

# Managing Sight Loss

## Advice for everyday living

### What you need to know – Terminology

- Don't let confusing terms or mistaken beliefs about the term "blindness" stand in the way of you using valuable resources. Blindness can include people who have some sight.
- For registration purposes, the term "blind/severely sight impaired" is applied to any person who can see just the top letter on an eye chart when standing 3 metres away - (this is called visual acuity and at this distance is measured as 3/60) or less in their better eye with the best possible correction, and to any person whose visual field is twenty degrees or less, regardless of their visual acuity.
- Many people with "low vision" or severely "impaired vision" often fit the legal definition of "blindness".
- Sometimes people who are not managing to read are still not eligible to be registered as blind or partially sighted but they may still find help from other organisations.

- **Whether you have a total or partial loss of sight, you should know that useful resources are often available through organisations and agencies which use the term “blind” or “for the blind” as part of their name. They can help you meet your goal of gaining as much use as possible from any remaining vision.**
- **You must take the first step. You might begin by talking to your eye consultant (ophthalmologist) about optical aids and low vision services. He or she may be able to help you explore low vision aids or may want to refer you to a special low vision clinic. He or she may also begin to introduce the idea of registration in order for you to access services and equipment more easily.**
- **The process of becoming registered blind or partially sighted in the UK starts with a form called CVI (certificate of visual impairment), which is a form signed by you and your consultant. Your consultant signs the form to confirm you are eligible for registration and you sign to confirm you agree to the registration taking place. It is entirely voluntary and you have the right to be taken off the register at any time.**