there are no lens details or lenses available) or simply the lens needs refitting. This again requires an up to date spectacle prescription. A double appointment is required, one to measure the eye and insert lenses and a second approx. 20 minutes later to assess the fit and power of the lens. **The cost of this is £60.00**

3; **A new fitting of contact lenses**. This requires an up to date spectacle prescription. 2 sessions will be required, the first one consisting of two 20 minute appointments with a 20 minute gap for the lenses to settle down. The second session will be about an hour to teach you how to insert and remove your lenses and also care and handling of your lenses. **The cost of this will be £150.00**

If you are unsure what type of appointment you need, or if you require advice please speak to the optometrist to discuss your needs.

No stock is kept at KEMH, so all lenses will come from the UK. Prices vary depending on type of lens so will be advised at the time.