Vision Rehabilitation
An Overview

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Agenda

1. Who Needs VR Services?
2. Why is Vision Rehabilitation (VR) Important?
3. What is VR?
4. AOA’s VR Pillars
5. VR & Primary Eye Care
6. 2018 VR Goals and Advocacy Efforts
Who Needs VR Services?

Many patients who are already sitting in your chair may need Vision Rehabilitation services

Patients suffering from:

- Macular Degeneration
- Diabetic Retinopathy
- Retinitis Pigmentosa
- Congenital Nystagmus
- Optic Nerve Diseases
- Glaucoma
- TBIs, strokes, etc
Why is VR Important to us?

- In 2010, almost **3 million** people over the age of 45 suffered for low vision
- In 2050, over **8 million** people over 45 will suffer from low vision

Source: https://nei.nih.gov/eyedata/lowvision
Adults: Aging population will create more demand for VR services

Source: https://nei.nih.gov/eyedata/lowvision
Why is VR important to Patients?

VR Services help patients with vision impairments:
• Prevent depression and emotional distress
• Improve academic performance and social development among children
• Improve Quality of Life and independence
• Increase overall visual ability
• Improve productivity at work and school
• Delay cognitive decline by increasing participation

Helps overcome the belief that “nothing more can be done”
Why is VR important to your practice?

➢ As doctors of optometry, we are the most equipped to manage and address the needs of patients with vision impairments

➢ Incorporating VR services helps expand your scope, reach new patients, and meet the growing demand

➢ If optometry does not provide these services, patients and policymakers will look to other professions
What is VR?

“Professional services provided to an individual with a congenital or acquired visual impairment associated with disease, disorder or injury, including, but not limited to, complications of systemic disease, traumatic brain injury, and cerebrovascular accidents, not correctable with conventional/standard eyeglasses/spectacles, contact lenses or surgery, that serve to support activities of daily living.”
Signs & Symptoms

- Difficulty reading, writing, managing medications, driving
- Difficulty walking, bumping or tripping
- Blurred Vision
- Generalized Haze
- Extreme Light Sensitivity
- Night Blindness
- Double Vision
VR Services

- Low Vision Evaluations
- Neuro-Optometric Assessments
- Occupational Therapy/Vision Rehabilitation Training
- Adaptive Devices
- Orientation mobility Services
AOA’s VR Pillars

1. VR Referrals & Evaluations
2. Low Vision Services
3. Neuro-Optometric Services
4. Devices
5. Management and Coordination of VR services
VR & Primary Eye Care

As primary eye care physicians, every optometrist should be able to:

- **Identify** signs of:
  - Low vision
  - Post Trauma Vision Syndrome
  - Concussion and TBIs
  - Depression among individuals with vision loss
- **Educate** patients on the importance of VR services and its potential impact
- **Know** the VR practices in your area
- **Refer** patients sooner than later to a VR specialist
AOA’s VR
2018 Goals & Advocacy

- **Educate** policymakers, patients, and other professions of optometry's role as eye care physicians for VR patients

- **Provide resources** that help members address the VR needs of their patients and incorporate more VR services
  - Short introductory webinar series
  - Clinical Pearls
  - 2018 VR Forum & CEs at Optometry’s Meeting

- **Advocate** for increased access and coverage of VR services and devices
2018 Optometry’s Meeting

- VR CE lectures and panel discussions
- TBI Workshop
- VR Forum

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AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION
aoa.org/VR
More Information

- Join the Vision Rehabilitation Advocacy Network
- aoa.org/VR
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