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Lost and found campaign
The RNIB's latest campaign 'Lost and Found' is calling for improved support for people who are losing their sight – particularly at the point of diagnosis and registration in hospital eye clinics. At the

moment when the consultant says that nothing more can be done medically. Where does the patient find help? Where is the information about what is out there? Moorfields has just appointed its first full-time eye clinic liaison officer (ECLO) and it is hoped that other hospitals across the country will follow suit before too long. The North London launch of 'Lost and Found' was organised by the Haringey Phoenix Group at the Winkfield Resource Centre in Wood Green on Friday 22 October. The speakers included Kate Slemeck (director of operations at The Whittington) David Lammy (Member of Parliament for Tottenham), David Winskill (Lib Dem spokesperson for Health and Social Care), Richard Holmes (RNIB campaigns manager) and Phoenix member, Shelagh Edge.

Kate talked about the steps that The Whittington has already taken to improve support for visually impaired patients in partnership with the Phoenix Group. In particular, the work that is being done on accessible information and different reading formats (Braille, large print, audio etc) which is all part of the RNIB's previous 'Losing Patients' campaign. The Whittington has already taken the initiative as far as the new 'Lost and Found' campaign is concerned by lining up dedicated volunteers, who will be trained specifically to provide support and information in the eye clinics. They will help patients cope with the emotional trauma of losing their sight which is often likened to bereavement. This is an important start and we hope this can be developed further in the future into a ECLO, particularly with the number of blind and partially sighted people set to double to nearly 4 million by 2050, the challenges confronting patients in eye clinics need to be addressed.

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