

Ophthalmology department

# Visual aid apps for visual impairment

## Information for patients, relatives and carers

### Introduction

This leaflet has been designed to give you information about the various visual aid apps which are useful for people with visual impairments. If you have any questions about the information below, please speak to a member of your clinical team.

### What are apps?

An app (application) is a piece of software that you download to your mobile phone or computer. There are now a range of apps available for people with visual impairments that can help with daily activities like reading, travelling and doing shopping. Apps can also be useful for those attending school/college.

It is important for people with low vision to be assessed in a low vision clinic where advice about visual rehabilitation can be given.

### What are the benefits of using apps?

Mobile apps can be used instead of bulky, expensive products. Apps are generally updated and improved regularly, which continuously refines their role without needing to invest in new products.

### Apps for daily activities



**Daily by ViaOpta** is a free app that can help by recognising objects and colour, in addition to reading text and recognising money. Available on iOS and Google Play.



**LookTel Money Reader** uses the phone camera to identify money (from over 21 countries). The amount is spoken aloud and displayed in large font.



**MD\_evReader** shows text from e-books in a scrolling stream across the screen. Available on iOS and Android.



**TapTapSee** uses the phone camera to photograph objects and then identifies them for the use. Available on iOS.

## Apps for mobility and independence



**Nav by ViaOpta** is a free navigation app that can show nearby points of interests and is accessible by voice command.



**Be My Eyes** is designed to connect people with low vision to sighted volunteers and company representatives for visual assistance through a live video call.



**Blindsquare** uses GPS to describe points of interest, environment and streets as you travel. Available on iOS.



**Station Alert UK** alerts you when on the train that your station is approaching. Select stations in advance and the app can alert you whenever you choose.

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## Apps for improving disease management and education



**ViaOpta Simulator** is a free app designed to show what it is like to live with a visual impairment. It includes simulation for several diseases including age-related macular degeneration, retinal vein occlusion, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy and cataract.



**Odysight** is a game designed for those with chronic macular diseases. During the game, it will regularly monitor visual parameters.



**BlindAbilities** shows podcasts and blogs about technology for those with visual impairments. Available on iOS and Android.

**At the time of publication, the above apps were active and available to install.**

## Other technology

**Smart Speakers:** Voice activated smart speakers (e.g. Alexa, Google Home Mini, Apple HomePod) allow you to do many tasks such as play music, make notes, check the weather and control the television using only your voice.

## Useful resources

**Eyes-Free Project** (Android only) is a group of free low vision apps created by a group of Google developers.

**Macula Society** reviews useful apps for people with visual impairments:  
[www.macularsociety.org/best-apps](http://www.macularsociety.org/best-apps)

**RNIB website** describes new technology available, in addition to giving advice and support about accessible technology events: [www.rnib.org.uk/advice/technology-useful-products](http://www.rnib.org.uk/advice/technology-useful-products)

**International Glaucoma Association:** [www.glaucoma-association.com](http://www.glaucoma-association.com)

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## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:  
[imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

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