Ein cyf / Our ref: Call 7111175

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By Email Only:

E-bost/Email:
AllWales.Alerts@wales.nhs.uk

Dyddiad / Date: 02/10/2026

Service Improvement and Assurance Lead
Diabetic Eye Screening Wales

This alert has been cascaded to the following:

- All Wales Practice Managers
- Wales Ophthalmic Practices

Have you seen our screening Professionals website for Information about DESW? Please check out this link; Diabetic Eye Screening Wales (sharepoint.com)

https://nhswales365.sharepoint.com/sites/PHW_ScrInfProComms/SitePages/Diabetic-Eye-Screening-Wales(1).aspx

Working together for a healthier Wales

Arweinydd Gwella Gwasanaethau a Sicrwydd Ansawdd Ydych chi wedi gweld ein gwefan Gweithwyr Proffesiynol Sgrinio am Wybodaeth am DESW? Edrychwch ar y ddolen hon; Diabetic Eye Screening Wales (sharepoint.com)

https://nhswales365.sharepoint.com/sites/PHW_ScrInfProComms/SitePages/Diabetic-Eye-Screening-Wales(1).aspx

Gweithio gyda'n gilydd i greu Cymru iachach

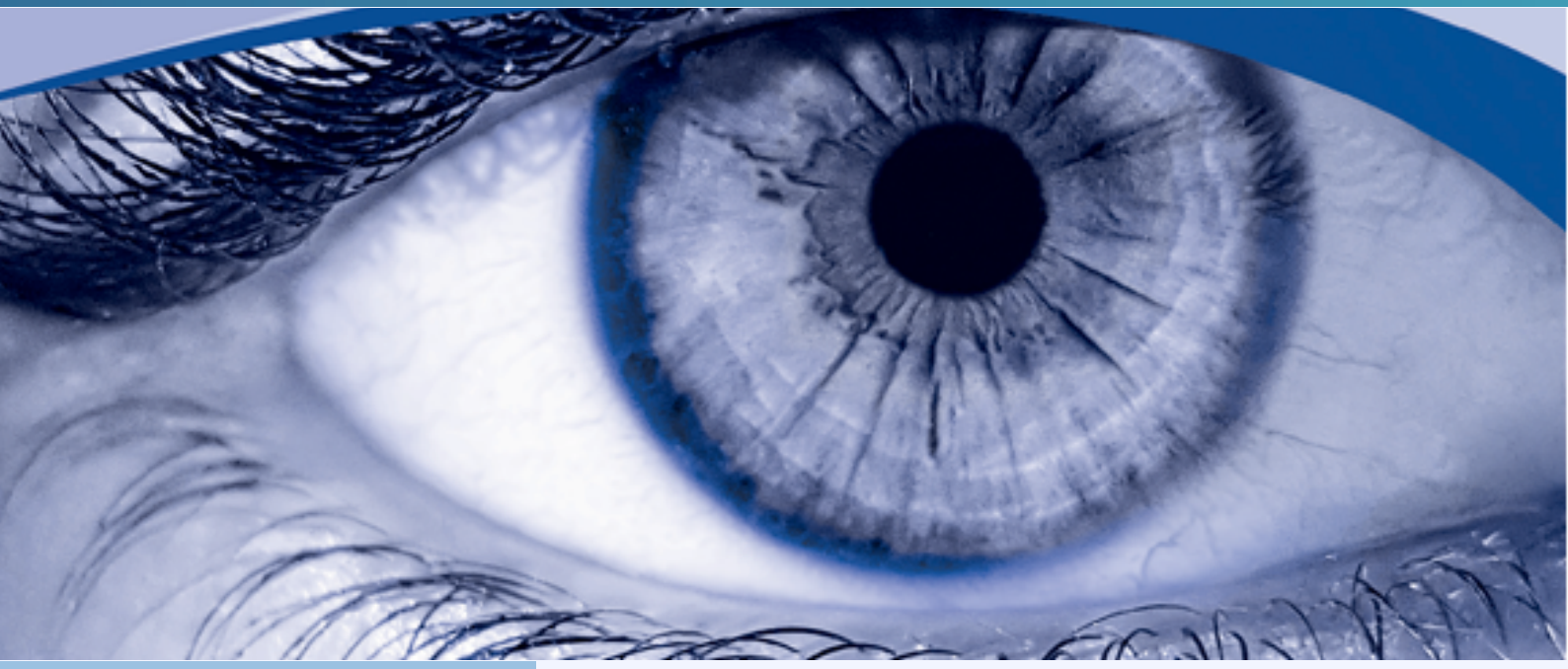
GIG CYMRU NHS WALES | Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales

Sgrinio Llygaid Diabetig Cymru
Diabetic Eye Screening Wales

Stakeholder News 2026

Diabetic Eye Screening Wales

DESW Autumn Update Newsletter



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Welcome to Diabetic Eye Screening Wales

Welcome to the refreshed and reinvigorated Diabetic Eye Screening Wales Stakeholder Newsletter. This is our new revised edition, and we felt it was an ideal opportunity to provide an insight into how the programme operates.

Diabetic Eye Screening Wales is an all-Wales national screening programme dedicated to reducing the risk of sight loss caused by diabetic retinopathy. The programme offers regular retinal screening to eligible patients from aged 12 years and over who have diabetes.

As part of Public Health Wales, DESW works closely with primary care, secondary care diabetes services along with a wide range of health professionals across Wales.

This newsletter provides an opportunity for the programme to share updates of service developments and highlights improvements through collaborative working. DESW remains focused on delivering a high quality, person-cantered screening service that contributes to prevent sight loss.

We look forward to keeping our stakeholders informed and engaged as we continue to develop and strengthen sharing informtion about our programme.

Patient Suitability for Attending Screening Appointments

For screening to be carried out successfully, participants need to be able to understand and follow the screener's instructions during the appointment. They also need to be able to position themselves appropriately at the screening camera and remain still long enough for retinal images to be taken.

For some participants, health, mobility or positioning needs may make routine screening in a community clinic setting difficult or unsuitable. Unfortunately, DESW does not currently offer domiciliary visits, and screening is provided at community clinic locations where retinal imaging can be undertaken.

In these circumstances, and depending on the participant's individual clinical needs, a local optometry practice may be able to provide a retinal review.

Thank you for your continued support in helping patients access the care most appropriate to their needs.

New Student Registration

Please remember to refer all newly registered students with diabetes to the Diabetic Eye Screening Programme so they can be invited for regular screening appointments.

Diabetic Eye Screening in Pregnancy Require More Frequent Eye Screening

Pregnancy is associated with an increased risk of the development and progression of diabetic retinopathy.

In line with UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC) recommendations, women with pre-existing diabetes should receive additional retinal screening during pregnancy.

The first pregnancy-related diabetic eye screening assessment should take place as early as possible following confirmation of pregnancy, unless eye screening has taken place within the last three months. Women will require at least 2 screening appointments during pregnancy, occasionally more.

Early identification and management of diabetic retinopathy during pregnancy can reduce the risk of visual impairment and support optimal maternal health outcomes.

If you care for someone with diabetes who becomes pregnant, please check with the patient to see if they have had a recent offer of diabetic eye screening.

Please contact pregnancy@wales.nhs.uk to check DESW is aware of the pregnancy, or complete a referral form, and include the patient's estimated delivery date.

Gestational Diabetes

Women diagnosed with gestational diabetes do not require diabetic eye screening; gestational diabetes is often temporary and is not associated with the same risk as pre-existing diabetes.

Women with gestational diabetes should, however, receive a diabetes testing 6 to 13 weeks following delivery to confirm resolution of hyperglycaemia.

GLP-1 Medication and Eye Screening Requests

Referral to DESW

All patients aged 12 and over with a confirmed diagnosis of diabetes (Type 1, Type 2, Maturity-onset diabetes of the young and steroid induced) should be referred to the Programme for eye screening. Referral into the service must be made via our referral form, completed by a healthcare professional or their representative.

DESW Appointment Outcomes and Results

DESW sends appointment outcome letters, including screening results and non-attendance notifications, to participants and their registered GP practice. Where known, correspondence is also shared with the individual's diabetology and/or ophthalmology team. While most communications are currently issued by post, we are exploring secure email as part of ongoing service improvement work.

If you have not received expected correspondence and need to confirm an appointment offer, attendance, or screening outcome, please contact the DESW Administration Team on 0300 003 0500 or sending an email to diabetic-eye-screening@wales.nhs.uk.

"DESW does not provide additional retinal screening for GLP-1 medication.

Patients should continue to attend routine DESW appointments when they are called for".

Appointment Availability

DESW provides screening clinics at healthcare and community venues across Wales, with appointments offered according to time since last screening, clinical eligibility and local clinic capacity. As venue availability varies across different areas, some participants may experience longer waiting times than others. Participants who are **overdue** for routine screening may contact the programme to enquire about short-notice appointment availability.

GLP-1 Monitoring & Surveillance is outside of the DESW Programme

Unfortunately, DESW does not provide additional retinal screening for patients commencing or receiving GLP-1 medication.

The WGOS 4 Pathway in Wales

Did you know that the Welsh General Ophthalmic Services (WGOS) Level 4 pathway is now available? WGOS 4 enables appropriately qualified community optometrists to provide referral refinement and monitoring services for medical retina patients who might otherwise be referred directly to Hospital Eye Services.

When a DESW participant is referred to their local secondary care (hospital eye service) for additional retinal assessment, many health boards have the opportunity to start a WGOS 4 pathway. Hospital eye services may now refer to a community optometrist as a first step. Optometrists with enhanced qualifications can refine, assess, and monitor participants who may otherwise be under the care of hospital eye services. This helps ensure patients receive timely care closer to home while reducing unnecessary pressure on hospital eye departments.

DESW should be kept informed of the status and management of all patients with diabetes referred to HES or a community optometrist. Please provide regular updates on patient management, including details of any treatment plans, discharge decisions, and instances where patients do not attend scheduled appointments.

DESW Information for Professionals

Please be advised that this QR code only works for people who has a NHS Wales email address.

DESW has a dedicated email address that can be use to contact the programme with queries, including enquiries about when participants are likely to be offered an appointment. This email address is **diabetic-eye-screening@wales.nhs.uk** and is a public facing and professional inbox. Please do not use the SP.Requests email address, which is for internal use only.

We are looking for venues in Conwy, Wrexham, Ceredigion if you are able to provide a space for screening please get in touch and lets us know.

DESW also has dedicated email addresses for pregnancy **(Pregnancy@wales.nhs.uk)**