

## A round-up of the eye related hot topics that have been trending on social media over the last few weeks.

Hello again, it's snowy outside on this March day in the UK. The news of late has been dominated by Storm Emma / the Beast from the East and the Olympics. So without further ado, I bring you an extended winter edition of trending stories.

### #StormEmma #BeastfromtheEast #NHS #snow #Snowmageddon #NHSsnowheroes

What a week it's been! Storm Emma collided with the Beast from the East to produce extraordinary weather conditions and snow all across the UK. Despite the disruption to roads and public transport, many hospitals remained open thanks to the dedication of their staff. A Glasgow surgeon walked three hours in snowy and icy conditions in order to perform a procedure required by a patient suffering from bowel cancer [1]. Many NHS staff all over Scotland and Sunderland stayed overnight in their hospitals to provide care for their patients and to cover shifts for other colleagues who were unable to make it in. Pictures documenting makeshift beds on hospital floors and the cheerful outlook by NHS staff appeared on social media and were picked up by local and national newspapers alike [2-4]. Nurses in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Glasgow posted a lighthearted photo with signs saying #doubleshift, #24hrpartypeople, #myjob[2]. Nurses into their 60s were recognised for their efforts to get to work, walking miles in the snow [3]. Lift shares were common, and those owning 4x4s, including members of the public, were drafted in to help bring NHS staff to and from work [5]. In Edinburgh, the army was mobilised to transport NHS staff to and from the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and Western General hospitals during the most severe weather [6]. And whilst these individuals made the news, I know from observing the efforts made in my individual department, that NHS staff all over the country went the extra mile this week to ensure their patients were cared for. A big thank you to our NHS Snow Heroes!

### #Olympics #doublesunglasses

The internet went nuts for a young man who was captured by the audience camera during the team figure skating event. He took off a pair of Olympic ring-shaped sunglasses only to reveal a second pair of

sunglasses underneath. Southern Sports Nation first tweeted it with the caption "This South Korean gentleman just won the entire Olympics" [7]. If you haven't seen this viral meme yet, it is linked here: <https://twitter.com/SoSportsNation/status/962865316912156673>. He has since been identified as pairs figure skater Alex Kang-chan Kam. Why so popular? The internet answered, because it was so smooth, addictive to watch, and everyone wanted to know who he was. He made it to the top of the Reddit front page, and of the meme he commented that his "Korean teammates were shining so brightly [...] that I needed two layers of shade" [8]. You know you've made it when you headline at teen *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Time Magazine* and *Buzzfeed* [8-11]. For Kam himself, it seems his internet fame ranked higher than his Olympic performance, as he told *Buzzfeed*, that he had prepared to become a meme for a long time. He added, "I've peaked. This is the single greatest achievement of my life. I can die happy now" [8].

### #ClaireFoy #eyetumour

The Crown's Claire Foy opened up recently about a benign eye tumour she suffered as a teenager, which was successfully treated with steroids. She cited her experiences dealing with her eye tumour and juvenile arthritis as the impetus for pushing her towards grabbing the life she wanted. She stated that had she not been unwell as a teenager, she probably would not have been brave enough to study drama [12]. And *The Crown* would never have been the same.

### #worms #eye #Oregon

This Oregon woman had suffered from an irritated eye, and thought maybe she had "a piece of fuzz" stuck in her inferior fornix. So being the pragmatic individual she was, she reached in to pick it out and realised then that it was a moving worm. She was later diagnosed with *Thelazia gulosa*, a type of worm normally seen in cattle but not in humans. Bizarrely, the treatment was to keep picking them out, because medication would cause worm death in the eye and prevent their removal [13].

### #Rwanda #eyecare

To end on an uplifting note, Rwanda became the first low income country to provide universal eye care. The government partnered with the organisation Vision

for a Nation to train ophthalmic nurses to prescribe glasses and refer on those with serious eye problems. They have visited all 15,000 villages in Rwanda [14]. Watch this space.

### References

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