LOW VISION CHECKLIST

There is a lot that community optometrists can offer their patients who suffer from visual impairment. The following summary checklist covers some of the key areas where optometrists are well placed to support these patients.

PATIENT BACKGROUND

- Ocular condition
- Home situation
- Other health problems or impairments
- Whether they are in employment or education
- Hobbies and activities
- Main areas of difficulty
- Current level of support

VISION ASSESSMENT AND REFRACITION

- Distance and near vision assessment with optimised spectacle prescription
- Increased near addition for reading when appropriate with base-in prism if over 6D

MAGNIFIERS

- Magnifying power = Actual near acuity/ Desired near acuity
- Higher the power, smaller the field of view, shorter working distance.

- Handheld illuminated (LED) and non-illuminated range from around X2 to X11
- Stand illuminated (LED) and non-illuminated range around X2 to X14

ELECTRONIC AIDS

- Portable video magnifier for tasks outside the home and workplace to provide increased contrast and magnification levels.
- Desktop video magnifier devices for increased contrast, magnification and possible audio output for those who find longer documents tiring.
- Reading machines and recognition equipment to read documents back to the user and also identify faces and objects.
- Lighting - appropriate use of ‘daylight’ quality lighting for specific tasks.

Support - Blind and partial sighted registration as appropriate. RNIB, Macular Society, War Blind and other supporting charities. Local visual impairment support groups. Guide Dogs UK and other mobility training groups. Access to work and education.