To: Chief Executive and President of the
Scottish Council on Visual Impairment (SCOVI)
SCOVI members

28 March 2018

Introduction of the new Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) Scotland Form

I am writing to:

1. Update you on the work that has been taking place to refresh and rename the BP1 form which is used to certify people in Scotland as sight impaired (partially sighted) or severely sight impaired (blind).
2. Advise you that the new Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) Scotland form, which replaces the BP1 form, will be introduced nationally from 1 April 2018 and that this is the form that ophthalmologists should use to certify people as sight impaired or severely sight impaired.
3. Invite the participation of SCOVI and its members in the national rollout of the new CVI Scotland Form and associated data collection process.

Background

The CVI Scotland form and explanatory notes is the result of consultation with people who use services, ophthalmologists, optometrists, orthoptists, ophthalmic nurses, low vision workers, RNIB, the Scottish Council on Visual Impairment (SCOVI), visual impairment societies, patient representatives, local See Hear Partnership leads and Social Work Scotland.

The CVI Scotland form was developed to make the form easier to complete with a list of coded diagnoses. This means that data on causes of loss of vision, and the number of people certified and registered, will be collected for the first time since 2010. The form is paper based, but is compatible with electronic conversion in the future. The form has been piloted and reviewed prior to this implementation.

Purpose

The purpose of the CVI Scotland form is the same as the BP1 form in that it formally certifies someone as partially sighted or blind. The CVI form uses the terminology of ‘sight impaired’ or ‘severely sight impaired’. Subject to patient consent, NHS Ophthalmology Departments will be able to pass the completed CVI Scotland form to the Local Authority or agency acting on their behalf (e.g. local Visual Impairment Society) so that they can provide
an assessment and support to the person. The Local Authority or their agent will also be able to ‘register’ the person if the person consents to registration.

Registration is voluntary, and many people who are certified choose to be registered as part of a process of accessing services, care and support. Access to some benefits and sight support services is not dependent on registration and those with sight loss may still be able to access assistance without being registered.

The CVI Scotland form will also be used to record diagnostic and other data that may be used for epidemiological analysis and to inform the planning of local and national services for people with sight loss.

Supporting children and young people with a visual impairment

The new CVI Scotland form is for people aged 16 and over. Arrangements for supporting young people and children under the age of 16 with a visual impairment will continue as at present, following the VINCYP Pathway (Visual Impairment Network for Children and Young People). VINCYP, as a managed clinical network across Scotland is commissioned and managed by NHS National Services Scotland. Once a child or young person is recognised as having a visual impairment then, with their parent’s/carer’s consent, they are notified to VINCYP http://www.vincyp.scot.nhs.uk/ and referred to the central referral contact in their NHS Board for access to the required support.

This central contact (listed on the VINCYP website) is responsible for forwarding the child’s referral to the appropriate services (health, education, social work or voluntary sector) who deliver support to children and families in the child’s locality. In this way children and their families receive the appropriate support timeously following identification of the child’s visual impairment. VINCYP has had a data system in place across Scotland to record diagnostic and other data for children since February 2017.

Information on how young people who are eligible to transition to the CVI Scotland process at age 16 years, if consent is given, will be provided by VINCYP to all young people and their parent(s)/carer(s) at age 15.5 years and is also available to partners in the Explanatory Notes for the CVI Scotland form (in Annex A).

Context

The Scottish Government is committed to supporting adults and children who have sight loss to access and receive the care and support they need through its See Hear Strategy. The Strategy is jointly endorsed by COSLA and is being delivered in local areas by partnerships between statutory and third sector organisations. Local See Hear Leads are identifying priority areas and are driving forward the delivery of the Strategy locally. Scottish Ministers allocated £2m of funding over 2 years to support the implementation of the Strategy. A further £478,000 was allocated in both 2016/17 and 2017/18 to assist the ongoing development and delivery of local and national priorities in the Strategy.

Next steps

I would be grateful for the support of you and your members in taking this work forward.

- The CVI Scotland form and Explanatory Notes are available in Audio, Braille and Easy Read, and the information leaflet is available in large print.

- Copies of the new CVI Scotland form and Explanatory Notes will be dispatched to NHS eye departments across Scotland so that the new form is ready for use from 1 April 2018. These forms should be completed and sent to the Local Authority (or local Visual Impairment Society) in the same way as the previous BP1 form. **The BP1 form should not be used after 31 March 2018.**

- Copies of the CVI Scotland form and Explanatory Notes documents are also being dispatched to CVI contacts in local areas.

- Data collection is the second part of the CVI Scotland process. An online web form has been developed to collect a small subset of the data recorded on the CVI Scotland form. A member (or members) of vision support staff or administrative and clerical staff should be identified in each eye department who will be responsible for submitting this data. It would be helpful if information on Certification from completed CVI Scotland forms could be entered and submitted on to the web platform within one week of the interaction with the patient where the patient has given their consent for their data to be shared.

- Local Authorities (or their agents such as the Local Visual Impairment Society) will also be submitting information to Information Services Division (ISD) Scotland on Registration following their interaction(s) with the client. It is recognised that people may need time to consider their circumstances before deciding whether to take up the option of registration. It is the role of the Local Authority or Agency working on its behalf to support the person in this process. Once a decision on registration has been made, information on the decision should be recorded on the web platform within 2 weeks by the Local Authority or the Agency working on its behalf if the person has given the consent for their information to be shared.

- The information provided in the CVI Scotland web form will be held securely, and will only be accessible by the Information Services Division (ISD) for the purposes of providing anonymised summary information.

We look forward to working with you and your members to progress this work, which will promote the certification process and provide better access to services, support and care for people with sight loss.

If you, your lead clinician or administrative staff would like more information, please contact Dr Julie Carr ([Julie.carr@gov.scot](mailto:Julie.carr@gov.scot)) in the Assisted Communications Policy Team at the Scottish Government, Professor Caroline MacEwen, Ophthalmology Specialty Adviser to the Scottish Government ([c.j.macewen@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:c.j.macewen@dundee.ac.uk)) or Ahmed Mahmoud at Information Services Division (ISD) Scotland (Email [a.mahmoud@nhs.net](mailto:a.mahmoud@nhs.net)).

Yours sincerely

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