



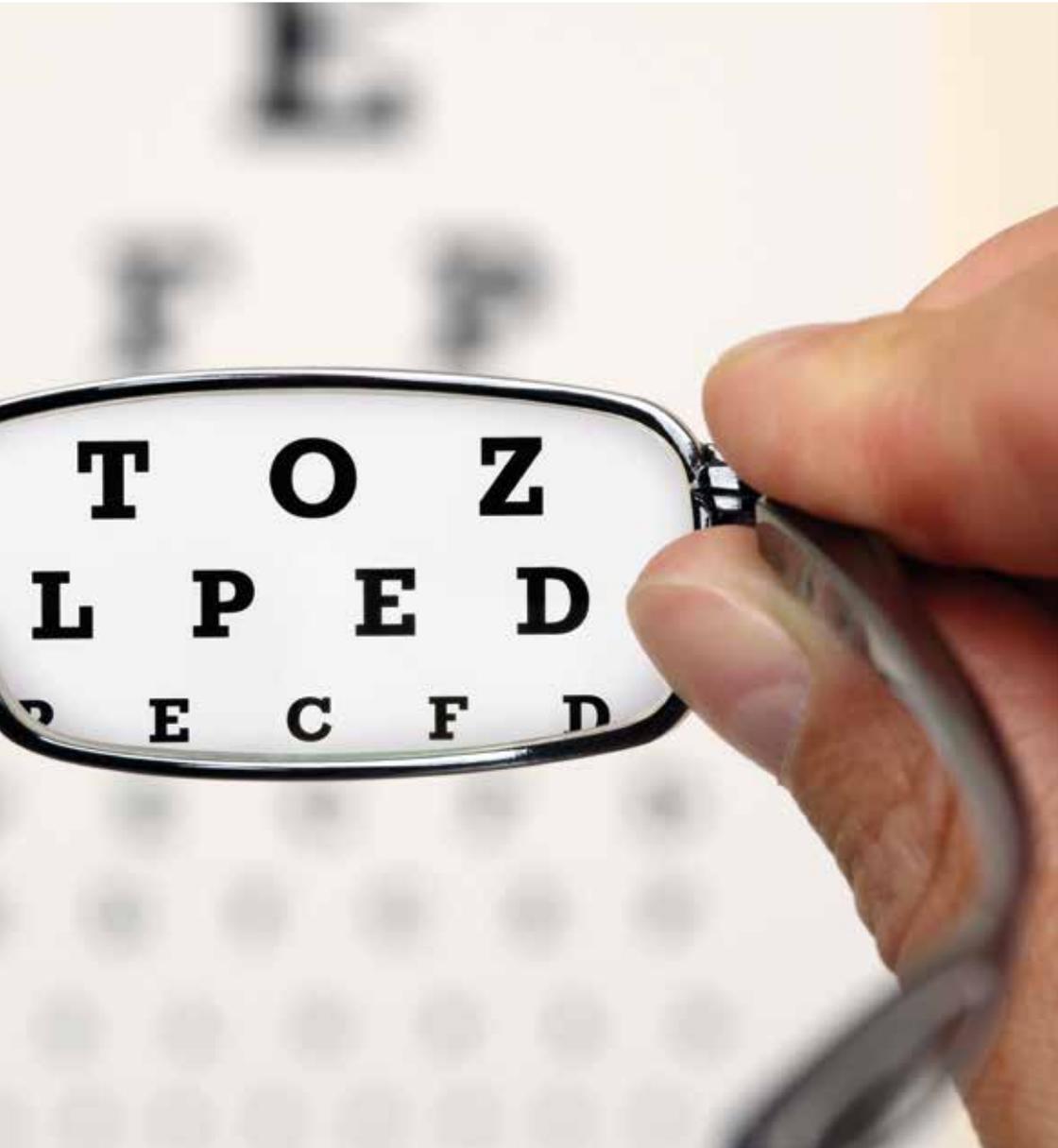
# Top tips for **Optometry**

for people with learning disabilities

**R N I B**

---

See differently



## 1. Before the appointment

Check whether a longer appointment time, or multiple appointments may be required.

## 2. Essential Information

Check if carers can provide information on:

- Symptoms and reasons for visit. Previous prescriptions or glasses
- History of patient's and family eye problems
- Current medications
- Hobbies and activities for which the patient may require glasses.

## 3. Environment

Remember the patient has to negotiate the shop front and practice staff. Are there aspects of the waiting areas or bits of communication that may need to be adapted for this patient? If so make

sure the changes are in place and colleagues know what to do beforehand.

## 4. Welcoming

Take a little time to get to know your patient. Gain their confidence, find out what they like and don't like, reassure them that you are not going to hurt them.

## 5. Include family members/carers

Carers may be anxious about the appointment so try to put them at ease too. Carers often also have useful advice on making the appointment go well – they can help too.

## 6. Explain what you are doing

Ensure that the patient is aware of what will happen in the test and in what order things will take place so that they can anticipate what comes next.

Offer a running commentary on what comes next in the process for example, explain that you are about to shine a torch in their eye and that it will be bright but that it will not hurt. Let the patient know how long it will last.

## 7. Be respectful

Talk to the patient first and foremost, (Do not talk to the carer /family member and ignore the patient).

Listen to what the patient is communicating whether verbally or with their actions and behaviour.

Remember that the patient may be frightened and unsure – you may have to pause in the process to let them catch up.

## 8. Try different approaches

Use varied testing equipment i.e. Cardiff cards, Kay's Pictures. Where possible adapt the process to get the best outcome.

## 9. What next?

Carers may have been focused on helping the appointment go well. Ask if they would like information written down for them so that they can understand the outcome and any other points to be followed up, later. Advice may have to be shared around a whole team of support staff.

## 10. Glasses

If your patient is going to choose glasses make sure that practice staff understand how best to help them with this.

Supported by:



Follow us online:



[facebook.com/rnibuk](https://facebook.com/rnibuk)



[twitter.com/RNIB](https://twitter.com/RNIB)



[youtube.com/user/rnibuk](https://youtube.com/user/rnibuk)

**[rnib.org.uk](https://rnib.org.uk)**

A registered charity in England and Wales (1156629) and Scotland (SC044876). A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England and Wales (08971500). Registered office 105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE.