Dear

Freedom of Information Request

Further to your request for information dated 22 February 2018 the information requested is below.

1. Please state the total number of referrals from primary care to Ophthalmology for cataract surgery (all types) in A) 2016, B) 2017 and C) 2018 to date. If it is not possible to provide data specifically regarding cataract surgery referrals then please provide data for all Ophthalmology referrals for A, B and C.

NHS Dartford Gravesham and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group does not have referral for all providers, this information is held on a national dataset. The CCG do not have a dataset that shows the reasons for referrals or outpatient appointments other than speciality. As a proxy, the figures quoted are for 1st Ophthalmology Outpatient appointments, from all sources for the calendar years (January to December)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Referrals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>6,752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>6,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018 (Jan- Nov)</td>
<td>6,608</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. A) Has the CCG updated its eligibility guidelines and/or referrals policy for cataract surgery since 04/08/17?

No, the CCG has not updated their eligibility guidelines. The CCG has a Referral and Treatment Criteria (RaTC) as below**. There is however plans in motion for the
triage of cataract referrals against NICE Guidance 77. This will be based on the decision to refer a person with a cataract for surgery on a discussion with them (and their family members or carers, as appropriate) that includes the following in the body of the referral

- How the cataract affects the patient’s vision and quality of life
- Whether 1 or both eyes are affected
- What cataract surgery involves, including possible risks and benefits
- How the person’s quality of life may be affected if they choose not to have cataract surgery
- Whether the person wants to have cataract surgery

**RaTC Apr17 Cataract Surgery**

**Background**

Cataract is the opacification of the normally transparent lens of the eye. It occurs as a result of denaturation of lens protein resulting in cloudiness of vision. Symptoms include glare, blurred vision, progressive decrease in visual function, and blindness. Most people with cataracts, if left untreated, will eventually become visually disabled. Cataracts are very common in the population aged over 65. Surgery becomes an option for patients when vision deteriorates, affecting function.

**Policy**

Referral for cataract surgery should only occur following a consultation with an optometrist or ophthalmologist who has confirmed the patient experiences both of the following:

- Impairment of functions of daily living attributable to impairment of visual function due to cataract; and
- Willingness to have surgery

Patients can undergo treatment of the second eye when they meet the criteria above.

**Rational**

This policy is consistent with Department of Health guidance.

**B) If yes, please provide a link to the relevant website or attach the relevant document, stating page number where applicable.**

Please see above.

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If you are unhappy with the service that you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision you should write to Complaints. NHS Dartford Gravesend and Swanley Clinical Commissioning Group 2nd Floor Gravesend Civic Centre Gravesend Kent DA12 1AU or email at dgscchg.complaints@nhs.net

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint or review, you may apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Clinical Commissioning Group. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

| Information Commissioners Office,          | Wycliffe House,                 |
| Water Lane,                               | Wilmslow,                       |
| Cheshire                                 | SK9 5AF                         |
| Telephone: 08456 306060 or 01625 54 57 45 | www.ico.gov.uk                  |

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.