



Picker Experience Network Awards 2025
Category: Support for Caregivers, Friends, and Family

Support for service users with diabetes and a learning disability and their carers

Central Mersey Diabetic Eye Screening Programme

2/10/2025

\Orchestrating a brighter world



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About Us: NEC CARE

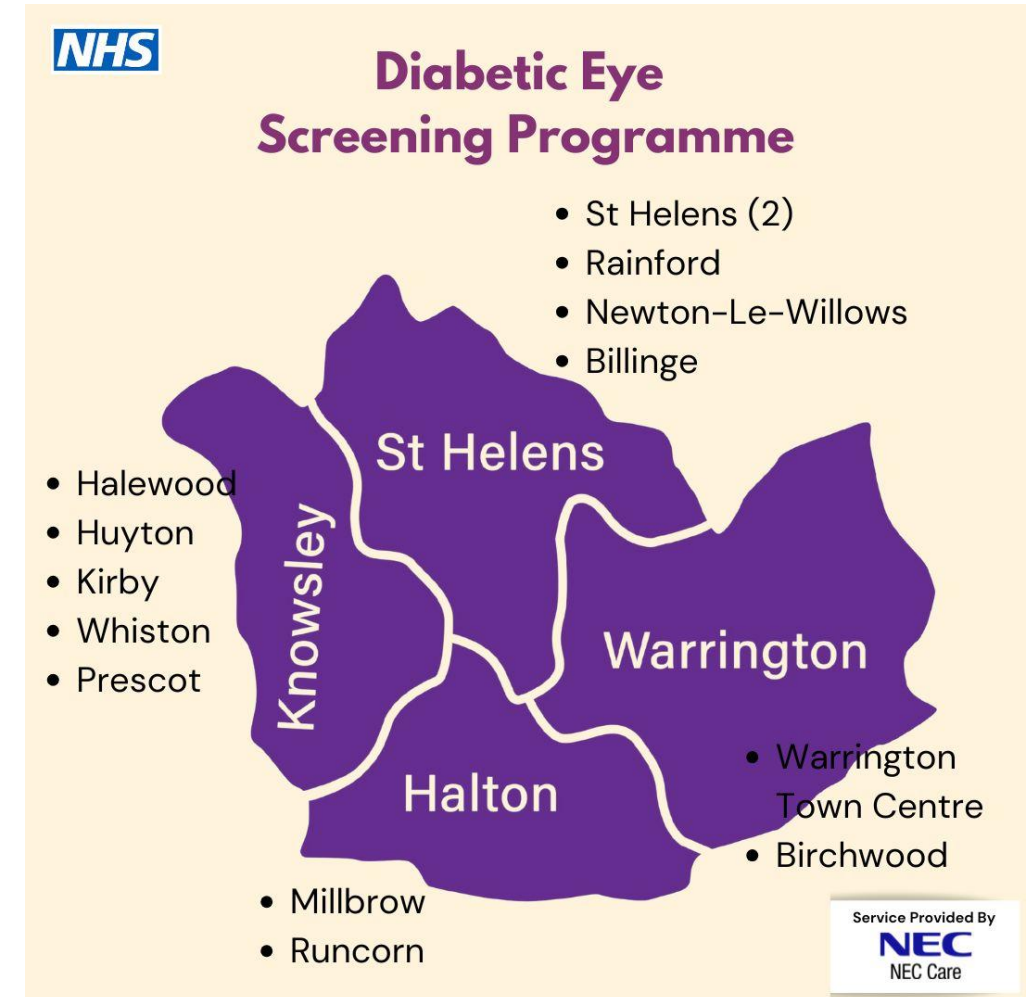
NEC Care provides **Diabetic Eye Screening** services across the UK and Ireland, helping service users with diabetes live healthier lives through excellent, high-quality, and innovative screening services for the NHS.

Our locations cover:

- **Central Mersey (North West of England)**
- Dorset
- BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire
- South West London
- Republic of Ireland

About Us: Central Mersey Diabetic Eye Screening Programme

- Central Mersey: **Halton, Knowsley, St Helens, Warrington**
- **14** regular clinics providing screening service
- Programme Size: over 50,000 eligible service users with diabetes and over the age of 12



Key Issue

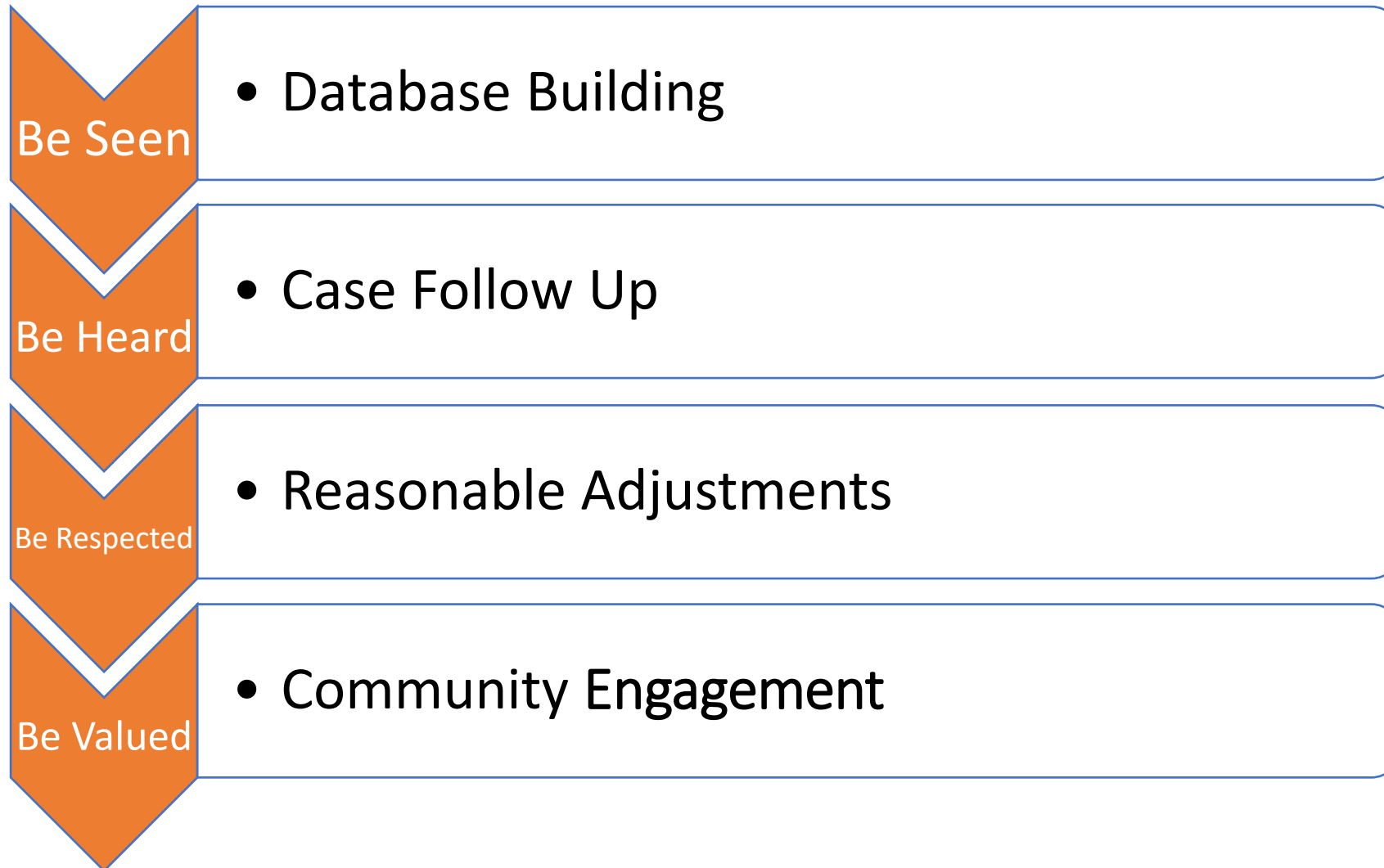
- The needs of patients with a **learning disability (LD)** and their carers may be overlooked because our staff are unable to identify them in the system. There is no standard operating procedure to obtain and process LD data. Without this data, following up with service users and their carers becomes impossible. The chance of re-screening will be higher because we cannot prepare reasonable adjustments for them when attending their appointment.



>> Bridging the Gap <<

- LD Service Users and Carers VS DESP
- Part of Health Equity Audit - Improve user experience

How it works – A Holistic Approach to support service users with a learning disability and their carers





Be Seen: Database Building

- In Optomize*, we could only find 18 eligible service users with LD information.
- There is no automatic LD data transfer from GP2DRS** to Optomize*
- Approached different sources across Central Mersey to obtain LD data, including asking PCNs.
- Finally, we could access the LD data through **Data into Action and build the database accordingly**
- Out of **362** records examined, **348** were found eligible. These records were tagged as "**Mild Learning Disability,**" "**Moderate Learning Disability,**" or "**Severe Learning Disability,**" and marked under "Cognitive Status" as "**Learning Disability**" in the screening software.

*Patient management system for Diabetic Eye Screening Programme

**GP2DRS – a system for transferring data from General Practice to Diabetic Retinopathy Screening



Be Heard: Case Follow Up

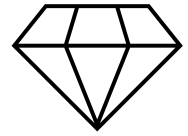
- Analysis of each record, identifying those who persistently missed or had unsuccessful screenings.
- Contacted **54** records, mostly talked to their carers to understand the needs for attending eye screening appointments. Additionally, the administration team made confirmation calls a week before appointments and sent reminders via text message on an on-going basis.
- **Reasons for not attending:** Fear of Eye Drops, Busy, Health Reasons, Don't Value of the Importance of Diabetic Eye Screening



Reasonable Adjustments

After communication with service users and carers, and examination of past screening history, some reasonable adjustments were made, including:

- Need **Slit-lamp Biomicroscopy** Screening (SLB) (a specific machine to examine): 71
- **Picture chart** for more accurate VA test: 51
- **Change location**: 3
- **Longer screening time**: 3
- **Specific appointment time (AM or PM)**: 2
- Other: **Speak slowly / Easy read leaflet / Appointment by post / extra screener**: 4



Community Engagement

- Made LD service users and their carers feel valued and supported
- Information provided to **Knowsley's Carers Hub Newsletters**: Frequently Asked Questions for Carers & OCT update
- **Diabetes Awareness Day** – Seminars for charities supporting people with learning disabilities and their carers (**Creating Adventures** and **Speak Up Warrington**)

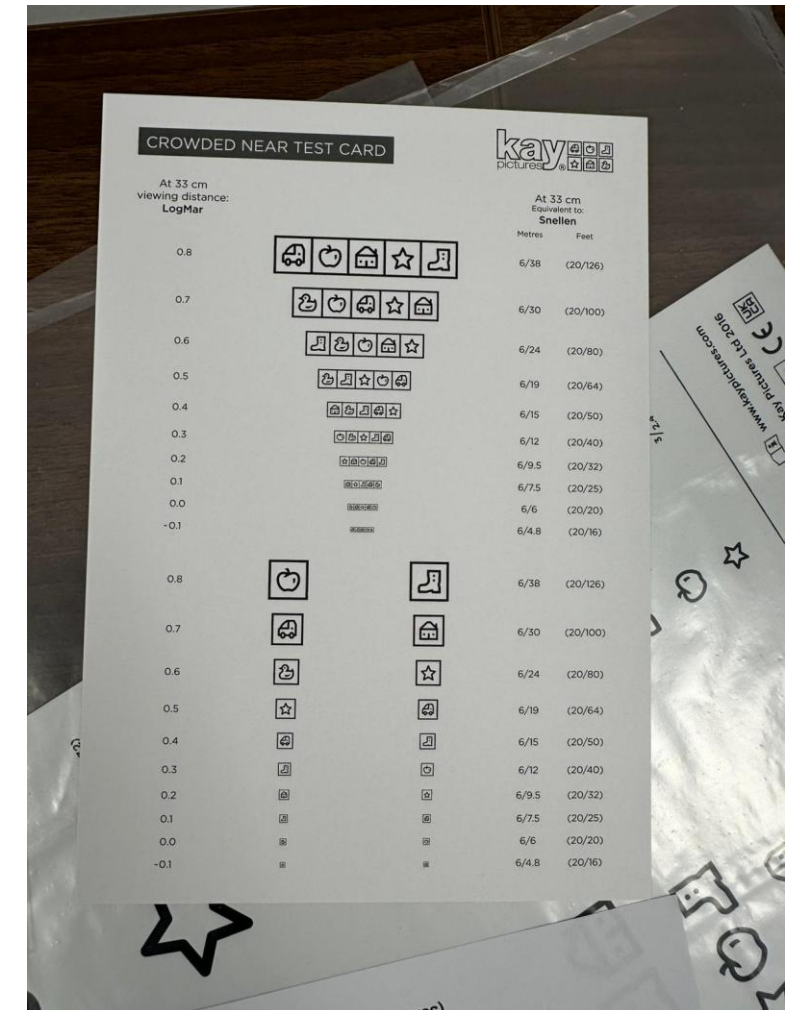


Achievements

- **LD Database** in Optomize has been significantly **updated** (increased from **18** to **362 entries**) : This enhancement makes it possible for our screeners and admin /engagement staff to be better prepared when contacting individuals or during appointments
- **Uptake rate increase** = more successful screening = less stressful to service users and their carers
 - Year 2023 – 13 screened / 23 invited (56.5%)
 - Year 2024 – 83 screened / 136 invited (61%)
 - First Half of 2025 – 92 screened / 131 invited (70%)

Achievements

- Reasonable adjustments – Implementation of **Picture Charts** in every clinics within the Central Mersey Diabetic Eye Screening Programme
Facilitates a more accurate visual acuity assessment for those who cannot recognise alphabetic characters.

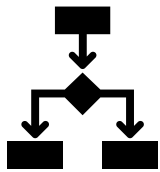


Achievements

- Strong community connection
 - CM DESP representative is a member of Knowsley Learning Disability Partnership Board Sub Group Member and Learning Disability Health Forum Member
- Guest speaker of Speak Up Warrington, Creating Adventures, charities that serving people with a learning disability and their carers



Sustainability



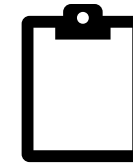
Standard Operating Procedure

(regular data updates and cleansing, ensuring coding and tagging steps in place)



Monthly Data Sync

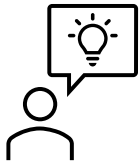
(Short term – data source from “Data Into Action”; Long run – from GP2DRS)



LD User Survey & Easy Read Materials

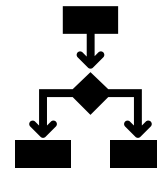
(Future implementation, to further improve user experience.)

Key Learning Points



Think Out of the Box

(Finding right resources may be challenging. Exploring more possibilities. Remember to persist even if your requests are ignored.)



Standard Procedure

(Create a document outlining the process for handling data and implementing follow-ups to ensure no one is overlooked.)



Engagement

(It's crucial to meet and communicate with service targets to understand their needs and assure them of your ongoing support.)

Contact

For more information, please contact:

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NEC

THANK YOU