



THE COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

DOCET

Activity and Expenditure Report 2020-21

July 2021

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Executive summary

The Directorate of Continuing Education and Training (DOCET) was established in 1989 and since then the College of Optometrists has administered funds from the four UK Health Departments for the provision of continuing education and training for UK optometrists.

For the DOCET finance year 2020-21 the total of £579,379 was made available in the form of grants from the four nations. See section two for details of expenditure against allocated funds.

Activity in 2020-21 has focused on producing and publishing new online learning content and on marketing the content on [docet.info](https://www.docet.info), DOCET's learning management system (LMS).

On the one hand, the pandemic resulted in exceptional engagement with DOCET's online content including:

- Website visits (26% increase from last year)
- Enrolments (57% increase from last year), and
- Completions (59% increase from last year).

On the other hand, it had an impact on the schedule of some of our projects, particularly where we had planned filming in optometric practices. Nonetheless, we still published:

- Two new courses on cataract and AMD
- Eight episodes of the DOCET podcast Sound Optometry, and
- Three webinars.

In total this provided 23 new CET points from April 2020 to March 2021:

- 18 non-interactive
- Five interactive.

We also reviewed and updated four of our existing courses (10 non-interactive CET points) and commissioned three further online courses. We currently offer all General Optical Council (GOC) registered optometrists 43 CET points covering all the required GOC Stage 2 competencies for optometrists plus a number of competencies for therapeutic optometrists.

Project development activity and publications during this year reflected the priority list agreed by the DOCET Council for the period of 2019-21 rather than producing materials updating optometrists on the changing landscape following the pandemic and COVID-19. We proceeded to work on topics such as: advances in contact lenses; the young eye; and children's vision and immunology.

Highlights this year were the launch of the DOCET podcast Sound Optometry, a webinar with record numbers on papilloedema with Dr Denize Atan and the publication of courses on cataract and AMD. For a detailed overview of DOCET projects please see section four of this report.

We routinely collect feedback from optometrists who complete CET exercises and feedback shows very high user satisfaction. Out of the 12,464 responses we collected: 98% rated the CET material overall as either excellent or good; 93% thought that the learning objectives were fully met; and the net promoter score (NPS) is 70 for recommending DOCET training to a colleague.

1. Introduction

DOCET is a committee established by The College of Optometrists, at the request of the UK Health Departments. DOCET's aim is to improve the eye health and eye care of the population through the provision of high-quality CET for all optometrists registered with the General Optical Council (GOC) in the UK.

DOCET's programme of activity is made possible by shared funding from the four UK nations, which is in proportion both to the numbers of optometrists within each nation and the size of their general populations. This equates to the following approximate percentages: England 83%, Scotland 9%, Wales 6%, and Northern Ireland 2%.

DOCET's provision ensures that all GOC-registered optometrists across the UK are provided with access to high quality, impartial and comprehensive continuing education and training resources.

DOCET's Terms of Reference are to warrant that funds are used towards ensuring that optometrists keep up to date with technological and scientific advances and assisting them in acquiring the necessary skills to improve their eye care services.

Since the introduction in 2005 of the GOC's mandatory CET scheme for optometrists, the focus of DOCET's output has been on maintaining current entry-level competence for optometrists, although the aims of DOCET are broad enough to allow for other priorities to be identified.

DOCET provides optometrists not only with regular newly published CET resources, but also with ongoing access in perpetuity to a comprehensive and expanding bank of past DOCET materials made freely available through the learning management system (LMS).

DOCET's priorities and activities are agreed by all stakeholders who make up the DOCET Council, which meets twice a year. A smaller Executive Committee monitors progress and advises on activity on a more regular basis throughout the year.

Through the meetings of the DOCET Council and the work of the Executive Committee, the training advisers, management and administrative staff, DOCET has sought to ensure that its activities respond to the changing needs of optometrists practising in the UK. DOCET aims to maintain the highest standards of quality, impartiality and relevance in the CET it provides.

Sound Optometry: Episode 6 - Medical Retina

"As always, I find the DOCET podcasts useful, relevant, informative and practical."

Independent optometrist



2. Expenditure against allocation for 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

2.1 DOCET funding breakdown

The total of £579,379 is the sum of the grants made by the four nations for 2020-21 serving all 16,283 optometrists currently registered with the GOC in the UK (GOC figures as at March 2021).

Table 1 – DOCET funding breakdown 2020-21

England	£477,599	83%
Scotland	£53,000	9%
Wales	£36,180	6%
NI	£12,600	2%
Total	£579,379	100%

2.2 CET event funding

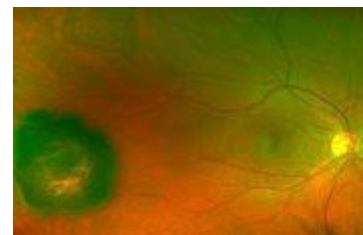
Following consultation with the DOCET Council in 2020 the decision was taken to discontinue the provision of the CET event funding in favour of extending the online learning available to all optometrists through webinars and our new podcast, alongside our existing online offering.

CET events budget: We have allocated a budget of £5,000 to wind down the provision in 2020-21.

Retinal and Choroidal Lesions in Daily Practice (October 2020 Webinar)

“Professor Heimann is amazing!! I loved this lecture and his passionate and engaging presentation. One of my favourite lectures of 2020. Thank you so much. As optometrists, we do see many pigmented lesions. It can be anxiety provoking to be able to assess, tentatively diagnose, and manage correctly because this is a potentially serious area. There is the responsibility of taking the best care of our patient coupled with the responsibility of not over-exhausting busy eye clinics with false referrals. Thank you for making this complex topic easier to understand and investigate in practice.

Independent optometrist



2.3 DOCET expenditure report 2020-21

Table 3 (below) shows a summary of expenditure against priority areas. As at 31 March 2021 the whole of the £579,379 has been committed to specific projects. Where projects span more than one financial year they are completed with part of the next year's funding.

Table 3 – DOCET expenditure report 2020-21 (incl VAT)

Activities 2020-21	Allocated	Expenditure 31/03/21	Reallocated Funds	Carried Forward
CET events	5,000	5,410	-410	
Distance learning projects				
Sound Optometry	9,000	5,017		3,983
Cataract	31,000	25,000	6,000	
AMD update	10,000	7,799	2,201	
Young Eye: Module 2	20,000	0		20,000
Contact Lenses: Module 3	50,000	22,496		27,504
Young Eye: Module 3	54,000	39,998		14,002
Contact Lenses: Module 4	60,000	81,769	-21,769	
Headaches	30,000	0		30,000
Immunology	30,000	32,487	-2,487	
Webinar	15,000	3,316	11,600	84
Redevelopment	9,379	0		9,379
Training Advisers	53,000	30,617		22,383
Contingency	4,000	0	4000	
Online maintenance & development	60,000	54,661		5,339
Meetings & subsistence	1,000	135	865	
College administration fee	108,000	108,000		
Marketing Communications	30,000	17,121		12,879
Subtotal	£579,379	£433,826	0	£145,553
Carried forward from 2019/20				
Contact Lenses: Module 3	1,669	1,669		
Young Eye: Module 2	879	0		879
Training Advisers	11,551	11,551		
Sound Optometry	21,376	21,376		
Online Maintenance & dev	1,757	1,757		
Marketing Communications	12,915	12,915		
Subtotal	£50,147	£49,268	0	£879
Total	£629,526	£483,094	£0	£146,432

2.4 Variation to expenditure

2.4.1 Young Eye: Module 2

The second part of the young eye series was commissioned in 2018-19. We allowed an overall budget of £100,000 for this project and we spent £79,660 of the allocated budget by March 2020. Although work on the project had continued in 2020-21, in March 2021 the project was not finalised due to delays in the animation process outside our control and the completion budget of £20,879 has been carried forward to 2021-22.

2.4.2 Contact Lenses: Module 4

The fourth part of the contact lens series was commissioned in 2020-21 when the decision was made to delay the start of the headaches project and to work instead on the next contact lens course. The proposed budget for this project is £97,400 with £60,000 committed for 2020-21. We spent £81,769 in 2020-21. We were able to cover the extra costs of £21,769 with savings from the cataract project, the webinar recordings and the contingency fund.

2.4.3 Headaches

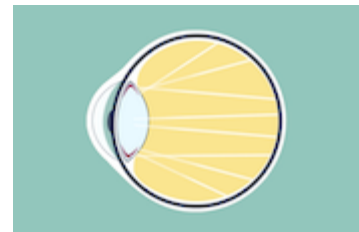
We briefed one of the DOCET approved agencies about the headaches project in March 2020 with a view to holding a meeting to discuss the proposal in April 2020. The proposed budget for this project is £100,000. As this project relies on expert advice from NHS frontline staff who were unavailable due to the pandemic, we made the decision to delay the start and work instead on the fourth module in the contact lens series, see Contact Lenses Module 4 above.

2.4.4 For more details on the above information on **variations to expenditure**, please see Appendix A.

Cataract: Part One – Introduction

I thought the course was brilliant. It summarised the key knowledge around cataract whilst providing insight into other key areas that optometrists can consider when following through a patient's ocular examination and history taking. It was very insightful and a good refresher. Good speakers!

Locum optometrist



3. Programme management

3.1 Risk and governance

DOCET funds are maintained as a restricted fund of the College of Optometrists and high-level risks pertaining to DOCET activity are identified and addressed as part of the College's three-year strategic plan. Individual project-related risks and issues are managed and monitored as part of the work of DOCET's Executive Committee, reporting to DOCET Council.

3.2 DOCET committees

Under its Terms of Reference, the DOCET Council meets twice yearly while the Executive Committee meets four times per year. The requisite elections and nominations are made on an ongoing basis.

3.3 Strategy, activity and priorities

The areas of focus during the pandemic in 2020-21 has been to produce new, engaging and high-quality content for optometrists in three different formats: as interactive online learning content, webinars and the new monthly podcast Sound Optometry.

In February / March 2020 DOCET took the decision to focus on the production of core programmes as agreed by the DOCET Executive Committee and DOCET Council and not produce materials updating optometrists on the changing landscape following the pandemic and COVID-19. We considered this outside our brief and agreed that the College, along with other key stakeholders, were leading on this important issue.

The DOCET team and DOCET Executive Committee continued to review priorities for the 2019-21 CET cycle. Although DOCET's funding is only approved on an annual basis, it is necessary to plan projects at least 18–24 months in advance. This ensures continuity for our learners and allows for project development time.

We have continued to create interactive learning content which offers users high-quality video content, images and graphics supported by explanations and descriptions displayed in bite-size sections. The content prompts users to test their learning with knowledge questions or activities at regular intervals. We keep individual CET courses to one hour's duration and release longer courses in several parts, each is one hour in duration. We stagger these over a period of weeks, which helps us to engage with our audience more frequently.

We launched our new podcast Sound Optometry, replacing the audio course Advances in Eyecare. We contracted Michelle Hanratty, IP optometrist, as a Podcast Adviser and host and Boffin Media as the agency to produce the podcasts. The first podcast was published in June 2020 and by the end of March 2021 all episodes had a combined listenership of 10,800 on the podcast platform audio boom.

The training advisers Philippa Shaw and Catherine Viner work as optometrist experts on the various multimedia projects supported by Louise Munns and Theresa Adamson as assessors for the interactive CET. Danny O'Connor and Tiffany Joiner have worked as online support on the course build and maintenance of the Learning Management System. Bettina Noelle-Fox, CPD Manager and Chee Han Tang, DOCET Administrator, manage DOCET on behalf of the College supported by Barbara Mason, Head of CPD.

During 2020-21 we offered a combination of new and updated courses, along with three webinars, and eight episodes of Sound Optometry, all totalling 45 CET points. The library now contains 89 programmes. Full details of distance learning projects undertaken in 2020-21 are provided in section 4 and Appendices B and C of this report.

We continue to review and improve the LMS to ensure it remains user-friendly and that full use is made of the system's functionality.

We have engaged in a variety of marketing activities. A breakdown of all marketing and communication activities are shown in the next section.

3.4 Marketing and communications

In 2020-21, DOCET focused on a number of key areas in marketing and communication. We have continued to engage with optometrists on social media via LinkedIn and Twitter and continued to work with our network of partner organisations and large employers to help promote DOCET courses.

3.4.1 Social media

We promoted our CET courses, webinars and podcast episodes on social media. We worked with an external agency on expanding our online presence on social media and focused our main attention on LinkedIn. We succeeded in increasing the number of followers on LinkedIn by 63% from 328 in April 2020 to 536 in March 2021.

3.4.2 Employers and partner organisations

We partner with a range of employers to encourage their staff to use DOCET courses and supplement their in-house training. In particular ASDA and Boots promote DOCET on their internal learning platforms.

We prepare press packs for all our core programmes which have been shared with Health and Social Care Board Northern Ireland, NHS Education for Scotland and Optometry Wales who have included information about DOCET courses in their newsletters.

3.4.3 Conferences

Although face-to-face conferences were cancelled in 2020, DOCET took part in the College of Optometrists Bitesize online conference in March 2021 and we created a Visual Recognition Test (VRICS) exercise to complement the OCT workshop during the event.

3.4.4 Promotion

We sent Mailchimp alerts to all database contacts for newly published programmes and successfully incorporated audio and video trailers within these mailshots.

We promoted DOCET's online resources in the College newsletter and during the Bitesize online conference.

We produced one page advertorials in Acuity, promoting the cataract course in the winter and Sound Optometry in the spring edition.

4. DOCET projects

From April 2020 to March 2021 we published two new courses on cataract and AMD, eight episodes of the DOCET podcast Sound Optometry and three webinars, totalling 23 CET points (18 non-interactive and five interactive). We also reviewed and updated four of our existing courses (10 non-interactive CET points) and commissioned three further online courses. We currently offer all GOC registered optometrists 43 CET points covering all the required GOC Stage 2 competencies for optometrists plus a number of competencies for therapeutic optometrists.

In addition, there is a bank of past training materials, which has been made freely available to optometrists in the video and audio library section of the LMS.

Please see the summary of distance learning projects below. For further details on each course please refer to Appendix B for Sound Optometry and Appendix C for multimedia projects and webinars.

4.1 Summary of DOCET podcast Sound Optometry

- Episode 1: Ocular Allergies - Jun 2020
- Episode 2: Papilloedema – Jul 2020
- Episode 3: Flashes and Floaters – Sep 2020
- Episode 4: Binocular Vision – Oct 2020
- Episode 5: Acute Red Eye – Nov 2020
- Episode 6: Medical Retina – Jan 2021
- Episode 7: Speaking Up – Feb 2021
- Episode 8: Cataract – Mar 2021.

4.2 Summary of DOCET multimedia projects

4.2.1 Summary of webinars

- Effective remote patient consultation – Jun 2020
- Retinal and choroidal lesions in daily practice – Oct 2020
- Papilloedema: What a headache - Feb 2021.

4.2.2 Multimedia (completed)

Cataract

- Part 1: Introduction (Definition and classification; pathophysiology; risk factors and incidence; assessment and referral criteria)
- Part 2: Management and treatment principles and surgical techniques
- Part 3: Post-treatment (Postoperative assessment and postoperative pathways).

AMD

- Part 1: What is AMD?
- Part 2: Physiology, pathology and classification
- Part 3: Assessment, management and referral
- Part 4: Patient Case Studies
- Part 5: Treating AMD.

Other

- OCT Visual recognition test (VRICS) – Medical retina and vitreo-retinal.

4.2.3 Multimedia (updated and republished)

- Examining Patients with Learning Disabilities – 3 parts
- Fitting Astigmatic Patients – 2 parts
- Modern Imaging in Eye Care – 3 parts
- Young Eye: Embryology – 2 parts.

4.2.4 Multimedia (commissioned/in development)

- Contact Lenses: Module 3 – Children
- Contact Lenses: Module 4 – Presbyopia
- Headaches (on hold)
- Immunology
- Young Eye: Module 2 - Development of vision (birth to 18 years)
- Young Eye: Module 3 – Assessment.

5. Annual data and user feedback

5.1 Annual data review

During the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 there has been exceptional engagement on our online learning site by the target user group of all UK registered optometrists. 8,816 optometrists visited the site at least once, compared to 6,970 in the previous year, an increase of 26%.

The quarterly learning site visits by all learners were also higher than the numbers in the previous year with an average increase of 18.5% in site visits compared to last year. (488,249 in 2020-21 compared to 411,982 in 2019-20).

We had 25,714 course enrolments in learning, ie optometrists viewing content, participating in learning activities and improving their knowledge and skills. This is an increase of 57% from 16,429 enrolments in the previous year.

We had 15,625 course completions ie optometrists completing courses and gaining CET points. This is an increase of 59% from 9,840 completions in the previous year.

The most visited courses were: *Safeguarding for optometrists* (both courses) with 6,392 enrolments and 5,904 completions, followed by *Glaucoma* with 2,580 enrolments and 1,740 completions and *Cataract* with 2,424 enrolments and 1,083 completions.

In addition 2,385 optometrists attended our webinar on *Papilloedema: What a headache* with Dr Denize Atan in February 2021; 934 optometrists attended our webinar on *Retinal and Choroidal Lesions in Daily Practice*, with Professor Heinrich Heimann in October 2020 and 1,445 optometrists attended our webinar on *Effective Remote Patient Consultations* with Dr Michael Johnson in June 2020.

Please see the Annual Data Report 2020-21 for further details.

5.2 User feedback

We routinely collect feedback from optometrists who complete CET exercises and feedback shows very high user satisfaction. Out of the 12,464 responses we collected: 98% rated the CET material overall as either excellent or good; 93% thought that the learning objectives were fully met; and the net promoter score (NPS) is 70 for recommending DOCET training to a colleague.

For user comments please see the quotes in this report.

We continue to analyse user feedback on all courses on a regular basis and use the findings to inform further developments.

Glaucoma: Part Five - Visual Fields, Management and Referrals

“The series has been really great. It gave me a very detailed outlook on what to expect from OCT and fields. Coupled with all the other knowledge learnt from previous parts, it will provide a very strong backbone for future management of patients. I especially enjoyed all the diagrams and pictures.”



Optometrist in multiple setting

6. Conclusion

In 2020-21 we made the decision to remain focused on providing a dynamic range of core clinical content in a variety of formats while the College focused on the changing pandemic landscape. DOCET's decision to provide continuing education and training was rewarded with the exceptional increase in course engagement from our core audience.

We launched our new podcast Sound Optometry which very quickly gained a strong following and we ran three very successful webinars.

We expanded our reach on social media and collaborated with our network of multiples and partner organisations to promote DOCET.

The user feedback from all users completing CET is consistently positive.

The focus for DOCET in 2021-22 will be to move successfully from a provider who produces high-quality CET to one that offers the same quality in their CPD provision and promotes a move towards lifelong learning. This will include a new series of nine podcasts, a range of webinars, alongside a variety of multimedia online resources. We will continue to support our learners in developing their clinical skills and fulfil their professional CPD requirements. This in turn will enable optometrists to deliver the highest standard of care in a professional landscape that is undergoing change as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and workforce developments in the sector.

Appendix A: Variation to expenditure

1. CET events

The funding request in 2020-21 exceeded the budget allocation for CET event funding by £410. We were able to offset this with underspend and savings in other areas, such as webinars.

2. AMD (Age Related Macular Degeneration) update

The AMD programme was delivered with a saving of £2,201.

3. Cataract

The cataract programme was delivered with a saving of £6,000.

4. Contact Lenses: Module 3

The children's contact lens programme was commissioned in 2018-19. We allowed an overall budget of £100,000 for this project and allocated £50,000 for 2019-20. We spent £48,330 in 2019-20 and £1,670 of committed funds were carried forward to 2020-21. We spent £22,496 in 2020-21. The remaining budget of £27,504 will be carried forward to 2021-22. The project is scheduled for completion in September 2021.

5. Contact Lenses: Module 4

The fourth part of the contact lens series was commissioned in 2020-21 when the decision was made to delay the start of the headaches project and to work instead on the next contact lens course. The proposed budget for this project is £97,400. We held the meeting to discuss the contact lens project on presbyopia in May 2020. The budget allocation for this project is £100,000 with £60,000 committed for 2020-21. We spent £81,769 in 2020-21. We were able to cover the extra costs of £21,769 with savings from the cataract project, the webinar recordings and the contingency fund. The project is scheduled for completion in November 2021 with the remaining budget of £15,600.

6. Headaches

We briefed one of the DOCET approved agencies about the headaches project in March 2020 with a view to holding a meeting to discuss the proposal in April 2020. The proposed budget for this project is £100,000. As this project relies on expert advice from NHS frontline staff who were unavailable due to the pandemic, we made the decision to delay the start and work instead on the fourth module in the contact lens series, see Contact Lenses Module 4 above. The headaches project was scheduled to start in October 2020 with a budget allocation of £30,000 for 2020-21 however due to the ongoing pandemic a decision was made to delay the start further. £30,000 of committed funds is carried forward to 2021-22 and the project is scheduled to start at the end of July 2021.

7. Immunology

The Immunology Project Part 1 was commissioned in 2020-21. We allowed an overall budget of £65,000 for this project and allocated £30,000 for 2020-21. We

spent £32,487 in 2020-21. We were able to cover the extra costs of £2,487 with savings on the AMD project. The project is scheduled for completion in January 2022 with the remaining budget of £32,550.

8. Redevelopment

We allocated a budget of £9,379 to course redevelopment in 2020-21. Although we updated four of our existing courses, the cost for those updates were covered under Training Advisers and Support and Online Maintenance and Development budget lines. £9,379 of committed funds will be carried forward to 2021-22.

9. Sound Optometry

The final episode of Sound Optometry for 2020-21 was scheduled for publication in April 2021 and the committed fund of £3,983 carried forward to 2021-22 covers the cost for Episode 9.

10. Webinars

We allocated a budget of £15,000 to the delivery of three webinars filmed in a studio in 2020-21. Due to the pandemic all three webinars were filmed remotely resulting in a saving of £11,600.

11. Young Eye: Module 2

The second part of the young eye series was commissioned in 2018-19 after completion of the first part on embryology and genetics. We allowed an overall budget of £100,000 for this project and allocated £30,000 for 2018-19. We spent £19,900 in 2018-19 and £10,639 of committed funds were carried forward to 2019-20. In 2019-20 we spent the committed funds of £10,639 and £49,121 of the allocated budget of £50,000. The remaining £879 were carried forward to 2020-21. Although work on the project had continued in 2020-21, in March 2021 the project was not finalised and the completion budget of £20,879 has been carried forward to 2021-22. The project is scheduled for completion in July 2021.

12. Young Eye: Module 3

The third part of the young eye series was commissioned in March 2020, we allowed an overall budget of £100,000 for this project and allocated £54,000 for 2020-21 for this project. We spent £39,998 in 2020-21 and £14,002 of committed funds were carried forward to 2021-22. The project is scheduled for completion in February 2022 with the remaining budget of £46,000 and the committed funds of £14,002.

13. Training Advisers

Filming restrictions due to the pandemic resulted in delays on some of the core programmes and less input was required from the training adviser allocated to these project in 2020-21 than we had anticipated. Therefore, we were able to make some savings in the budget. £22,383 of committed funds will be carried forward to 2021-22.

14. Print, mailing, marcomms

As discussed in the Council Meeting in February 2021, DOCET requires a brand refresh due to the GOC moving from a CET to a CPD scheme. The committed funds of £12,879 carried forward to 2021-22 are allocated for the brand refresh.

Appendix B: DOCET projects – podcast

1. Sound Optometry

Reflecting user feedback, Sound Optometry has moved away from covering solely advances in ocular research and latest technological developments as previously offered in our audio programme *Advances in Eyecare*. We now focus on topics more closely related to everyday optometric practice. There are nine episodes spread across the year with 20-minute interviews. Most episodes contain a patient case study and an expert interview around the case study. The interviews are accompanied by reading materials for those users who would like to gain CET points.

1.1. Episode 1: Ocular allergies – Relieving the itch

In the first episode we explore how patients with ocular allergy get clinical advice and treatment. We hear from a community pharmacist who is often the first port of call for an allergy sufferer before Michelle Hanratty discusses ocular allergy in more detail with IP optometrist Dr Peter Frampton.

Issued in: June 2020 with one non-interactive CET point.

1.2. Episode 2: Papilloedema – A swell of concern

In the second episode of Sound Optometry we hear about a clinical scenario where papilloedema was detected in a young girl. Michelle Hanratty then discusses the topic of papilloedema, its presentation, causes and potential treatment with consultant neuro-ophthalmologist Naz Raouf.

Issued in: July 2020 with one non-interactive CET point.

1.3. Episode 3: Flashes and floaters – Retinal detachment waiting to happen

In the third episode Michelle Hanratty is joined by Stephen Lash, consultant vitreo-retinal surgeon, and Roshni Kanabar, clinical and regulatory advisor for the Association of Optometrists (AOP), to discuss how to manage suspected retinal detachment.

Issued in: September 2020 with one non-interactive CET point.

1.4. Episode 4: Binocular vision – The trouble with double

In this episode we hear of a scenario where a sixth nerve palsy was detected in an urgent remote consultation with an elderly patient. We also explore methods that optometrists have at their disposal to detect and manage binocular vision problems in children.

Issued in: October 2020 with one non-interactive CET point.

1.5. Episode 5: Acute red eye – Stay calm and keep it simple

In this episode optometrist Robert Longhurst reports an increased incidence of viral conjunctivitis-related red eye during lockdown and consultant ophthalmologist David Lockington explores the investigation and management of acute red eye.

Issued in: November 2020 with one non-interactive CET point.

1.6. Episode 6: Medical retina – Investigations and injections

The focus of this episode of Sound Optometry is wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD) where Michelle Hanratty explores the referral, investigation and management of wet AMD with consultant ophthalmologist Rupal Morjaria.

Issued in: January 2021 with one non-interactive CET point.

1.7. Episode 7: Speaking up – Putting patients first

In this episode, Michelle discusses the concepts of Speaking Up with David Hewlett, Group Director at FODO; and our producer, Richard Hollingham speaks to Julie Breen, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian for Tees LOC, who outlines her role within primary care optometry.

Issued in: February 2021 with one non-interactive CET point.

1.8. Episode 8: Cataract, A tale of two surgeons

In March Michelle speaks to Arijit Mitra, consultant ophthalmologist about his personal experience with cataract and Ajai Tyagi, who gives insight from a surgical viewpoint. The episode concludes with some advice from both surgeons on the referral and postoperative care of cataract patients.

Issued in: March 2021 with one non-interactive CET point.

Sound Optometry: Episode 4 - Binocular Vision

“The DOCET PDF on examining children is an extremely valuable document to refer back to for normative values and tips and tricks to help with examining children. I will definitely be utilising the information gained from this in practice. It was very beneficial to hear different BV case scenarios and the outcomes of them. This is something that has encouraged me to learn further and consolidate the knowledge I already have in order to provide the best and most effective care for my patients.”

Optometrist in a multiple setting



Appendix C: DOCET projects – multimedia and webinars

1. Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD)

This course on age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is designed for optometrists to become confident in diagnosing patients with AMD, know when it is appropriate to refer to the hospital eye service and be able to support people with AMD and visual impairment over the long-term.

The course is split into five units:

- What is AMD?
- Physiology, pathology and classification
- Assessment, management and referral
- Patient case studies
- Treatment.

The project is complete and the first part was launched in April 2021. For completion of the whole course there are four non-interactive and one interactive CET point.

2. Cataract

Cataract is one of the most common ocular pathologies encountered in community practice and we want to ensure all optometrists are up-to-date on current practice and treatments. NICE guidelines were published in October 2017 and optometrists are increasingly being involved in pre- and post-cataract care.

The course is split into three parts:

- Part One: Definition, classification, physiology and pathology
- Part Two: Management and treatment
- Part Three: Post-operative assessment and management.

The project is complete and the first part was launched in November 2020. For completion of the whole course there are two non-interactive and one interactive CET point.

3. The Contact Lenses Series

To give the best advice and recommendations to a patient, an optometrist needs to understand a wide range of lenses and solutions and how best to manage contact lens patients in the context of modern lifestyles. DOCET published *Contact Lenses: Core Skills – Fitting and Aftercare* in February 2017 and *Fitting Astigmatic Patients* in April 2018.

The focus of the next two modules will be on fitting children with contact lenses and presbyopic contact lens fitting. Future modules will deal with specific types of patients and conditions that may be encountered covering the following key areas:

- Materials and complications 1 (soft lenses, materials and properties and managing CL complications including CL discomfort)

- CL complication 2 (solutions and compliance, inflammation, overnight wear, managing allergy)
- Complex contact lens fitting (an introduction).

3.1. Fitting Children with Contact Lenses

This contact lens programme focuses on fitting children with contact lenses (CLs). There has been a recent focus on fitting children with CLs and myopia control, and it will be useful to provide an update for optometrists. However, the focus will be on fitting children in general and will not be a programme on myopia control.

The programme will be in four parts:

- Why offer contact lenses and why start early?
- How contact lenses can provide visual benefits compared to spectacles
- How you can help children to get the best from their contact lenses
- Dotting the 'I's and crossing the 'T's – best practice and legal requirements.

Filming for the project was affected by the lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Expert interviews have been recorded remotely and patients provided their own footage in collaboration with the production company. The course is in the final stages of course build and is scheduled for publication in the autumn of 2021.

3.2. Presbyopic Contact Lens Fitting

Many optometrists are reluctant to fit presbyopes with contact lenses. This programme will challenge some of the perceived barriers to fitting older patients needing more than one refractive solution, and will provide an understanding of the range of products that have improved fitting success rates in this group of patients.

The areas we plan to cover are:

- Why and when should you offer contact lenses to presbyopes?
- Advantages and disadvantages of different forms of correction
- Different multifocal designs and fitting tips
- Lens choices and communication with patients
- Common after-care issues.

This project has replaced the programme on headaches. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic it has been difficult to access subject matter experts for the programme on headaches (see 5) and we have therefore postponed the production on headaches and accelerated the production of the course on presbyopic contact lens fitting. The first draft of the content for three units and three patient case studies has been completed.

4. Effective remote patient consultation – Webinar

This recorded lecture by Dr Michael Johnson helps increase confidence in examining patients remotely, ensuring they are managed safely and referred when required. It covers the key points to consider during a remote consultation including:

- Remote consultation etiquette
- Key questions to ask
- Red flag symptoms and related ocular disease

- Referrals and management
- Patient advice and follow-up
- Record keeping.

The webinar ran in June 2020 with one interactive point available and the recording is available with one non-interactive CET point on the LMS.

5. Headaches

This is an area of concern to optometrists following some high profile cases; it is also one of the most common presenting symptoms for optometrists. Due to the strain on frontline staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, and as this course relies on expert input from a neurologist and a GP, we have postponed the start of this project until later in the year and have instead accelerated the start of the fourth module in the contact lens series on presbyopic contact lens fitting (see 3.2).

Content to include:

- Classification
- Prevalence
- Differential diagnosis:
 - Considering different types and causes of headache
 - Primary (migraine, tension, cluster and other)
 - Secondary (due to underlying cause eg trauma, infection, substance withdrawal, disorder of eyes, psychiatric disorder, facial pain and other)
 - History and symptoms
 - Investigation
- Management.

6. Immunology

Immunology is an area of interest to optometrists since many allergic conditions can be dealt with in practice and under MECS schemes. We are planning to cover the topic in two parts:

6.1. Part One:

- General background to the immune system
 - How this relates to the eye
 - Why and how it goes wrong.
- Allergic eye disease, for each condition including prevalence, aetiology, presenting signs and symptoms, differential diagnosis and management. Conditions to be covered include:
 - Acute allergic conjunctivitis
 - Seasonal allergic conjunctivitis
 - Atopic keratoconjunctivitis
 - Vernal keratoconjunctivitis
 - Contact lens associated papillary conjunctivitis
 - Conjunctivitis medicamentosa.

The storyboard for the first section and the content outline for the second section of Part One have been drafted.

6.2. Part Two:

- Systemic auto-immune disease with ocular effects, for each condition including prevalence, aetiology, overview of the condition, presenting ocular signs and symptoms, differential diagnosis and management. Conditions to be covered include:
 - Rheumatoid arthritis
 - Thyroid eye disease
 - Bechets, sarcoidosis, Reiter's syndrome
 - Sjogrens
 - MS
 - Lupus
 - Myasthenia gravis.

The project has been scheduled to start in autumn of 2021.

7. OCT Visual recognition test (VRICS) – Medial retina and vitreo-retinal

The visual recognition test presents four sets of images of medical retina or vitreo-retinal conditions to view, comprising a confocal scanning laser ophthalmoscopy image of the fundus and a retinal OCT image. Each set of images is accompanied by three questions that ask the learner to identify the most likely condition and test the knowledge of these conditions with regards to: risk factors, presenting signs/symptoms and potential management and treatment options.

This CET exercise was launched in March 2020 for one non-interactive CET point to coincide with the College of Optometrists Bitesize online conference.

OCT VRICS - Medical Retina & Vitreo-retinal

“This CET activity has helped with the familiarization of OCT images, different macula conditions and their management - which will be very useful in practice.”

Optometrist in an academic setting



8. Papilloedema: What a headache – Webinar

In this recorded lecture, Dr Denize Atan looks at patients presenting with suspicious optic discs and/or headaches and discusses how to differentiate between serious and benign conditions. She looks at how the increasing use of OCT can be applied to aid appropriate referrals for patients with suspect neurological conditions.

The webinar covers the following points:

- Clinical symptoms of serious neurological diseases that cause headache and/or papilloedema

- Differential diagnosis of the more common causes of unilateral/bilateral optic disc swelling and pseudopapilloedema
- Optic disc examination:
 - Indirect ophthalmoscopy
 - OCT
- Recommendations about when to refer and where to refer patients to, safely and appropriately
- Record keeping and patient communication.

The webinar ran in February 2021 with one interactive point available and the recording is available with one non-interactive CET point on the LMS.

9. Retinal and choroidal lesions – Webinar

This lecture by consultant ophthalmic surgeon, Professor Heinrich Heimann, aims to increase clinical skills in differentiating between benign and suspicious lesions that require monitoring or referral and covers the following points:

- Basic understanding of the aetiology and epidemiology of retinal and choroidal lesions
- Examination techniques (including traditional fundus examination and fields, scanning laser ophthalmoscopy, OCT, etc)
- Differential diagnosis of the more common causes including: choroidal naevus, choroidal melanoma and CHRPE
- Appropriate referral and monitoring.

The webinar ran in October 2020 with one interactive point available and the recording is available with one non-interactive CET point on the LMS.

10. The Young Eye series

DOCET identified the young eye and children's vision as a priority training area for optometrists. A new training programme addresses this as an umbrella topic, formed of a series of related modules, in a similar way to the ageing eye series.

It is intended that the series should cover the following key areas:

- Embryology [published in September 2018]
- Development of vision (birth to 18 years)
- Assessment of vision (birth to 18 years) including screening and protocols
- Children's refractive and BV management
- Paediatric prescribing including spectacle dispensing
- Paediatric disease and disorders: Medical.

10.1. Development of Vision from Birth to 18 Years

This module covers anatomy and physiology from birth to 18 years.

We will deal with this in four age groups and follow three main development timelines:

- Refractive development,
- Binocularity/neurological development

- Social and psychological development.

This module is in the final stages of amends and is scheduled for publication in the autumn of 2021.

10.2. Assessment from Birth to 18 Years

The third module in the Young Eye series will look at the practical considerations of testing children's vision. This will include choosing the most appropriate techniques for the particular child in order to establish their visual status. Emphasis will be on examining children in high street practice rather than in a specialist clinic and will include discussion on how to modify or adapt standard tests to improve the interaction and involvement of the child. Content to include:

- History and symptoms
- Establishing unaided vision / visual acuity
- Establishing binocular status
- Objective refraction
- Examination of fundus.

The filming of this project had to be delayed due to the restrictions under the pandemic and is now scheduled for August 2021. The module is scheduled for publication at the beginning of 2022.

Papilloedema: What a headache (February 2021 Webinar)

I will feel more confident at assessing the clinical signs and differentiating between papilloedema and pseudopapilloedema, particularly looking at OCT scans and the sign of sub-retinal fluid at the disc margin. I was not previously aware of circumferential retinal folds as a sign of disc swelling, or of crescential haemorrhages associated with optic disc drusen. The lecture was very well structured and the important points were easy to understand.

Locum optometrist

