

Executive Summary

National Eye Health Week

18-24 September 2023

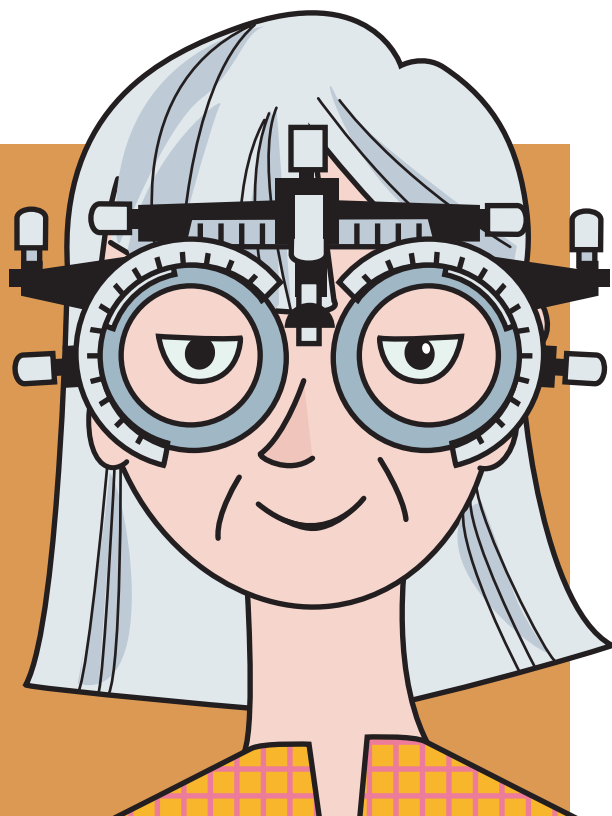
#VisionMatters

About National Eye Health Week (NEHW)

NEHW is an annual public health promotion led by the charity Eye Health UK. In 2023 the awareness week took place 18 to 24 September.

The Week provides a unique platform that brings together government, health and social care, business, charities, community groups and others to shine a light on the importance of good eye care.

It aims to increase uptake of routine eye tests and encourage more of us to make healthy lifestyle choices to benefit eye health – actions that will reduce avoidable sight loss and improve the emotional and physical health of people living in the UK.



Daily themes

Each day of the Week had a specific theme to keep messaging fresh and ensure the campaign reached the widest possible audience. In 2023 these included:

NHS Eye Care & Support – highlighting eligibility for NHS sight tests and optical vouchers plus a look at the range of services provided by high street opticians.

Myopia and Me – A tween to teen campaign highlighting increasing levels of myopia, why early diagnosis is important and advances in myopia management and control.

Digital Eye Care – Top tips to prevent screen fatigue whilst at work, rest and play.

Eye on Mental Health – With 55% of us saying our vision takes a toll on our emotional well-being¹ we

explored the links between your eye health and mental well-being.

Live Well, See Well – How lifestyle factors such as smoking, diet and exercise can influence eye health.

Participation

More than 3,500 individuals and organisations used our resources to help spread the word on eye health during the Week, including Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England, Birmingham City Council, Healthwatch, Liberty London, IKEA stores, Visionary, local Brownie packs and schools.

Health promotion tools

We provided a host of free resources to help supporters share important advice about looking after your eyes.

These included posters, leaflets, flyers, kids' activity sheets, social media graphics and posts.

We also provided resources in alternative languages to help ensure advice was accessible for some more hard to reach groups.

The Vision Matters website also had links to an interactive eye health quiz, podcast and vision simulator.

The vision simulator allowed people to get a glimpse of what it's like to live with a sight threatening eye condition.

continued overleaf...

Footnotes

1. Eye Q Report, 2022
2. NHS Sight Test Data (2019/23).
3. Source College of Optometrists,
4. Search engine analytics
5. Sight test levy analysis.

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Eye Health UK registered charity number 1086146



**NATIONAL EYE
HEALTH WEEK**
MONDAY 18 – SUNDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2023
YOUR VISION MATTERS

Highlights

A national media campaign encouraged people to 'get back into the habit' of having regular eye tests, after data showed 4.7 million NHS sight tests have been lost since the pandemic disrupted people's healthcare routines² and 1 in 5 of us have postponed or cancelled a sight test in the past year due to cost concerns.³

A new map identified pockets of the UK at increased risk of future sight loss caused by the four most common causes of eye disease – age-related macular degeneration (AMD), cataracts, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy. See fig 1.

An Early Day Motion marking NEHW drew the attention of the House of Commons to the need for improved eye care.

A motion raised in the Scottish Parliament by Annie Wells, MSP acknowledged the important work of NEHW and that it urges anyone who is due an eye test to get in contact with their optician and book an appointment.

Publication of Vista, the official NEHW magazine featuring an exclusive interview with Katie Piper OBE and a host of other great health, lifestyle, fashion and beauty articles designed to help it's 1/4 million readers keep their eyes and vision healthy.

Katie Piper shared Vista with her 1.1 Million Instagram followers.

New guidance on how to be 'screen smart' to prevent poor eye health when looking at screens for prolonged periods was released.

Our live well, see well activity included a set of recipe cards featuring dishes created by celebrity chef, Marcus Wareing.

The mouthwatering recipes were jam packed with essential eye-friendly nutrients.

Tricia Sail, winner of BBC TV's Race Across The World provided inspiration to those living with visual impairment as she told how her own sight loss hasn't dimmed her sense of adventure.

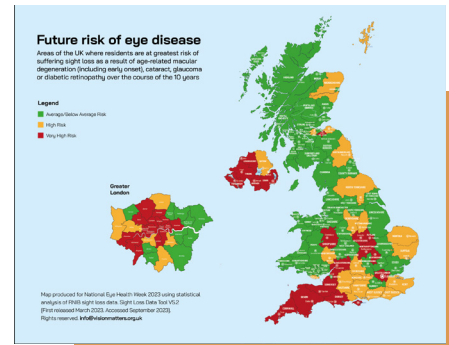


fig 1.

Community events saw eye health information stands popping up in supermarkets, hospitals, high streets and work places across the country.

NEHW in action! A class of pre-schoolers from Little Darlings Nursery in Harrow, west London were treated to a tour of their local opticians during NEHW, where they spent two hours learning about eye health, what happens during a sight test and looking at the spectacle frames.

Following this visit two of the 10 pupils have since been prescribed glasses for previously undetected vision impairments.

Results

The campaign enjoyed good levels of engagement, visibility and media share of voice.

More than 1,600 pieces of press coverage were generated, including BBC TV, local radio, national newspapers & consumer magazines, combined these had a reach of 610 Million (OTS).

The social conversation on eye health had a reach of more than 20 million with the Week trending on X (formerly Twitter) on 18 September.

Internet searches around eye health rose 36% during the Week.⁴

There was a clear up-tick in the number of sight tests conducted post NEHW.⁵

“ **Regular sight tests are essential for everyone** ”

Health Minister Neil O'Brien for NEHW



With thanks to our official partners - Asda Opticians, Central Optical Fund and Specsavers.