



**London Borough
of Hounslow**

Equality Objective 2 - Minimising disadvantage experienced by blind and partially sighted residents 2014 – 2018

The evidence base for adopting equality objective 2

Hounslow Vision (Right to Sight) Strategy 2014-2020 and the Action Plan to tackle sight loss as a key equalities objective for the Council and by Hounslow Health and Well Being Board is an approved strategy which prioritises and co-ordinates service improvements between health, social care and third sector partners for Blind and partially sighted residents of Hounslow.

It describes the impact of sight loss across Hounslow and how local organisations are working together to tackle the challenges that people face every day of sight loss.

Local organisations, professionals and people affected by sight loss have formed a partnership to tackle avoidable sight loss and make sure that together we are working to improve life for visually impaired people across Hounslow by agreeing the Hounslow Vision Strategy Action Plan 2014- 2020.

Prevalence, trends and costs associated with visual impairment

According to 2015 projections, Hounslow's population is 271,800, this is an increase of 1.7% over the previous year. There are approximately 1465 people registered as living with sight loss in Hounslow.

The main reasons for the increase are:-

- ageing population: sight loss is directly linked to ageing
- make up of our local population: some age groups and communities are more at risk of sight loss than others
- lifestyle factors that put people at increased risk of sight loss.

Of the 1,465 people currently registered as having a visual impairment in Hounslow, 780 are registered as blind and 685 as partially sighted. Some people who are eligible to register do not do so, others may be waiting for treatment and not be given the 'certificate of vision impairment' that precedes registration, and others may not understand, or have explained, the benefits of registration and so may not take up, or be given, the offer of a CVI.

Sight loss affects people of all ages across Hounslow, but is more common among older people because age increases the risk of health conditions that cause sight loss. One in five people aged 75 and over is living with sight loss and one in two people aged 90 and over is living with sight loss.

Progress update for period July 2014 to July 2015

The Hounslow Vision Strategy Action Plan details the following to mitigate against unnecessary sight loss:-

1. Promoting eye health and preventing sight loss
2. Diagnosis and treatment
3. Support for the newly diagnosed
4. Independent living – getting out and about
5. Independent living – access and participation

The coordination group that is responsible for the Right to Sight Action plan agreed that the partnership should focus annually on one theme. From April 2014 to March

2015 it was decided that the partnership will focus on Theme 1 'Promoting eye Health and Preventing Sight Loss.'

Hounslow and its partners have made the following progress in implementing the strategy's aims of:-

- raise awareness and understanding of eye health, particularly focusing on people most at risk of eye disease
- encourage every individual to develop personal responsibility for their eye health and sight
- raise awareness of eye health and the impact of sight loss among health and social care practitioners and ensure the early detection of sight loss and prevention where possible.

The outcomes over the last 12months have included:-

- Vision Matters Conference - Reducing sight loss in Hounslow
This was held in October 2014 at the Civic Centre with multi-agency participation and was attended by over 150 people.
- Goldy Goldy Asian Women's Group in Heston. Presentation given to over 30 Asian women in January 2015.
- Vision Matters Conference - Reducing sight loss in Hounslow
This was held in June 2015 at the Wellington Day Centre with multi-agency participation and was attended by over 60 people.
- Vision Matters Conference - Reducing sight loss in Hounslow
This was held in June 2015 at the Shree Jalaram Seva Trust Hindu religious temple with multi-agency participation and was attended by over 25 people.