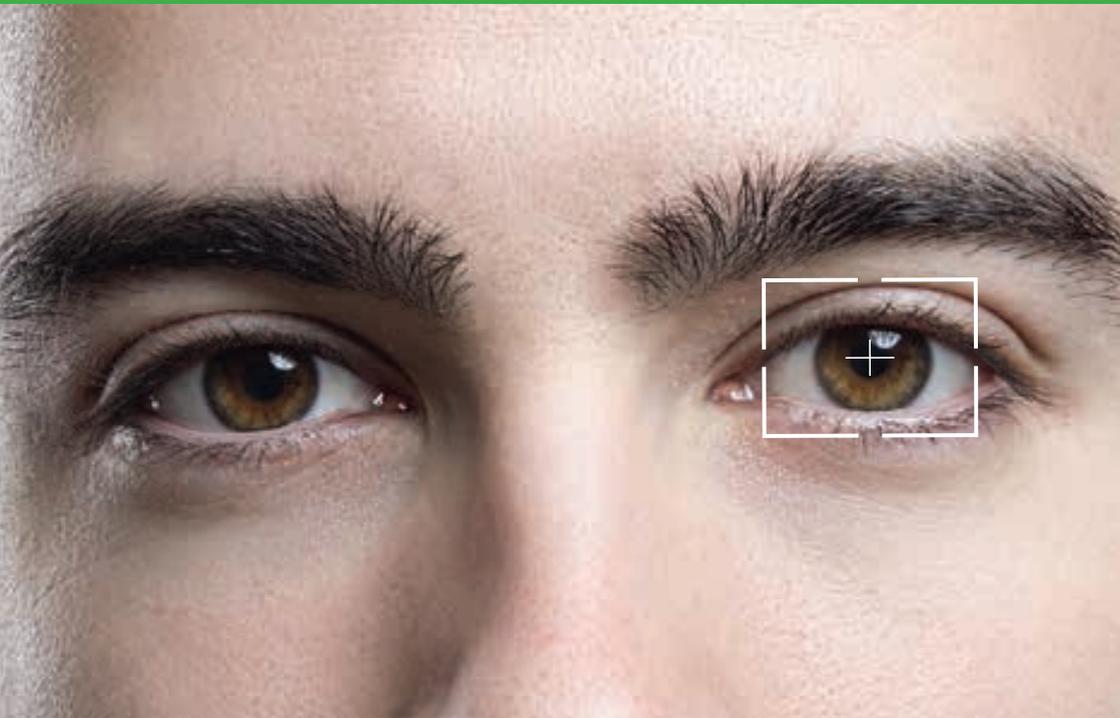


# Diabetic eye screening programme

Consultation in brief



Northern Ireland  
**Diabetic Eye  
Screening**  
Programme



Public Health  
Agency

## The purpose of this document

This document outlines how the Northern Ireland Diabetic Eye Screening Programme (NIDESP) could be delivered in the future. It summarises three options for the programme and asks you to respond to the consultation by completing a questionnaire.

These three options have been shortlisted from the pre-consultation exercise done in 2017. If you would like more detailed information on this, you can download the complete consultation and background information from:

**[pha.site/DESPconsultation](https://www.pha.gov.uk/pha.site/DESPconsultation)**

See page 9 for how to respond to the consultation and page 10 for a list of useful terms.

## The Diabetic Eye Screening Programme – what is it?

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of blindness in people of working age in the UK. The Diabetic Eye Screening Programme (DESP) aims to detect eye diseases associated with diabetes at an early stage to prevent possible sight loss. Those with diabetes aged 12 years and over in Northern Ireland are invited to be screened with special photography every year. Diabetic eye screening is not covered as part of your normal eye examination with an optometrist.

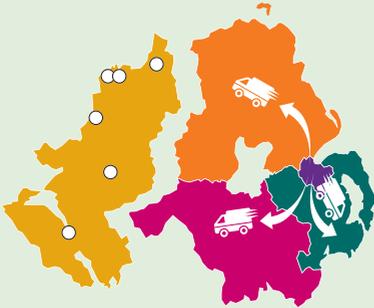
## Why change how we deliver NIDESP?

The numbers of people living with diabetes continues to grow rapidly:



The programme needs to ensure that it can cope with these growing numbers into the future and can provide a service that meets national quality standards.

## The current delivery model



## MOBILE SERVICE + FIXED HSC SITES IN WEST



At present, the NIDESP is delivered in two ways:

- **Mobile:** in most Trust areas, screeners travel to each GP practice (approximately 280 in total) to carry out the screening test for diabetic patients in that practice.
- **Fixed:** in the Western HSC Trust area the screening test is carried out in six fixed health and social care sites (hospitals, GPs and Health and Wellbeing Centres).

## Main problem with the current model:

It is becoming difficult to offer screening every 12 months, as recommended in national quality standards



## This is partly because:

- Screeners have to travel to a large number of practices (sites), and spend longer at each because of the rising numbers to be screened



- GP practices are increasingly over stretched and finding a dedicated room for screening in each can cause delays



# Options for the future delivery of NIDESP

## Option 1

### Fixed HSC sites throughout Northern Ireland (previously 2a)



## FIXED HSC SITES



This model would mean that you will be invited to attend for screening at one of at least 22 health and social care sites: either a community hospital, suitable GP practice or a health and wellbeing centre. You will have more flexibility about when and where you attend.



Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• screening every 12 months</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• possible increased travel</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• potential for longer opening hours</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• flexibility on venue</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• potential to link with other services</li></ul>	

## Option 2

### Fixed GP sites throughout Northern Ireland (previously 2b)



# FIXED GP SITES



This is similar to the first option, but screening would be carried out at larger GP practices. You would be able to choose a different venue, but it may not be possible to offer appointments outside GP practice hours.



Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• screening every 12 months</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• possible increased travel</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• flexibility on venue</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• restricted opening hours</li></ul>



### Option 3

## High Street optometry based service (previously 5)



### HIGH STREET OPTOMETRY SITES



This would mean contracting the screening test out to private optometrists. You would be sent a reminder that your screening test is due, along with a list of local optometrists and asked to contact one of them to make an appointment. The optometrist would then carry out the screening test and send the images to a centralised screening office who will check them and issue a result.



Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>flexibility on venue </li><li>longer opening hours </li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>difficult to monitor:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>quality </li><li>training</li><li>personal data</li></ul></li><li>costs </li></ul>

## How can I respond?

We would like all of you who have an interest in the Diabetic Eye Screening Programme to respond to the consultation by completing a questionnaire on the proposed options at the link below. Here you can also access all the supporting documentation, including:

- Consultation document and appendices
- Supporting information
- Details of community engagement events
- Contact details and useful links

Responses can be completed on the consultation website at:

**[pha.site/DESPconsultation](http://pha.site/DESPconsultation)**

Alternatively, responses can be sent to:

**Email:** [screening.diabeticeye@hscni.net](mailto:screening.diabeticeye@hscni.net)

**Written:** Consultation on the way NIDESP is provided  
Public Health Agency  
9th Floor, Linum Chambers  
2 Bedford Square  
Belfast  
BT2 7ES

**Telephone:** 028 9536 1655

Before you submit your response, please read **Appendix 7** about the effect of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 on the confidentiality of responses to public consultation exercises.

If you would like a printed copy of the questionnaire or if you need the documents in another format or language please use the contact details above.

**Responses must be received no later than 29 March 2019**

## Useful terms

<b>Fixed site</b>	Where screening is carried out in either a hospital, a GP practice or a Health and Wellbeing Centre
<b>GP practice</b>	Where your doctor (General Practitioner) operates from and may include a number of other doctors, nurses or other healthcare professionals
<b>High Street</b>	Private optometrist practice
<b>HSC</b>	Health and Social Care
<b>H+W C</b>	Health and Wellbeing Centre
<b>Mobile service</b>	Where screeners travel to each GP practice to carry out screening
<b>NIDESP</b>	Northern Ireland Diabetic Eye Screening Programme
<b>Optometrist</b>	An eye expert trained to recognise and manage vision problems
<b>Screening</b>	A way of detecting a disease early





**Public Health  
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[www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net)

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