

# Exploring public perceptions of optical services in the UK

The annual 2025 representative survey findings aim to inform the policy work conducted at both the General Optical Council and stakeholder bodies across the optical sector. The full report can be found [here](#).



**Last visit...**

**80%** have been for a sight test/eye examination in the last two years

**87%** say their needs were properly addressed during their visit

**83%** felt involved in decisions about their care and treatment

**87%** are satisfied with their overall experience of the opticians/optometrist practice

**Satisfaction is lowest amongst younger respondents (aged 16-24), ethnic minorities and those with a disability**

**Confidence in the professions**

**93%** are confident in receiving a high standard of care from an opticians/optometrist practice

**Compared to:**

- 78%** GP practices/surgeries
- 80%** Dental practices/surgeries
- 86%** Pharmacies (Down from 89% in 2024)

**Where to go in an emergency?**

- 36%** Opticians/Optomtetrst practice
- 27%** GP practice (Down from 30% in 2024)
- 14%** Pharmacist (Up from 12% in 2024)

**53%** Scotland (Up from 44% in 2024)

**44%** Northern Ireland

**53%** Wales (Up from 43% in 2024)

**33%** England

**England are the least likely nation to say they would go to an opticians/optometrist practice first if they had an eye problem**

Young people (aged 16-24) and ethnic minorities are more likely to go to an eye hospital

**Shopping habits...**

**31%** shopped around before selecting which opticians/optometrist practice to go to

**24%** felt pressured to purchase a specific brand/type of glasses or contact lenses

**Cost**  
The most commonly cited reasons for discomfort around visiting an opticians/optometrist practice are associated with money

**Experience of discrimination**  
**12%** feel they were treated less favourably based on characteristics such as age, gender, weight, race, or disability

**Complaints**

**7%** made a complaint about their experience at an opticians/optometrist practice

**73%** were satisfied with the outcome of their complaint