**Preliminary Market Engagement**

**The Provision of HMP (His Majesty’s Prisons) General Ophthalmic Service**

**August 2025**

**Project Reference: PROC.78.0074 HMP GOS**

**Preliminary Market Engagement Notice**

BSOL (Birmingham and Solihull) Procurement Collaborative (hosted by University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust) acting on behalf of Birmingham Community Healthcare (BCHC) to advise the market of a collaborative procurement exercise and intention to issue a tender opportunity for the provision of HMP (His Majesty’s Prisons) General Ophthalmic Service.

The service provision is one commissioned and provided through BCHC.

Part of the initial process includes Provider Market Engagement (PME) with the Trusts looking to engage with Provider(s) for feedback regarding service delivery.

**Introduction to Preliminary Market Engagement**

This PME allows BCHC the opportunity to engage with the market and encourages the commercial and voluntary sectors to participate in the development process before a procurement is released. The market can express its views, outline market developments, provide insights into innovative and effective approaches for delivery and potentially influence how solutions to BCHC’s needs might be met. By engaging in the market, BCHC hopes to foster stronger partnerships with providers that share a commitment to improving public health outcomes and provide value for money in the community.

**Disclaimer**

The Authority does not warrant any of the statements made in the PME and expressly informs organisations that information given out at the PME stage is liable to change; even information set out as statements of fact.

The Authority has a duty to avoid the distortion of competition and to adhere to the procurement principles and transparency requirements required by The Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023. It will take all necessary measures to discharge this duty, including (for example) making relevant information from this market engagement available to candidates and tenderers in a future procurement and maintaining suitable records of correspondence. Accordingly, no information supplied by the market during this engagement, either in written response or in discussion between interested organisations and the Authority as part of the market engagement process will be considered confidential or will be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Any future procurement will be conducted in accordance with The Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023.

No expense in responding to this market engagement will be reimbursed by the Authority.

**Summary of Service**

This HMP General Ophthalmic Service refers to all prisoners at HMP Birmingham. All prisoners are entitled to the full range of NHS services including routine appointments and urgent appointments where required (details on urgent appointments in Draft Spec). Urgent referrals are to be seen within seven days of referral. The Healthcare Provider will ensure that appointment lengths are tailored to meet the clinical needs of the patient. Each appointment is expected to be at least 15-25 minutes in duration. Additional time may be needed e.g. for spectacle fitting.

An appropriate number of sessions must be delivered to meet the needs of the population and to provide suitable access to prisoners, equivalent to that within the community. Hours of operation will be Wednesday Morning weekly and a VIP Clinic once a month on a Thursday (dates TBC) from 08:30 -12:00. Each session will include administration time and will last 3.5 hours.

The contract is planned to run from 01 April 2025 to 31 October 2029.

**Aims & Objectives**

To optimise prisoner vision and minimise avoidable visual disability, mortality and other morbidity by providing high quality care that meets the needs of adults with ophthalmic problems. To ensure that adults have their ophthalmic plans coordinated. To ensure prisoner are treated in line with national guidelines and agree local pathways.

The Healthcare Provider will deliver:

* Eye assessment to include the assessment of ocular health, to include glaucoma testing.
* Detection and diagnosis of ocular disease.
* Checking for signs and symptoms of general health conditions (e.g. diabetes).
* Prescription, supply and fitting of NHS spectacles, including minor adjustments and repairs.
* Providing advice as appropriate.
* Referral to medical practitioners if necessary.
* Diabetic retinopathy screening. This may either be delivered directly by the Healthcare Provider if they have the appropriate training and equipment or through arrangements with a community Healthcare Provider.

**Outcomes & Benefits**

Key Health and Justice Outcomes:

* Contributing to the population’s improved health through the effective detection and management of sight problems and eye disease.
* Services as delivered as part of an integrated healthcare service as set out within the full range of service specifications within this contract.
* Service delivery is equitable to the community.
* Patients receive timely, efficient services which enhance their health and wellbeing.
* Robust continuity of care arrangements are in place to support patients on release or transfer to another establishment.

**Population**

The services described in this specification must be available to all prisoners within HMP Birmingham.

**Social Value**

The Authority’s expectation is that the provider will contribute positively towards delivery of the Authority’s Social Value Policy ambitions, delivering tangible and meaningful added social value outputs to the local community of Birmingham and Solihull.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires the Authority to have regard to economic, social and environmental implications of the tendering exercise within the local area. It will cover, looking beyond the price of each individual contract and looking at what the collective benefit to a community is when a public body chooses to award a contract.

*Link to Procurement Policy Notice 06/20:* [*https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0620-taking-account-of-social-value-in-the-award-of-central-government-contracts*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0620-taking-account-of-social-value-in-the-award-of-central-government-contracts)

**Match my Project**

Match My Project provides a platform for businesses and the community to come together and improve their local area. It matches the resources of business with the local know-how of community organisations.

As a business, you can use the site to find community projects that need the kind of resources you can provide as well as offer any other support/resources/funds.

As suppliers to Birmingham City Council and the Birmingham and Solihull ICS, the projects you deliver via Match My Project will help demonstrate how you have delivered Social Value in the local area.

This tool is expected to be adopted by our suppliers to aid you to fulfil your Social Value commitments that forms part of the contractual arrangements.

*Portal Link:* [*https://matchmyproject.org/birmingham*](https://matchmyproject.org/birmingham)

**How to get involved**

Provider(s) who express an interest will find a copy of the draft service specification on the Find a Tender Portal, to which the Trust welcome Expressions of Interest by End of Day on Friday 12/09/2025 as there is a planned virtual Provider meeting organised for 25/09/2025.

Meetings on 25/09/2025 will be virtual. They will compromise of a conversation on Aims & Objectives and answering 7 set questions (below). Depending on the number of Providers showing an Expression of Interest, the sessions could be 30 minutes-1 hour. We will be in touch by End of Day 23/09/2025 with confirmation of meetings.

**Questions:**

1. Do you have any experience working with this cohort of (prisoners) patients.
2. From the Service Specification - What challenges do you feel there will be, how will you overcome them
3. How will you ensure (prisoners) patients have the correct care pathway.
4. We are a remand prison; how can you ensure that our patients are seen in a timely manner.
5. How do you ensure patients understand their diagnosis and treatment options considering health literacy.
6. How do you manage patient expectations, especially in time-limited consultations.
7. How do you gather patient feedback/monitor experience.

If you wish to participate, please confirm in writing via the Atamis portal to Bernadette Melody – Assistant Category Manager by End of Day on Friday 12/09/2025.

Please be advised that this notice is not a formal call for competition and participation in this pre-market engagement meeting is voluntary.

All information provided to the Provider(s) by BSOL Procurement shall be regarded as confidential and used only to prepare a response to this market engagement.

**Indicative Timetable**

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| **Activity** | **Date** | **Time of Day** |
| Preliminary Market Engagement Published | 29/08/2025 | End of Day |
| Deadline for Confirmation of Participation | 12/09/2025 | End of Day |
| Confirmation of Meeting time | 23/09/2025 | End of Day |
| Virtual Provider Meeting | 25/09/2025 | TBC |
| Indicative Date for Release of the Tender | 01/04/2026 |  |

\*Please note we are planning to award the contract in **January 2026**, ahead of an 8-week vetting process needed for HMP Providers. Contract to commence **1st April 2026.**