

19 March 2014

Re: Diabetic RetinaScreen - The National Diabetic Retinal Screening Programme

Dear Colleague

I am pleased to inform you that Diabetic RetinaScreen - The National Diabetic Retinal Screening Programme has commenced. This government-funded programme offers free, regular diabetic retinopathy screening to people with diabetes aged 12 years and over. As you may be aware the NSS is also responsible for BreastCheck, CervicalCheck and BowelScreen call, re-call screening programmes.

Diabetic RetinaScreen aims to reduce the risk of sight loss among people with diabetes by the early detection and treatment of sight-threatening retinopathy.

All eligible people on the Diabetic RetinaScreen register will be invited by letter to participate in the programme. The programme will send invitation letters to clients on the register who will be required to call the Freephone 1800 45 45 55 number to consent to participate in the programme. Once Diabetic RetinaScreen has received verbal consent from the client and details of their nominated GP, a photographic screening appointment will be scheduled at a local screening centre.

The Diabetic RetinaScreen register was populated in 2012 with details of people diagnosed with diabetes using prescription data, anyone diagnosed after this date will **not** automatically be included on the register. Healthcare professionals can check if clients are on the register and can also register clients by calling Freephone 1800 45 45 55. A web portal is under development which, when available will allow GP practices to register clients online.

The programme is being implemented on a phased basis and it is anticipated that all people on the register will be invited by the end of 2014. Following completion of the first round, screening will be offered on an annual basis to all those on the register. Regional diabetic retinal screening programmes will be phased out this year and clients will receive their screen through the national programme.

Diabetic retinopathy screening services are provided to the NSS by Global Vision and Medical Imaging UK Ltd who were selected following a rigorous process under EU procurement guidelines.


A results letter will be sent directly to the client within three weeks of attending a screening appointment, to advise them of the next steps. Currently the clients' GP also receives a hard-copy report with the result and the associated management recommendation. The client may also nominate a second clinician to receive their result.

Following their screening result the client will be either:

- re-called for screening OR
- referred to a designated ophthalmology clinic for further investigation/
treatment

A copy of the Standards for Quality Assurance in Diabetic Retinopathy Screening and further information to support your knowledge of the programme is available at www.diabeticrotinascreeen.ie.

Yours sincerely



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