

Guidance on applying for a non-tolerance voucher

NHS England considers a patient to be non-tolerant to an optical appliance if they are unable to adjust to new spectacles and have visual discomfort which subsequently requires a modification to the prescription to be made even though the prescription issued may have been “clinically” correct at the time of testing.

Retests and second opinions

If a patient is non-tolerant of their spectacles they may have another GOS sight test. The GOS1 or GOS 6 should be annotated with “retest/non-tolerance”. It is recommended that the patient should, if at all possible, return to have the retest with the original prescriber. However, this may be done by another practitioner if necessary. In all cases the spectacles should be verified as correct to the prescription before commencing a further test. Approval does not need to be sought to carry out the second sight test but approval to issue a second GOS 3 is required.

Acceptance criteria

Applications for a new GOS 3 voucher on the grounds of non-tolerance can be submitted to the NHS England Regional Local Team (RLT) if the following criteria are met:

- The tolerance problem has been present from the time of supply (rather than starting later)
- The cause of the problem has been shown to be related to the prescription (i.e. the strength of the lenses), not the type of lens or appliance.

NHS England’s interpretation of the regulation is that non-tolerance should be defined by the prescription and not by the type of optical appliance that has been provided. Therefore, requests for an additional GOS 3 to allow a change from single vision to bifocal/varifocal or vice versa will not be considered to meet the acceptance criteria unless there is also a change in prescription.

Patients who are in receipt of their original spectacles from the Hospital Eye Service should apply to the individual NHS Trust concerned if they have a problem adjusting to the prescription.

How to apply for a non-tolerance voucher

1. Complete the [Non-tolerance voucher application form](#) on the patient's behalf.
2. Submit the completed form to the NHS England RLT by secure email if you have an nhs.net account, encrypted email or by fax or post. See here for [RLT contact details](#)
3. The RLT will normally notify you of their decision within one week.
4. Once you have received a decision from the RLT you must retain a copy of the application form for your records for post payment verification purposes.
5. If the application has been approved, you should submit a GOS3 to PCSE.