

# The nation's local community optician



The Outside Clinic, a privately owned company based in Old Town and led by its Managing Director Damian Kenning, celebrates 21 years in serving the community as the largest National provider of 'At Home' Eye Testing Services. Having been originally formed in 1987 from a small team of a couple of opticians who worked locally, it has now grown to an organisation staffed by dedicated professional and support personnel of 140. Half of the workforce is based at their Head Office in Swindon and the other half are based all over England, Scotland and Wales, visiting people in the community who can no longer visit a High Street optician without help or assistance.



**One of The Outside Clinic's Optical Dispensers, Sam Millen, providing a free replacement pair of spectacles to raid victim Phyllis Buckles, from Suffolk**

All the optometrists are qualified and registered with the General Optical Council but are also additionally CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) enhanced disclosure and POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) checked. Clinical governance protocol and continuing education and training of all optometric personnel is a high priority when working for The Outside Clinic and even the supporting staff are encouraged to take a national qualification, externally verified to ensure their skill set is kept up to date and they offer the very best of patient care.

The Outside Clinic are also one of the founding members of the Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians (FODO) Domiciliary Eyecare

Committee which was instrumental in putting in place the Code of Practice for Domiciliary Eye Care, which has been adopted by all organisations representing the UK Optical Sector and contributed to by the Department of Health.

The Outside Clinic is uniquely placed to educate and inform national and local organisations and other healthcare professionals about the importance of regular sight testing, to ensure a better quality of life, by being able to make the most of one of the most precious senses – sight! It can also make a crucial difference in ensuring eye health conditions and diseases such as cataracts, glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration are caught early.

Referral for all types of ocular health issues are dealt with through the patient's GP, unless a local direct referral pathway exists. Where the patient wishes to discuss their onward care their Power of Attorney/Next of Kin are encouraged to contact the in-house Optometric Advisor in order to consult with all interested parties.

Following the sight test, The Outside Clinic can offer a full dispensing service, with a choice of frames ranging from completely free spectacles for those that qualify through benefits, through Memory metal, Non allergenic Stainless Steel and Titanium, Rimless, up to designer labels, for those that want something a little more special. A full range of lenses are offered, including all of the modern high index and aspheric lenses, which help to make the spectacles as light and as comfortable as possible. This along with a range of Single Vision, Bifocal and Varifocal Lenses from all of the leading brands such as Zeiss, Essilor (Varilux), Nikon, Rodenstock and many others, ensures that the patient is able to choose a product that will be right for them. All spectacles are individually delivered and fitted and are accompanied by a 'no quibble' 12-month guarantee of product and service.

The Outside Clinic believe their service is second to none and they strive to implement ongoing improvements both for their own staff and their patients.

*Working in association with*

**Lloyds**pharmacy

Your local health authority



They are often requested to participate in the National Falls Awareness Events staged by Help The Aged and other bodies. The latest figures indicate that approximately 89,500 falls requiring hospital treatment occur each year, some directly as a result of visual impairment, which in turn costs the NHS £269 million annually. Regular sight testing could help prevent these frightening figures.

Last year they have helped organise “Dignity and Independence – Transforming Eye Care for Older People”, which is a cross party conference hosted by the Eye health Alliance in association with Help the Aged and the RNIB, the keynote speaker being Ivan Lewis MP, Minister for Care Services.

The Outside Clinic were delighted to welcome Anne Snelgrove, Labour MP for South Swindon, when she visited their Head Office to discuss with Damian Kenning how the lack of awareness regarding a home eye testing service was contributing to a recent finding that 4 million people over 60 are currently not taking up their entitlement to a free eye test.

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The Outside Clinic were delighted to have been the sponsors of the Optical Charity of the Year Award in partnership with Reed Business Information Publications and Optician Magazine. The worthy winners have been Gift of Sight in 2006 and 4 Sight in 2007.

Another charity that has captured some of the aims of The Outside Clinic are Friends of the Elderly ([www.fote.org.uk](http://www.fote.org.uk)) whose Patron is Her Majesty The Queen. Friends of the Elderly have been helping older people since 1905, both at home and in residential care, supporting them to remain living an independent life. They have been chosen as The Outside Clinic’s supported charity for 2007.

The Outside Clinic is pleased to announce that it has joined forces with Lloyds Pharmacy to tackle the chronic under provision of Optometry services to the over 60’s.

Lloyds Pharmacy, the national community based pharmacist with a network of nearly 1700 stores, will now be offering its customers optometry services in association with and through The Outside Clinic. The service will be for those individuals who are unable to attend a High Street Optician.



**Managing Director Damian Kenning meeting with Swindon’s MP Anne Snelgrove**

The RNIB has over recent years continually highlighted the grave issue of under provision of sight testing for the elderly housebound, however recent Government statistics demonstrate that despite these constant reports there has been no significant increase in annual eye examinations in this high risk group. In its most recent report (Older People and Eye Tests) the RNIB drew attention to the lack of awareness within this group. Lloyds Pharmacy, which has a high percentage of elderly customers, is perfectly placed to increase the awareness of this sight saving service. The Outside Clinic with over 20 years experience in delivering home optometry is equally well placed to take the raised awareness through Lloyds Pharmacy to fulfilment and considerable cost savings in terms of reduced falls and ongoing cost to support the partially sighted and blind.

See also:

[www.lloydspharmacy.com/wps/portal/services/homeeyetest](http://www.lloydspharmacy.com/wps/portal/services/homeeyetest)

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community opticians

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