

26 May 2026

## **Survey of Ophthalmic Support Staff Education and Training**

This FOI request is for information about the numbers of ophthalmic support staff working in Eye / Ophthalmology departments in NHS Hospitals, their pay scales and their education and training. *We request that you enter information into the attached table.*

Ophthalmic support staff are not registered professionals and have a range of job titles. The list below is not inclusive, and the job titles may include “Senior”, “Clinical” and “Healthcare Science”

Healthcare Assistant  
Ophthalmic Assistant  
Orthoptic Assistant  
Ophthalmic Technician  
Ophthalmic Science Practitioner  
Ophthalmic Associate Practitioner  
Ophthalmic Assistant Practitioner

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From: Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

For each category of staff please provide the following information:

Job title* (specify)	No of staff	Pay bands (state 2, 3, 4 etc.)	Education and training** Please ✓ or add details as appropriate	
Senior Nursing Assistant Ophthalmology	11	11 x Band 3	In house	X
			CPD	X
			External course, include title and course provider	
			Other (please describe)	X Learn HSC NI
Nursing Assistant Ophthalmology	1	1 x Band 2	In house	x
			CPD	x
			External course, include title and course provider	
			Other (please describe)	X Learn HSC NI
Assistant Ophthalmic Science Practitioner	1	1 x Band 3	In house	X
			CPD	X
			External course, include title and course provider	
			Other (please describe)	X Learn HSC NI
	25	25 x Band 5	In house	X
			CPD	X

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Ophthalmic Science Practitioner			External course, include title and course provider	Certificate of Higher Education in Optical Coherence Tomography Capture, University of Gloucestershire.
			Other (please describe)	X Learn HSC NI
Senior Ophthalmic Science Practitioner	2	2 x Band 6	In house	X
			CPD	X
			External course, include title and course provider	University Diploma in OCT Interpretation, University of Gloucestershire. Professional Certificate in Medical Retina, University of Ulster.
			Other (please describe)	X Learn HSC NI
Advanced Ophthalmic Science Practitioner	3	3 x Band 7	In house	X
			CPD	X
			External course, include title and course provider	University Diploma in OCT Interpretation, University of Gloucestershire. Professional Certificate in Medical Retina, University of Ulster. Postgraduate Diploma in Healthcare Leadership and Management.
			Other (please describe)	X Learn HSC NI

\*Job titles, see list below, job titles may include “Senior”, “Clinical” and “Healthcare Science”

Healthcare Assistant  
 Ophthalmic Assistant  
 Orthoptic Assistant  
 Ophthalmic Technician  
 Ophthalmic Science Practitioner  
 Ophthalmic Assistant Practitioner

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**Ophthalmic Associate Practitioner  
Other, please specify**

**\*\*Education and training**

**In house i.e. provided solely by the employer in the workplace.**

**Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses documented by a certificate of attendance.**

**External courses with a curriculum, learning outcomes and documented assessment of knowledge and/or competence.**

**Please provide course title, and the name of the organisation / institution providing the course.**

**Other education and training not listed above.**

*\* Where numbers are low we have put <5 rather than state the actual figure. To ensure that patient remain non identifiable. Disclosure of this information would breach the first data protection principle, which relates to the fair and lawful processing of personal data. Therefore, we have concluded that this information is exempt from disclosure under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act - Personal Information relating to a third party.*