

HOSPITAL OPTOMETRISTS

INFORMATION SERIES

**CLINICALLY NECESSARY
CONTACT LENSES**

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Clinically Necessary Contact Lenses

Forward

The contents of this document were written by the Association of Optometrists, Hospital Optometrists Committee following discussions at the 21st Hospital Optometrists Annual Meeting at UMIST in 1995 and national consultation. It is re-issued now as a part the Hospital Optometrists Information Series. It is not intended as a definitive statement but rather as a general guide.

Although great care has been taken in the compilation and preparation of *Clinically Necessary Contact Lenses* to ensure accuracy, the publishers cannot in any circumstances accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.

Clinically Necessary Contact Lenses

HOSPITAL SUPPLY OF CONTACT LENSES

Individual patients of hospital eye departments / units are eligible to be supplied with contact lenses, under the NHS, where there is a clinical necessity. These notes are intended to assist practitioners when considering the clinical necessity. The notes are not, however, meant to be prescriptive or exhaustive.

Clinical necessity will normally be demonstrated where the patients spectacle prescription is + or - 10 Dioptre or more, or alternatively in situations where the use of a contact lens is deemed necessary by the hospital optometrist to achieve best therapeutic, prosthetic or ocular function.

In the case of sighted contact lenses there must be a definite improvement in the patients vision using the contact lens over that obtainable with spectacles. This applies to the "quality" of vision as well as the Snellen visual acuity.

Clinical necessity would not normally be in doubt in the following circumstances: -

- Hypermetropia of 10 Dioptre or more,
- Myopia of 10 Dioptre or more,
- Anisometropia of 4 Dioptre or more,
- Astigmatism of 4 Dioptre or more,
- Marked corneal irregularities,
e.g. corneal scarring, keratoconus, keratoplasty,
- Therapeutic (bandage lens) applications,
- Albinism, Aniridia, Coloboma,
- Ptosis.

Patients must be given advice regarding the use of appropriate aftercare products. The Department of Health has issued guidelines to the effect that aftercare products are regarded as an integral part of the treatment and should be made available to those patients for whom clinically necessary contact lenses have been prescribed.