

Retinal detachment discovered in healthy 40-year-old thanks to Optos device



Based in Newtownabbey, Northern Ireland

Device: *Daytona*

One consulting room

One optometrist

Michael Allen opened Mackey Opticians on Carnmoney Road in Newtownabbey in 2012. The practice is part of Northern Ireland's largest chain of 13 independent optometrists, Mackey Opticians.

Michael's practice specialises in contact lenses and general eye care. As of August 2020, it also offers patients the ultra-widefield (UWF™) technology of an Optos *Daytona*.

The *Daytona* provides a 200° single capture digital image of the retina, an **optomap®**. Michael says: "When my wife and I opened the practice in 2012, we wanted to provide our community with the best eye care possible. The town we're in isn't very big which means we really get to know our patients so we're passionate about providing a personal service with quality products."

New working practices

In March, when the Covid-19 pandemic caused the first national lockdown, the practice was only able to provide essential and emergency care for patients. Michael explained: "In April to June, we couldn't carry out our regular appointments due to the government guidance around the pandemic. I continued to work with those needing urgent care and in between, I attended webinars to learn about new technology we could adopt and protocols we'd need to adhere to in order to open up safely when restrictions allowed. It was after hearing the benefits of the *Daytona* device, especially as social distancing was set to be the norm, that I decided to invest in the device."

“Introducing the new device has been amazing. Optos provided support to get us up and running and from there it was all smooth sailing.”



Introducing the *Daytona* means that Michael can now identify problems with people's eyesight that previously could have gone unnoticed. The UWF™ technology provides Michael with the reassurance that nothing is being missed and gives him the ability to identify any issues before they become a bigger problem for his patients. The device also allows examinations to take place with a safe distance between the patient and optometrist.

Michael said: "Introducing the new device has been amazing. Optos provided support to get us up and running and from there it was all smooth sailing. Our patients are happy to pay the additional £25 on top of their eye exams as I clearly explain, and they understand the benefits that come with an **optomap** image. It's also hugely beneficial in this new working environment as during examinations, I don't need to be close to patients. I can carry out the imaging and then go onto show patients the images from a safe distance. Cleaning the device for patients is also extremely easy as everything can be simply wiped down between appointments.

"The **optomap** image also saves time as the imaging itself takes seconds. This allows for more time to discuss what we are looking at with the patient. Long-term, this will positively benefit the practice.

At the moment, we do about 40 tests a week but will be able to book more examinations in due to the time being saved, once restrictions further ease."

Eye-opening results

Getting used to the device in the practice was very straight-forward for Michael, and his patients. He explained: "Once the new device was brought in, it didn't take long to get used to the new way of working. We have a lot of patients who are over the age of 60 and younger people from the two big high schools nearby. All our patients have loved the new device as it's super quick and they can see exactly what we are speaking about there and then."

Industry support

"There's also an online forum called The Optix Software forum that a lot of optometrists use to share information and advice," Michael explained. "This has been especially useful during the pandemic as we can share best practice with each other to ensure the safety of patients and our staff.

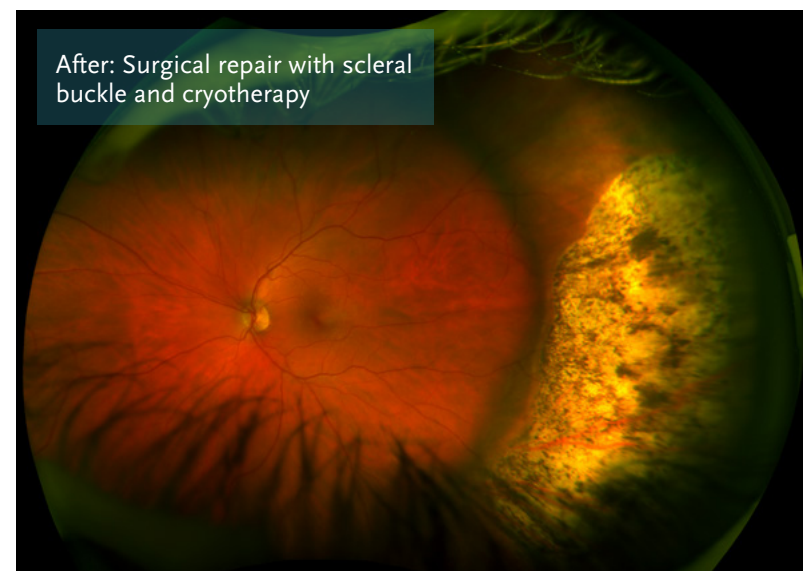
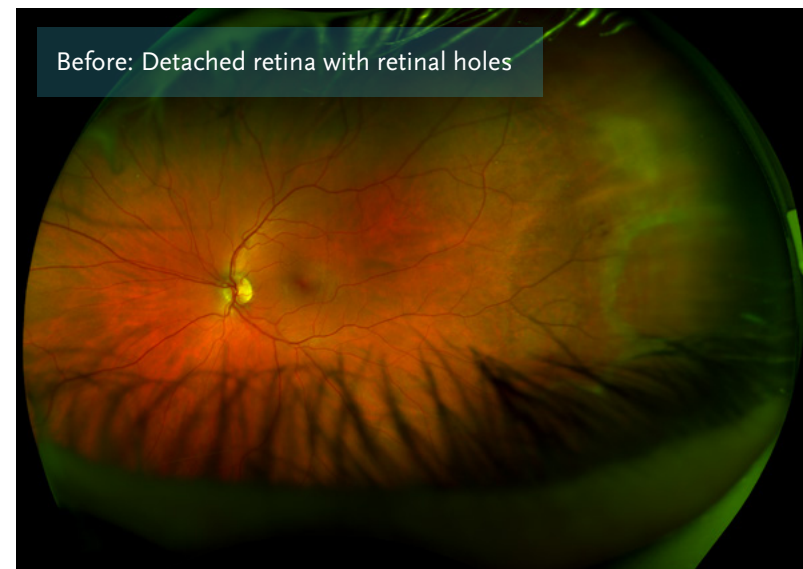
"The forum recently proved itself invaluable after one of my regular patients came in for his routine eye examination.

The 40-year-old male arrived with no symptoms or concerns but the **optomap** image picked up something that I wanted a second opinion on. This was on the Friday, and after consulting colleagues over the weekend via the forum, I had confirmation that my patient was suffering from a retinal detachment in his left eye. By Tuesday morning, he was in hospital recovering from laser surgery and thanking me for spotting what could have ended with the loss of his eyesight in one eye."

No looking back

"If it wasn't for the *Daytona* device, patients like this that come along with no symptoms, could leave none the wiser. Thankfully, **optomap** picked up the retinal detachment and the image we took could quickly be shared with the ophthalmologists at Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast.

"Between adapting and adjusting our normal protocols as we get back to business in this new Covid-19-era, to spotting issues early to save people's eyesight, I can't recommend the **optomap** enough. It gives both myself and my patients the peace of mind that everything is being spotted and crucially, that it's happening in a safe way that adheres to current government guidance."



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