

**Patient
Information**

Low Vision Aid Clinic

Introduction

This leaflet provides information for patients due to attend the Low Vision Aid (LVA) Clinic.

What is a LVA?

LVA stands for Low Vision Aid. This is a tool used in visual impairment, to allow you to do a task which is no longer possible with spectacles alone.

LVAs are most often magnifiers of various sorts, but may also include telescopes, extra strong reading glasses, specially tinted sunglasses as well as some non-optical devices that can make life with reduced vision easier.

What happens at the LVA Clinic?

You will see an optometrist who will ask you about the visual difficulties you are having in your everyday life.

Your first visit to the clinic will last about 45 minutes to one hour. It may be useful to bring a relative or friend with you as you will be given lots of information and it may be good to have another person to talk it over with.

Before you come to the appointment, think about the tasks that you are finding difficult at home as we are best able to help if we have a clear idea what things you find hardest to do.

Things to bring with you to each appointment:

- Your glasses (reading, distance, TV, varifocal or bifocals).
- Any magnifying aids that you already have.
- Any specific examples of things that you would like to see better such as crosswords, needlework, books.

On your first visit the optometrist will assess your current vision and may check your glasses prescription. During your appointment a member of the team will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have about your eye condition. We will also give you advice on how to make the most of your vision.

Reference No.

GHPI0196_07_20

Department

Ophthalmology

Review due

July 2023

Patient Information

Your appointment is not a full health check of your eyes. It is therefore important to continue with your ophthalmology appointments. If you have been discharged from the hospital ophthalmology clinic you should still have regular routine eye examinations with your local optician.

We will give you the opportunity to try various magnifiers. These will be chosen depending on your level of vision and some of the tasks you want to carry out, as well as any physical limitations such as difficulty using your hands.

If we find a suitable magnifier that is helpful for you, you will be able to take it home with you to try out for your everyday tasks.

At the clinic we may also discuss things you can do which may help you with visual tasks, such as:

- Using an angle-poise lamp directed closely onto the page/task to increase the level of lighting.
- Using natural daylight to illuminate your task by turning your back towards the window/daylight.
- Reading large print books.
- Using different coloured backgrounds to provide contrast for specific tasks.
- Using a thicker, black felt tip pen for writing.
- Sitting closer to the television.
- Buying a talking watch or talking clock.

Do I have to pay for LVAs?

Any aids which you take away from the clinic are loaned to you for as long as you find them useful, so you do not have to pay for them. But please return any magnifying aids to us that you no longer use as we are able to re-use them for other patients.

LVA follow up

Once we have seen you in the LVA clinic we are keen to stay in touch with you to make sure that the aids provided are working well for you. This is usually done by telephone.

Patient Information

One of the LVA team of optometrists will call you a few months after your first visit to the clinic. They will discuss how your magnifiers are working for you and whether a further appointment is needed to look at alternative aids. After this we will generally call you yearly to check how you are getting on, and will book you back into the LVA clinic if necessary.

If your magnifier breaks or is lost, we may be able to send a replacement by post. Please contact the Optometry Department on 0300 422 3190.

However, if you are concerned about having new and sudden changes to your vision, for example a new distortion in the case of age related macular degeneration; you should contact the Eye Clinic Casualty line. The number is at the end of this leaflet.

Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO)

When you attend the LVA Clinic you may also be offered a consultation with an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO).

ECLO's help people with sight conditions to get the support they may need, when they need it. They also provide advice on a range of topics including:

- Benefits and discounts you may be entitled to.
- Education, employment, housing and leisure.
- Emotional support.
- Talking books and other services specific to those having problems with their sight.
- Mobility advice and training, such as the use of a white cane to get around independently or special methods of viewing to make the most of your remaining vision.
- Many other aspects of living with sight loss and staying independent.

You do not need to be registered sight impaired to be able to access the LVA clinic or the ECLO service.

Patient Information

We have ECLO's based at both main hospital sites:

Louise Birt at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital

Tel: 07702 961060

Monday to Wednesday, 10:00am to 5:00pm

Email: Louise.birt@rnib.org.uk or

Email: Louise.birt@nhs.net

Gary Learmonth at Cheltenham General Hospital

Tel: 07925 034 799

Wednesday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

Email: Gary.learmonth@rnib.org.uk or

Email: Gary.learmonth@nhs.net

Contact information

Optometry Department

Tel: 0300 422 3190

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:30pm

Eye Clinic Casualty

Tel: 0300 422 3578

Monday to Friday 9:00 to 5:30pm

The line is closed between 1:00pm and 2:00pm

Further information

INSIGHT Gloucestershire (formerly GCAB)

81 Albion Street,

Cheltenham

GL52 2RZ

Tel: 01242 221170

Website: <http://insight-glos.org.uk/>

E-mail: info@insight-glos.org.uk

Forest Sensory Services

Forge Centre

Valley Road

Cinderford

Gloucestershire

GL14 2LJ

Tel: 01594 827711

Email: info@forestsensoryservices.org

**Patient
Information**

Macular Society

Advice and Information Service

Tel: 0300 3030 111 or

Email: help@macularsociety.org

Supporter Care (membership and general enquiries)

Tel: 01264 350 551 or

Email: info@macularsociety.org

RNIB Talking Books

Talking Book Service - Referrals to this service may be made through your local library or the ECLO.

Helpline: 0303 123 9999

RNIB Emotional Support Service

A telephone counselling service is available for anyone who has a visual impairment. It is free and confidential and may be useful in helping someone come to terms with their sight loss.

Helpline: 0303 123 9999

Gloucestershire Social Services

For all social care requests and rehabilitation.

Adult Helpdesk

Tel: 01452 426868

Children and Families

Tel: 01452 426565

The above services are open from Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm

Content reviewed: July 2020