

Fife Hospital Eye Service

Who are the staff involved in the Hospital Eye Service?

Ophthalmologists, ophthalmic nurses, orthoptists, administrators and secretarial staff.

What is an ophthalmologist?

An ophthalmologist qualifies first as a medical doctor then trains for several years in diagnosing and treating eye diseases.

What do ophthalmic nurses do?

Ophthalmic nurses nowadays carry out many of the investigations and treatments for eye diseases.

What is an orthoptist?

Orthoptists are skilled in testing children and use specific tests to determine how much a child can see. They are able to diagnose and treat squints and other defects of eye co-ordination or movement. Orthoptists screen pre-school children for sight problems. They also treat adults who have double vision.

What kind of clinics are held?

Most eye diseases can be treated in Fife. Special clinics are held for patients who have glaucoma, diabetes, macular degeneration, eye inflammation (uveitis), eyelid problems and cataracts. Children's clinics are run by paediatric ophthalmologists and orthoptists.



Low vision clinics are multi-disciplinary, assessing vision, providing magnifiers and demonstrating electronic equipment. Following eye examination, registration of sight impairment can also be carried out at the same visit if required. Follow up home visits are then arranged by the Insight team.

What operations are done?

Cataract surgery (whereby the cloudy lens in the eye is replaced by a clear plastic lens) is the most commonly performed operation and is usually a day case procedure. Glaucoma, eyelid and squint operations are also carried out and injections for wet macular degeneration are now done routinely. Laser treatment, especially for diabetic eye disease, is also available. Emergency patients are seen daily at special eye casualty clinics .

Where is the service based?

Although the eye unit is based in Queen Margaret Hospital where all major eye operations are done, there are clinics every weekday at both the Victoria and Queen Margaret Hospitals, and weekly clinics at Cupar Adamson Hospital. The orthoptic service also has clinics in certain health centres throughout Fife. The Low Vision clinics are jointly held with Insight rehabilitation workers and social workers at the Fife Sensory Impairment Centre in Kirkcaldy.

How can I access the hospital eye service?

Patients are referred mainly by their optometrist or general practitioner. Insight staff also refer patients directly to the low vision service. Referrals come by secure email and optometrists can attach pictures of the eye to help decide on urgency. There is a central booking office at Queen Margaret Hospital where the referrals are screened daily by trained nurses aided by the on-call ophthalmologist. This ensures that patients are given appointments to the most appropriate specialist without unnecessary delays.

Queen Margaret Hospital, Victoria Hospital, Adamson Hospital with Low Vision Clinic at Fife Sensory Impairment Centre, Kirkcaldy

**Referral is via optometrists and general practitioners.
Insight staff also refer directly to the Low Vision Clinic.**

