

## Press Release

**August 2006**

### **1<sup>st</sup> Retinal Screen wins contract to provide Diabetic Retinopathy Screening service at Kensington and Chelsea PCT and Westminster PCT**

Following the success of their service at Swindon and Kennet & North Wiltshire PCTs, 1<sup>st</sup> Retinal Screen have been awarded the contract to implement their ground breaking Diabetic Retinopathy Screening programme at Kensington and Chelsea PCT and Westminster PCT.

The retinopathy service is for people with diabetes who are at risk of becoming visually impaired. By enabling patients who have diabetes to be screened early on, the service aims to reduce the number of patients with diabetic-related blindness. Around 11000 people are registered as having diabetes within Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea GP practices.

The screening involves a digital camera rather than a physical eye examination and patients who are identified as having the condition will be referred for further treatment. The new service also offers flexible eye screening appointment times – those invited to attend are able to select the date and time of their appointment at any one of four screening centres in the Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea boroughs.

Westminster Primary Care Trust Service Development Manager, Paul Crooks, said:

“Before we offered this service, we were unable to monitor the standard of screening nor were we able to monitor patients’ progress properly. The new service ensures patients have a high quality, consistent and co-ordinated

approach to screening, which should significantly reduce the number of people in Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea with diabetic-related blindness.”

Mike Nelson from 1<sup>st</sup> Retinal Screen said:

“Early treatment is essential in preventing loss of sight. It is estimated that 90% of patients affected by diabetic retinopathy, who receive early treatment, will continue to lead normal lives. Our service can help PCTs achieve the government targets for the introduction of this screening programme across England.”

This free service is available for all people with diabetes registered with a GP within the two boroughs, provided they are aged 12 years and over.

**- Ends -**

**For further information please contact**

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