




**Optical Consumer
Complaints Service**

**OCCS Summer Newsletter -
Including the Latest Trends in
Complaints**



Welcome to the summer newsletter for the Optical Consumer Complaints Service (OCCS). Here we share the highlights from our 2024-25 annual report, plus the details of a case we mediated in which started with a social media mix up.


Annual Report Findings - 2024-25

In June, we published our 2024-25 annual report. The good news was that complaints about optical services fell -4.4% while the number of resolved cases continued to grow.

Last year, we received 1,679 enquiries of which 95% were within the remit of the OCCS. 86% of these cases were resolved – up from 85% the year before.

There were some interesting trends in the data:

- Cataract related complaints increased 70% (from 7-23 year on year)
- Concerns about eye examinations almost doubled
- There was a notable increase in diagnosis-related complaints (jumping from 25 last year to 48 this year)
- After a spike last year, issues around domiciliary healthcare dropped to 63 this year (it was 98 last year)
- Despite the ongoing ‘cost of living crisis’ complaints around charges made up just 4.5% of all enquiries.



The stand-out trend highlighted in the report was the significant uptick in complaints relating to online suppliers. Over the past two years, 75 complaints have been received and the OCCS was unable to assist in over half (55%) because the businesses were not regulated, there was not a GOC registrant involved or the provider was based outside of the UK. In 2024-25 there was 36 cases, with 16 out of remit. This is a trend we’ll be tracking carefully.

Overall, customers and professionals remain happy with the OCCS service they receive, with more than 9/10 people saying they would recommend us to others.


Want to know more? Read the full report [here](#).

A Cautionary Tale About Social Media Advertising

A consumer was prompted to book a sight test after seeing a social media advertisement mentioning ‘free sight tests’. After attending the appointment and being issued their prescription, they discovered there was a sight test charge to be paid which had not been mentioned before.

The consumer felt embarrassed and misled and raised a complaint with the practice. The practice advised that the social media advert was for a scheme which included ‘free sight tests’ as a benefit.

The consumer felt the response to their complaint was dismissive and did not address the lack of clarity in the social media advert or the lack of discussion around pricing from members of the team at any point in their journey from booking to test.





The consumer escalated their complaint to the OCCS. We listened to their concerns and provided an acknowledgement of the customer's experience and feelings. Further clarity and learnings were identified for the practice, following the customer's feedback of the advert wording.

As a goodwill gesture, the practice refunded the sight test fee, and the case was closed.

Social media is a cost-effective and popular way of advertising your practice to consumers, however it's important to ensure your online communications are clear and not misleading to potential customers to avoid any confusion and complaints later down the line.

Contact Sue Clark sclark@nockolds.co.uk for more information or to book a CPD event for your LOC or employer.

