

Blackpool

139,870

total population

4,770

people living with sight loss

1,560

registered blind or partially sighted

91

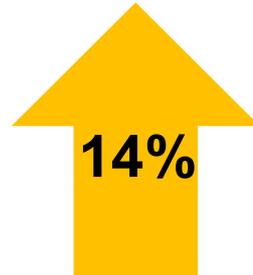
Certificates of Vision Impairment in 2016/17

£66,600,000

Estimated cost of sight loss each year (includes direct and indirect costs)

General population stats

- 20% aged 65+
- 3% from ethnic minority communities
- 51% of local authority in most deprived areas in the country
- 10% of people describe their health as “bad” or “very bad”
- 26% say that they have a long-term health condition or disability



increase in number of people with sight loss by 2030

UK stats



One in every five people will start to live with sight loss in their lifetime



Every day 250 people start to lose their sight

Main causes of sight loss

- Uncorrected refracted error (39%)
- AMD (23%)
- Cataract (19%)
- Glaucoma (7%)
- Diabetic eye disease (5%)

Blind and partially sighted people

- Only one in four in work
- 40% moderately or completely cut off
- 17% offered emotional support with sight loss
- 75% have experienced a deterioration in sight over the last 12 months

The references section at the end of this report lists sources for these statistics.

Blackpool: eye health and sight loss report

This report has been generated using RNIB’s Sight Loss Data Tool. It provides a range of indicators relevant to blind and partially sighted people and those at risk of sight loss in Blackpool.

There is a comprehensive set of guidance notes to accompany this report. These notes provide further information on the data we have used throughout, including notes on terminology and the limitations of the data. Further information, including references, can be found at www.rnib.org.uk/datatool.

In terms of referencing, we suggest using the full sources at the end of the report. In addition, the RNIB Sight Loss Data Tool may be given as a reference.

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this report, sometimes mistakes do happen or information has changed. If you notice anything that doesn’t look right, please let us know.

If you have any questions, please contact us at stats@rnib.org.uk.

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1. General population

This section provides an overview of the general population in Blackpool.

1.1 Age

There are 139,870 people living in Blackpool (1).

Blackpool has a higher proportion of people aged 75 years and over compared to the average for England (1, 2). Of the population:

- 21% are aged 17 or under.
- 59% are aged 18-64.
- 20% are aged over 65.

Table: Population by age band

Age band	Population
0-4	8,485
5-17	20,275
18-29	20,068
30-49	33,660
50-64	28,838
65-74	15,545
75-84	9,304
85+	3,695

Table: Proportion of population by age band

Age band	Blackpool	North West	England
0-4	6%	6%	6%
5-17	15%	15%	15%
18-29	14%	16%	16%
30-49	24%	25%	26%
50-64	21%	19%	19%
65-74	11%	10%	10%
75-84	7%	6%	6%
85+	3%	2%	2%

Note: totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

1.2 Ethnicity

Blackpool has a lower proportion of people from minority ethnic groups than the average for England:

- 3% of the population are from minority ethnic groups, compared to 15% in England (3).

Table: Total population by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Population
White	137,339
Mixed ethnicity	1,753
Asian / Asian British	1,768
Black / Black British	346
Other ethnic groups	859

Table: Proportion of population by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Blackpool	North West	England
White	97%	90%	85%
Mixed ethnicity	1%	2%	2%
Asian / Asian British	1%	6%	7%
Black / Black British	0%	1%	4%
Other ethnic groups	1%	1%	2%

Note: totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

1.3 Socio-economics

- Blackpool is the 12th most deprived local authority in England (4).
- 51% of the local authority is within the 30% most deprived areas in the whole of England (4).
- There are 7,205 children living in low income families, which is worse than the average for England (4).

1.4 Health

- The health of people in Blackpool is worse than the England average (5). Life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the national average (6).
- 26% of people have a long-term health condition or disability that limits their day to day life (7).

- 10% of people describe their health as either 'bad' or 'very bad' (5).
- 23% of people smoke (8).
- 69% of adults are either overweight or obese (9).

1.5 Local labour market

- The unemployment rate in Blackpool is 5.5%, which is higher than the national average (10).
- There is an 30% gap in the employment rate between people with a long-term health condition and the overall population (11).

2. Adults living with sight loss

2.1 UK overview

More than two million people are estimated to be living with sight loss in the UK today (12). This sight loss is severe enough to have a significant impact on their daily lives. This figure includes:

- people who are registered blind or partially sighted;
- people whose vision is better than the levels that qualify for registration, but that still has a significant impact on their daily life (for example, not being able to drive);
- people who are awaiting or having treatment such as eye injections or surgery that may improve their sight;
- people whose sight loss could be improved by wearing correctly prescribed glasses or contact lenses.

The main causes of sight loss are:

- Uncorrected refracted error – 39 per cent
- AMD – 23 per cent
- Cataract – 19 per cent
- Glaucoma – 7 per cent
- Diabetic eye disease – 5 per cent

2.2 Blackpool

In Blackpool, there are an estimated 4,770 people living with sight loss (12). This includes around:

- 4,140 people living with partial sight.
- 640 people living with blindness.

Note: these figures include people whose vision is better than the levels that qualify for registration, but that still has a significant impact on their daily life (for example, not being able to drive).

The estimated prevalence of sight loss is higher in Blackpool compared to the average for England, with 3.4% of the population living with sight loss, compared to 3.1% nationally (12). This estimate is based on age and gender. Higher proportions of BAME communities, the number of people in low income households and access to healthcare services could all potentially impact on the prevalence of sight loss in the local area.

Age profile

In terms of the age profile of the people living with sight loss in Blackpool, we estimate that:

- 890 are aged 18 to 64 years
- 990 are aged 65 to 74 years
- 1,360 are aged 75 to 84 years
- 1,480 are aged 85 years and over

Future projections

By 2030, there are expected to be 5,420 people in Blackpool living with sight loss, an increase of 14% from 2018 (12).

Table: Estimated prevalence of sight loss over time, by severity

Severity of sight loss	2018	2025	2030
Partial sight	4,140	4,400	4,680
Blindness	640	690	740
Total	4,770	5,080	5,420

3. Children and young people

There are over 25,000 visually impaired children aged 0-16 in the UK, and around 15,000 aged 17 to 25 (13). Around half of these children will have additional disabilities and special educational needs. This figure includes:

- children who are registered blind or partially sighted;
- children who are living with sight loss but who are not registered blind or partially sighted.

In Blackpool, there are an estimated:

- 50 blind and partially sighted children aged 0-16.
- 25 blind and partially sighted young people aged 17-25.

Table: Estimated number of blind and partially sighted children by age group

Age group	Blind	Partially sighted	Total
0 to 16 years	10	40	50
17 to 25 years	5	20	25

Note: Based on different childhood prevalence rates, totals may not sum to total number of people living with sight loss.

4. Certification and registration

A Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) certifies a person as either sight impaired (partially sighted) or severely sight impaired (blind). The purpose of the CVI is to provide a formal referral route for someone with sight loss to social care services. Each CVI form is signed by a consultant ophthalmologist in an eye clinic and a copy is sent to the person's local social services department. Upon receipt of the CVI, social services offer registration and other relevant advice and services.

4.1 Certification of Vision Impairment (CVI)

In 2016/17, 91 Certificates of Vision Impairment were issued in Blackpool (14).

This was higher than the overall rate for England. In Blackpool, 65 CVIs were issued per 100,000 people; compared to 42 per 100,000 people in England (14).

There have been numerous initiatives to support better identification of need and recording of CVI so that people get access to the support they need. A higher rate of certification may indicate a positive response to this work.

Public Health Outcomes Framework

The Public Health Outcomes Framework gathers information on the rate of CVIs for three of the main causes of preventable sight loss. In Blackpool:

- The rate of age related macular degeneration was 151 CVIs per 100,000 people over 65 years.
- The rate of glaucoma was 12 CVIs per 100,000 people over 40 years.
- The rate of diabetic eye disease was 5.9 CVIs per 100,000 people over 12 years.

Trend

Since 2012/13, there has been an increase of 22% in the number of CVIs issued. (15).

4.2 Registration

Upon receipt of a completed CVI form, the social services department offer registration as blind or partially sighted and other relevant advice and support. Registers of blind and partially sighted people are maintained by all local authorities to help them plan and deliver services.

In Blackpool, there are 1,560 people registered as blind or partially sighted (16). 47% are registered as blind and 53% are registered as partially sighted.

Table: Registered blind or partially sighted by age band

Age band	Registered blind	Registered partially sighted	Total
0-17	10	25	35
18-49	80	90	170
50-64	75	90	165
65-74	60	100	160
75+	455	575	1,030
Total	680	880	1,560

Additional disabilities

150 of the people registered as blind or partially sighted in Blackpool have also been recorded as having an additional disability by the local authority (16).

New registrations

In the year 2016/17, there were 55 new registrations of blind and partially sighted people in Blackpool (16).

This compares to 91 new CVIs. Any difference in these numbers may be due to the time taken from certification to registration, and these processes falling into different calendar years.

Rate of registration

In Blackpool, there are 1,114 registered blind or partially sighted people per 100,000 population. This is higher than the overall rate for England (17).

Trends

From 2014 to 2017, there has been an increase of 23% in the overall number of people registered as blind or partially sighted.

Over the same period, there has been an increase of 6% in the number of new registrations (18).

5. Eye health

Health services are crucial for the diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of eye conditions, as well as for helping people maintain good eye health.

5.1 Health administration

Blackpool is coterminous with NHS Blackpool CCG.

The local authority was formerly part of the Lancashire Area Team.

5.2 NHS sight tests

In England, free NHS sight tests are available to people who meet certain criteria. For example, people who are aged 60 or over, children aged 15 and under, and people in receipt of certain benefits. Public data on sight tests only records those paid for by the NHS. Privately funded sight tests are not included in this data.

There were 371,998 sight tests in the Lancashire Area Team in 2016/17 (19). In terms of the groups eligible for NHS sight tests:

- 138,812 sight tests were taken by people aged 60 years and over;
- 81,143 sight tests were taken by children aged 0-15;
- 14,084 sight tests were taken by students aged 16-18;
- 57,390 sight tests were taken by benefit claimants.

5.3 Outpatient appointments

When diagnosed with an eye condition, patients attend a hospital appointment with an ophthalmology specialist. The outpatient appointment data below includes all ophthalmology appointments however only a small proportion of these will involve patients diagnosed with serious sight loss.

There were 215,569 ophthalmology outpatient appointments in the Lancashire Area Team in 2016/17 (20). The breakdown by major NHS Trust is in section 6.1 below.

5.4 Inpatient procedures

Some eye conditions, such as cataract, require a patient to have a surgical procedure.

There were 18,662 ophthalmology inpatient procedures (also known as finished consultant episodes) in the Lancashire Area Team in 2016/17 (21).

6. Services and support

Blind and partially sighted people may require services and support to help them remain independent. This section provides a summary of some key services.

The Sightline Directory provides more information on services aimed at helping blind and partially sighted in Blackpool. Please visit www.sightlinedirectory.org.uk for more details.

6.1 Eye Clinic Liaison Officers

Eye Clinic Liaison Officers or ECLOs, providing a sight loss advice service, are based within eye clinics or hospitals. They play an important role in helping patients recently diagnosed with an eye condition or who are experiences changes in their eye sight to

understand the impact of their diagnosis and provide patients with emotional and practical support.

ECLO support is not available in every NHS Trust or Health Board. RNIB has collected information about where support is available. This only includes qualified ECLOs, trained by RNIB, and there may be other support services available locally.

In the Lancashire Area Team, 5 NHS Trusts had access to an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer out of a total of 5 Trusts (based on the busiest 150 trusts in England by ophthalmic appointments) (22).

Table: Availability of ECLO support by NHS Trust

	Ophthalmic outpatient appointments 2016/17	RNIB-trained ECLOs (Jul 2018)
Lancashire Area Team		
Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	52,819	Yes
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	71,266	Yes
Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	22,658	Yes
The Croft Shifa Health Centre	14,640	Yes
University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust	54,186	Yes

6.2 Vision rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is the structured support put in place by a local authority (or commissioned agency) to maximise independence and quality of life for people with sight loss, as required by the Care Act 2014.

The mapping data we currently hold on the vision rehabilitation offer in local authorities is out of date. When this information is updated, we will include it in a future update to the Sight Loss Data Tool.

For further information please see the “Demonstrating the impact and value of vision rehabilitation”, which is available at www.rnib.org.uk/research.

6.3 Benefits

- In Blackpool, there were 252 blind and partially sighted people claiming either Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disabled Living Allowance (DLA) (23).
- At the end of the 2017, there were still 40.7% of working age DLA claimants waiting to be moved on to PIP (23).

6.4 Transport

Blue badges are parking badges for disabled people. Local authorities issue them to individuals and organisations concerned with the care of disabled people. Upon issue, a Blue Badge is valid for a period of three years. People who are registered as blind are automatically entitled to a blue badge if they register for one (i.e. there will be no further assessment of need).

In Blackpool, 66 blue badges were issued to people with sight loss in 2015/16. 162 blue badges were held by people registered blind in 2016, which represents 30% of people who are registered blind (24).

6.5 Education

In Blackpool, there are 49 pupils with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education, health and care (EHC) plans with vision impairment as their primary support need (25). Of these pupils:

- 26 are in primary school
- 23 are in secondary school
- None are in special schools

7. Cost of sight loss

RNIB has worked with Deloitte Access Economics to produce detailed analysis of the economic cost of sight loss in the UK. Based on the proportion of people living with sight loss in each area, we can estimate these costs for each local authority.

There are different costs related to eye health and sight loss:

- Direct costs of providing health and social care services.
- Indirect costs of informal care or lower employment.
- Economic impact of the reduction in the quality and length of life.

Direct costs

In Blackpool, the direct cost of sight loss is estimated to be £7,000,000 each year (27).

The main elements of this costs are hospital treatments, sight tests, prescriptions and social care. This is different to the NHS programme budget costs as it includes estimated expenditure on things not provided or counted by the CCG.

Indirect costs

In Blackpool, the indirect cost of sight loss is estimated to be £13,200,000 each year (27). The main elements of this cost are:

- unpaid care provided by family and friends;
- lower employment rate for blind and partially sighted people;
- devices/modifications.

Wider economic impact

The estimated wider economic impact of cost of sight loss is estimated to be around £46,400,000 (27). This includes the costs associated with the reduction in the quality and length of life.

8. Sight threatening eye conditions

The figures presented in this section highlight estimates for all people living with certain eye conditions. This includes people who have experienced sight loss as a result of these eye conditions, people who have been diagnosed but have not experienced any sight loss yet, and also those people who are undiagnosed.

8.1 Age-related macular degeneration (AMD)

This condition commonly affects people over the age of 50 and is the leading cause of blindness.

There are two main types of AMD:

- Wet AMD can develop quickly affecting central vision in a short period of time. Early identification and treatment of wet AMD is vital. Treatment can halt the further development of scarring but lost sight cannot be restored.
- Dry AMD can develop slowly and take a long time to progress. There is currently no treatment for dry AMD. People with early

and moderate stages of dry AMD are not eligible for registration, but it does have an impact upon daily life, for example a person may have to stop driving.

In Blackpool, we estimate that (28):

- 6,390 people are living with the early stages of AMD;
- 490 are living with late stage dry AMD;
- 1,000 are living with late stage wet AMD.
- 1,420 combined late stage AMD.

Future projection

Between 2018 and 2030 there is estimated to be an increase of 18% in the number of people living with late stage AMD in Blackpool (28).

8.2 Cataract

Cataract is a common eye condition that is prevalent in older people. The lens becomes less transparent and turns misty or cloudy. Cataracts over time can get worse and impact upon vision. A straightforward operation replaces the lens with an artificial one. Numerous studies have demonstrated the cost benefits of cataracts surgery in improving life quality and reducing the number of falls.

In Blackpool, we estimate that 1,570 people are living with cataract (28).

Future projection

Between 2018 and 2030 there is estimated to be an increase of 18% in the number of people living with cataract in Blackpool (28).

8.3 Glaucoma

This is a group of eye conditions in which the optic nerve can be damaged due to changes in eye pressure. Damage to sight can usually be minimised by early diagnosis in conjunction with careful regular observation and treatment. Many glaucoma patients will attend regular appointments and take eye drops for the rest of their lives to prevent deterioration of vision. Some forms of glaucoma can be treated with laser surgery and surgery.

In Blackpool, we estimate that 2,900 people are living with ocular hypertension. A further 1,540 people are living with glaucoma (28).

Future projection

Between 2018 and 2030 there is estimated to be an increase of 12% in the number of people living with glaucoma in Blackpool (28).

8.4 Diabetic eye disease

People with diabetes are at risk of diabetic eye disease, which can affect the blood vessels in the eye. This can lead to permanent sight loss. Screening and early diagnosis with appropriate intervention is essential.

In Blackpool, we estimate that:

- 9,230 adults have diagnosed diabetes (29).
- 2,770 people are living with diabetic retinopathy (30).
- Of these, 250 have severe diabetic retinopathy, a later stage of the disease that is likely to result in significant and potentially certifiable sight loss (30).

Future projection

Between 2018 and 2030 there is estimated to be an increase of -2% in the number of people living with diabetic retinopathy in Blackpool (30).

8.5 Trends

These trends assume that the underlying prevalence of these eye conditions stays the same until 2030. The changes are due to demographics – as the population ages, more people will be living with eye conditions and sight loss.

Table: Estimated number of people living with sight threatening eye conditions in Blackpool, from 2018 to 2030

	2018	2025	2030
Early stage AMD	6,390	6,820	7,170
Late stage dry AMD	490	530	570
Late stage wet AMD	1,000	1,080	1,180

Total late state AMD	1,420	1,530	1,670
Cataract	1,570	1,690	1,850
Ocular hypertension	2,900	2,880	2,890
Glaucoma	1,540	5,840	1,720
Diabetes	9,230	9,290	9,440
Diabetic retinopathy	2,770	2,720	2,710
Severe retinopathy	250	250	250

9. Additional health problems and disabilities

Many blind and partially sighted people are also living with other health problems or disabilities. Sight loss is linked to age, and as we get older we are more likely to be living with many health conditions at the same time.

9.1 Stroke

Around 60% of people who experience strokes will also experience some form of visual impairment immediately after their stroke. There are national guidelines recommending specialist vision assessment for stroke survivors who have a suspected visual problem.

In Blackpool, 740 people have a long-standing health condition after experiencing a stroke (31).

9.2 Dementia

Up to 850,000 people in the UK have some form of dementia. Prevalence of sight loss is higher among people with dementia, especially those living in care homes.

In Blackpool, we estimate that 1,950 people are living with dementia (32). Within this group, we estimate that 330 people have dementia and significant sight loss (33).

9.3 Learning disabilities

People with learning disabilities are 10 times more likely to experience sight loss than the general population

In Blackpool, we estimate that 170 adults have a learning disability and partial sight. A further 50 adults have a learning disability and blindness (34).

9.4 Hearing impairment

In Blackpool, we estimate that 15,300 people have a moderate or severe hearing impairment, and 340 people have a profound hearing impairment (35).

9.5 Dual sensory loss

An estimated 910 people are living with some degree of dual sensory loss in Blackpool (36). Of these people, it is estimated that 350 are living with severe dual sensory loss (36).

The register of blind and partially sighted people also records hearing impairment. In Blackpool, 0 people registered blind and partially sighted are also deaf or hard of hearing (37).

9.6 Falls

Falls are more common, and are more likely to have serious outcomes, amongst older people. In some cases, falls can lead to serious medical problems and a range of adverse outcomes for health and wellbeing.

In Blackpool, it is estimated that:

- 600 people with sight loss aged over 65 experience a fall per year (38).
- Of these falls, 290 are directly attributable to sight loss (38).
- 45 people aged over 65 with sight loss experience a severe fall per year (here, a severe fall is defined as a fall that results in hospital admission through A&E) (38).
- Of these severe falls, 20 are directly attributable to sight loss (38).

Additional resources

RNIB Research and Knowledge Hub

Information on the latest research news and reports published by RNIB, as well as guides to impact measurement, blogs and other resources.

These resources can be accessed on the RNIB website: www.rnib.org.uk/research.

State of the Nation: Eye Health 2017

A summary report that provides the latest evidence on eye health across the UK. It supports strategic thinking to transform eye health and take steps to stop people losing their sight unnecessarily.

My Voice

Research into the views and experiences of over 1,200 registered blind and partially sighted people in the UK. My Voice covers a range of different topics, such as employment, transport and access to information and services. It is a key source in helping us understand the circumstances of blind and partially sighted people.

Sight Loss Data Tool

Sight Loss Data Tool is the UK's biggest collection of eye health data. The Excel based tool shows users all of the local figures relating to sight loss and eye health to use as evidence in campaigns, fundraising and service development.

Evidence-based reviews

RNIB's Evidence-based reviews look in detail at the experiences of blind and partially sighted people in different age groups. They include a profile of the group, the policies that govern and impact upon their lives, and a commentary on what the evidence tells us. We publish reviews focusing on children and young people, people of working age and older people.

For further information or queries, please contact us at stats@rnib.org.uk.

References

Please see the “References and Further Information” document for full details on the evidence used in this report. A summary of the evidence is provided below.

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