

# “I was devastated, frightened... and NOW I know I have SUPPORT”



## NCBI Eye Clinic Liaison Officer (ECLO)

The Eye Clinic Liaison service operates in the Mater and Temple Street, St. Vincent's and The Eye and Ear Hospitals. They provide **information, guidance, reassurance and support** bridging the gap between clinical services in the hospital with patients and their families and support services in the community after hospital **from initial diagnosis through all the life cycle stages with NCBI.**

## What are the CHALLENGES?

We at NCBI are:

### 1) Providing an Eye Clinic Liaison service

We provide **emotional support** to an individual from diagnosis and inform them of all the supports and aids available through our services and others enabling them to have a better quality of life for the future. We **provide timely referrals** to community-based services and a plan going forward.

### 2) Aiming to expand our service to address increased demand & current lack of support

The Department of Health needs to work with NCBI to ensure ECLO's are in the right place at the right time across Ireland's major eye clinics reducing the burden on ophthalmologists and clinic-based staff and the **huge waiting lists, 43,455 the highest ever recorded to date.** This does not include cataract waiting lists. Many are forced to go to Northern Ireland as otherwise their sight could deteriorate further. **We can aid and ease the pressure on hospital services.**



“I have met babies only weeks old with their frightened and bewildered parents who have started an unplanned journey together and are not sure what is ahead of them. The ECLO meeting them at an early stage helps them to feel less alone and if and when further support is required they feel more able to take that step.”

**Hilary Devlin, ECLO Liaison Officer,  
Temple St & Eye & Ear Hospitals**

## We have four SOLUTIONS

1. **Pilot Programme across all three major hospital eye departments in Dublin—** Enabling NCBI to provide the best service possible from the very beginning of diagnosis.
2. **Expand further nationally —** More eye clinics
3. **Provide additional support services —** NCBI additional Services through all life cycle stages
4. **Liaise and build on partnerships —** with Department of Health, patients, ophthalmologists and clinical staff.

## Sight Loss Figures

**54,810** People with significant sight loss. NCBI works with over **6,500** each year. And **2,000** new referrals each year

# Priority Projects



## PROJECTS—Costs, Location, Impact

### 1. Pilot Programme—

NCBI is currently piloting two ECLOs across three major Dublin hospitals which commenced in 2019. This is following the success of such a programme in the UK. The ECLO is there to listen, offer emotional support and signpost to appropriate services. The ECLO also has a role in advocating on behalf of the patient and provides information and training to the hospital staff for example sighted guide training.

### 2. Expand ECLO Services —

Expand across all Eye Clinics nationwide to address growing demand. There is a growing demand for ECLO's across all Eye Clinics nationwide as our aging population is living longer and sight deteriorates with age. We need to ensure patients are supported and do not deteriorate further, which would put additional pressure on national health services.

### 3. Continue to provide services & support—

NCBI Services — Counselling, technology, mobility, day services, education, training, employment, camps, sports and advocacy. We also provide a dedicated **Family Therapy Service** which offers individuals, couples and families a safe supportive space to explore the impact of sight loss or a diagnosis of a progressive eye condition on themselves, their partner, their child or family member.

### 4. Liaise and build on Partnerships

#### Department of Health —

- Needs to ensure **more timely access** to people awaiting outpatient ophthalmic services.
- Needs to introduce a target for eye care patients based on the **urgency of the condition**, alongside referral to treatment targets to prevent avoidable blindness.
- **Support Clinical Staff** and ensure that those visually impaired avail of early intervention and a focused support plan for the future.



## Our OFFERING —Expertise

Our strategy aims to provide a quality service through support and representative consultation ensuring the best possible quality of life for our service users and their families.

#### We aid in three areas :

- 1) Quality Advice and Expertise**—from first diagnosis and throughout all stages of life.
- 2) Additional Support Services** —supporting services and opportunities through NCBI.
- 3) Established Partnerships** and provide representation.

**Come** be a partner in empowering those with sight loss and visual impairment.

#### HELP NCBI provide every individual with:

- Reassurance
- Direction and Focus
- A Pathway to Progress
- Skills & Training
- Improved Access & Opportunities
- Peer to peer engagement
- Improved Quality of Life

#### Further Information

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**NCBI**  
Working for People  
with Sight Loss