

GOC ITT: Commercial practices and patient safety

GOC's response to queries

Q. Is the requirement for five focus groups?

- Patient organisations
- GOC registrants
- Optical businesses
- Non-regulated eye care staff
- Other non-regulated eye care staff

GOC response: We would like agencies to advise on how many focus groups they can provide for the budget, but that would be a minimum of four (non-regulated staff would be grouped together).

Q. Do you have an expected number of participants per group?

GOC response: We would like agencies to advise on the number of participants they can provide based on the budget.

Q. What does publishable standards mean?

GOC response: In relation to publishable standards, please look on our website at previous research reports. I don't have a definition of 'publishable' but we would expect a high quality and robust report. [Policy and research](#)

Q. Is there a particular publication you are aiming for this to be submitted to or is this designed so it is publishable on a website?

GOC response: We are just publishing the report on our website.

Q. Is there an example of the type of document you want produced?

GOC response: As stated above, please look on our website for examples of reports we have previously published.

Q. Proposal structure: do you have any preferences on the proposal length/structure/format?

GOC response: No, we don't have a preference for the proposal structure.

Q. Thematic Review: we note the thematic review on commercial practices and patient safety in the primary eye care sector is due to be published in June 2026, will you be able to share insights from other strands of activity with the successful supplier to inform research tool design/sampling?

GOC response: Yes, we can share insights from the wider project.

Q. Non-GOC regulated staff/optical assistants:

- **Do you know (roughly) how many non-GOC regulated staff / optical assistants there are?**

GOC response: No, we don't have an approximation for unregulated staff unfortunately.

- **Could you please confirm whether you require this group to be engaged at all, e.g. do you require some insights from them, or could they be de-prioritised to enable greater involvement by others?**

GOC response: We would like some engagement with the unregulated staff in order to get some insights from this group.

Q. Socio-economic background: could you please clarify how you define this internally?

GOC response: I would suggest looking at our public perceptions report page 59 under 'annual income': [PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Q. Welsh Language requirements: we note the GOC is a UK-wide regulator, can you clarify whether you expect there to be any Welsh language requirements for reporting and/or fieldwork?

GOC response: No, we wouldn't expect there to be any Welsh language requirements.

Q. Incentives: would you consider incentives to be appropriate, to encourage participation?

GOC response: Yes, we would consider incentives

Q. Data transfer: please can you confirm you do not expect to receive transcripts or notes of interviews (as this risks people not speaking freely)?

GOC response: No, we wouldn't expect to see transcripts or notes.

Q. In the research questions it asks to understand the nature and extent commercial practices in the eye care sector - can you expand on expectations regarding a measurement of extent given the qualitative approach and sample limitations?

GOC response: The research is just one of the methods we are using as part of our thematic review into commercial practices and patient safety. We understand the limitations you have outlined but it's still important that we hear first hand from different stakeholder groups to get a more in-depth understanding.

Q. The brief outlines patient organisations as a proxy to understand patient experience/ views - could you expand on the type of organisations these may be, including spread/ approximate number and the level of lived experience understanding they would be able to bring to the research.

GOC response: We probably have around 4-6 that we can ask to take part including charities from the eye care sector, but we would like to finalise our approach with the appointed agency. We would expect them to be able to bring a good level of insight from the groups of patients they represent.

Q. You specify one focus group with patient organisations and that you can provide details for this; are we right to assume that this is a group of representatives of patient organisations that you have convened previously for other projects? We're interested to know why only one group rather than separate depth interviews.

GOC response: Yes, we've engaged with these patient organisations before. We are open to other ways of engaging such as in-depth interviews.

Q. Have you raised awareness through social media/e bulletins before with optical businesses? How successful was this?

GOC response: We have raised awareness of previous research projects via social media before but with limited success for optical businesses.

Q. Have you previously conducted any other research that was similarly potentially controversial/sensitive in nature that you can point us to?

GOC response: The only other research that is potentially sensitive in nature is the lived experience research into harassment, bullying, abuse and discrimination: [Other research](#)

Q. Does the report need to be a separate report in Word? Could it be a fuller Powerpoint version of a debrief deck?

GOC response: We are open to different ways of presenting the research.

Q. Point 17 - could you please define what you mean by stakeholders here?

GOC response: Stakeholders refer to the groups that we want to hear from i.e. registrants, non-regulated optical staff, optical businesses and patient organisations.

Q. Point 17 - could you please clarify what is meant by conducting research with this group first and then finalising the research methodology?

GOC response: We are not conducting any research before finalising the methodology.

Q. Point 18 - what do you aim to understand from optical businesses?

GOC response: Please refer to paragraph 4 in the ITT – we are seeking the views of businesses, for example, on the balance between providing safe patient care whilst operating in a commercial environment.

Q. Point 18 - does the GOC expect the method used to be focus groups for all audiences?

GOC response: We would like agencies to suggest which methodology they think is suitable.

Q. Point 18 - as the research aims to understand experiences of eye care, should the sample for patients and public be mainly or entirely patients (e.g. visited an opticians in the last year)

GOC response: We are not looking to engage directly with patients and the public, but rather with patient organisations.