Low Vision Aid Clinic (LVA Clinic)

Introduction

This leaflet sets out to answer questions patients have about the Low Vision Aid (LVA) Clinic and is useful to read before you attend.

You have been offered an appointment to attend the Low Vision Aid (LVA) Clinic. This is because your sight loss is at a level where spectacles alone are unable to improve your vision.

In the LVA Clinic, we will ask you about the types of difficulties you experience in your everyday life. Also we will assess your vision and test your eyes, which will enable us to determine how much magnification you need in order to manage specific tasks such as reading.

If a magnifier proves to be helpful for you, this will be provided on loan from the hospital. There will be no charge, but please make sure that you return the magnifying aid to us if you no longer use it. We will also pass on specific guidance and information to you that will help you in your daily living and direct you to other suitable organisations.

Your first visit to us will last between 45 minutes to one hour. It may be useful to bring a relative or friend with you. Before you come to the appointment, think about the tasks that you are finding difficult at home, you can then ask us if there is a particular low vision aid to help to manage more easily. We will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have and will provide advice on how to make the most of your vision.

Your LVA Clinic appointment is not a full health check of your eyes, therefore it is important to continue with your ophthalmology appointments.

If you have been discharged from ophthalmology, you should have regular appointments with your community optometrist (optician).
Please remember to bring with you to each appointment:

- Your reading glasses
- Your distance/TV glasses
- Any magnifying aids that you already have
- Any specific examples of things that you would like to see better such as crossword puzzles.

We normally arrange follow up appointments to monitor your progress and to check how you are coping. Once your sight is stable you will be discharged from the LVA Clinic. If you require re-referral at a later stage, this can be organised via your community optometrist (optician) or GP.

If necessary, we can put you in contact with Social Services or local voluntary organisations. There are many organisations aimed at supporting people with sight loss, or specific eye conditions such as the Macular Society, for example, which supports people with macular degeneration (contact details are at the end of this leaflet).

Things you can do that may help:

- Use natural daylight to illuminate your task by turning your back towards the window/daylight
- Use an angle-poise lamp directed closely onto the page/task to increase the level of local lighting
- Read large print books
- Use different coloured backgrounds to provide contrast for specific tasks
- Use a thicker, black pen for writing
- Sit closer to the television (it is a myth that sitting close to the television damages eyesight)
- Buy a talking watch or talking clock.

Contact information

Optometry Department
Tel: 0300 422 3190 (Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm)
Further information

Social Services (for all social care requests and rehabilitation)
Open Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm

Adult Social Care Helpdesk
Tel: 01452 426 868
Children and Families
Tel: 01452 426 565

INSIGHT Gloucestershire (Formerly GCAB)
81 Albion Street,
Cheltenham
GL52 2RZ
Tel: 01242 221 170 (Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 1.00pm)
Website: www.insight-glos.org.uk/
E-mail: info@insight-glos.org.uk

Forest Sensory Services
Foxes Bridge Day Centre
Foxes Bridge Road (off Valley Road)
Cinderford
GL14 2LH
Tel: 01594 827 711 (Open Monday to Thursday, 9:00am to 4:00pm)
Email: info@forestsensoryservices.org

Macular Society
PO Box 1970
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 9AD
Tel: 01264 350 551

RNIB
Talking Book Service - referrals to this service may be made through your local library or at the Low Vision Aid Clinic.
RNIB Helpline:
Tel: 0303 123 9999

RNIB Emotional Support Service
A telephone counselling service is available for anyone who has a visual impairment. This service is free and confidential and may be useful for helping someone come to terms with their sight loss.
RNIB Helpline:
Tel: 0303 123 9999