

Niall O'Kane

It is with great sadness that the Board and Directors of Primary Eyecare (Kent and Medway) and Kent & Medway Local Optical Committee announce the passing of Niall O'Kane on Wednesday 11th March 2026.

Niall passionately believed in the place of Optometry in the future of Ophthalmology. He was at the forefront of obtaining diplomas in IP and Glaucoma. He singlehandedly developed the award-winning CAMS with Maidstone Hospital so that optometrists could monitor patients undergoing treatment for wet macular degeneration. Not only did he serve as an LOC member but later became the Clinical Director of PEKM. It was in this role that he worked tirelessly to pull all the strands of optometry and ophthalmology together to create better outcomes for both patients and practitioners.

Niall could not stand wasted time, pulling people back into line if they strayed from the point under discussion. He could run some of the tightest meetings but was also happy to spend time explaining or helping individuals to sort out their work-related problems.

Niall owned and ran his practice in Strood which was extremely well thought of and received countless exceptional reviews. It was here that he introduced and helped improve MECS with enormous success.

Following retirement, not only did Niall devote even more time to his work as Clinical Director but had more time to enjoy his country home with his wife Anne. They continued with looking after a small herd of sheep with them working together, especially during lambing and improving their beautiful home. Just last week he was excitedly programming a new robotic lawn mower and getting ready to build a new bird table.

Niall leaves his devoted wife Anne, a true partnership, their two amazing children: Kieran (an Ophthalmologist, at present extending his skills in New Zealand) and Alana (a highly qualified veterinarian) and their grandchildren, one of whom, Thea, was born just before Niall passed.