

# Devon in Sight Eye Health & Sight Loss Fact Sheet 10

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## Registering your Sight Loss

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### Introduction

Registration simply means being on your local social service's register of people who are either severely sight impaired (blind) or sight impaired (partially sighted). It's voluntary and is completely confidential and your details won't be shared. There are some very significant advantages to getting registered.

### Getting a referral to an eye specialist?

Visit your optician or GP if you're concerned about any aspect of your vision at any time.

Having an eye test won't just tell you if you need new glasses or a change of prescription it is also an important eye health check.

This check can often pick up the first signs of an eye condition before you notice any changes in your vision. This can lead to you getting vital treatment at the right time, which could save your sight.

If they find a problem, you'll be referred to hospital to see an ophthalmologist (eye doctor).

### What should I do in an emergency?

You should go to a hospital Accident and Emergency Department as soon as possible if you:

Have a sudden serious change in your vision

Lose all or part of your vision in one eye or both eyes

Have an accident involving your eyes

Suddenly start seeing flashing lights or floaters in your vision.

## **Ophthalmologist (Eye Doctor)**

If the Ophthalmologist finds that your vision can't be improved by glasses and contact lenses, or medical or surgical treatment, you may be referred to a Low Vision Clinic.

You may also be referred by your optician directly into the Low Vision Clinic.

## **At the Low Vision Clinic**

The Optometrist will measure your functional vision for both close up and distance tasks. They will use eye charts and reading materials similar to the charts used in standard eye tests.

They will identify potential optical aids that may help with everyday tasks such as reading and writing.

They can advise you about managing at home and getting out and about.

They will also assess you to see if you are eligible to be registered as sight impaired or severely sight impaired.

If your ophthalmologist judges that you can be certified, they will complete an official certificate with the results of your eye examination, as well as information about your circumstances.

In England and Wales this certificate is called the Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI). In Northern Ireland it's called A655, in Scotland it's called the CVI (Scotland) form.

## **Registration with your local Social Services**

After receiving a copy of your certificate, your local social services team should contact you to ask if you wish to be included on its register of blind and partially sighted people. If you say "yes" then you become registered.

If you choose not to be registered, you can still get support from social services to help you remain independent.

## What happens after you're registered?

Social services should contact you to discuss carrying out a needs assessment, also known as a Social Care and Rehabilitation Assessment. The aim of this assessment is for social services to find out what help and advice you need to remain independent. For example, this could include help with everyday tasks such as cleaning and cooking, keeping in touch with friends and family, or with transport.

## The advantages of registering

There are some very significant advantages to getting registered. Firstly, it can make life more affordable by enabling you to claim a wide range of concessions. These include a half-price TV Licence, help with NHS costs, help with your Council Tax bill and tax allowances, leisure discounts and free public transport. Which concessions you are entitled to depend on whether you are registered as severely sight impaired or sight impaired.

Although being registered does not automatically entitle you to any particular welfare benefits, it does often make it easier for you to claim some of them. Your registration confirms your sight loss and helps as evidence in your claim.

Your local council will often give you a registration card that proves your registration status. Having this can help to prove your entitlement to concessions, including when you're visiting places of interest.

## What to do next?

Book an eye test with your Optician, if you are concerned about any aspect of your vision at any time.

**If you need any further advice call our Helpline: 01392 876 666**

**Devon in Sight** is a member of the **Helpline Partnership Community**.

## Further Support Available from Devon in Sight

- **Information, Advice and Guidance**
  - **Demonstrations of Low Vision Aids & Daily Living Equipment**
  - **Assistive Technology Solutions**
  - **Our holistic needs assessment (Sight Loss MOT)**
  - **Training for people with central vision loss (Skills for Seeing)**
  - **Emotional Support Service**
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## Information Disclaimer

**Devon in Sight** is committed to producing Information, Advice & Guidance Resources that are clear, accurate, evidence-based, up-to-date and easy to use. We have a robust information production process based on best practice to ensure that information we produce meets the needs of people who are blind or partially sighted and their family and friends.

**Devon in Sight** is not a medical organisation; therefore we can only provide general information that is not intended to be a substitute for a proper medical assessment. Our information is not intended to be used for individual cases. If you have a specific question about your eye condition, we recommend that you consult an eye care professional.

**Devon in Sight** will not accept liability for any loss or damage or inconvenience arising as a consequence of any use of or the inability to use any information resources that it provides. People who use our Information Resources and rely on any information do so at their own risk. Devon in Sight does not represent or warrant that its Information Resources are accurate, complete or up to date.

Our Information, Advice & Guidance Resources were correct at the time of writing. However, due to research and medical advances, the content may not be completely up to date.

## Devon in Sight Contact Information



**Helpline 01392 876 666**  
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