

World Council of Optometry Passes Resolution Calling for a Standard of Care for Myopia Management

ST. LOUIS, APRIL 13, 2021—Furthering its commitment to address the global epidemic of childhood myopia, the World Council of Optometry (WCO) Board of Directors unanimously approved a resolution advising optometrists to incorporate a standard of care for myopia management within their practices.

“Myopia is increasing at an alarming rate, as are the risks for vision impairment associated with the condition¹. With more than five billion people projected to be affected by myopia by 2050², the global optometric community must increase its efforts to combat this public health issue,” said Paul Folkesson, president, World Council of Optometry. “Significant research has identified a number of interventions to potentially control the progression of myopia. Establishing a standard of care that regularly and consistently applies these interventions, particularly at an early age, may prevent or delay the onset of myopia, or halt or slow its progression.”

The resolution defines the evidence-based standard of care as comprising of three main components:

- **Mitigation** — optometrists educating and counseling parents and children, during early and regular eye exams, on lifestyle, dietary, and other factors to prevent or delay the onset of myopia.
- **Measurement** — optometrists evaluating the status of a patient during regular comprehensive vision and eye health exams, such as measuring refractive error and axial length whenever possible.
- **Management** — optometrists addressing patients’ needs of today by correcting myopia, while also providing evidence-based interventions (e.g., contact lenses, spectacles, pharmaceuticals) that slow the progression of myopia, for improved quality of life and better eye health today and into the future.

It also advises optometrists to incorporate within their practice the standard of care for myopia management, which shifts from simply correcting vision to managing the condition, and also includes public education and early, frequent discussions with parents that explain:

- What myopia is.
- Lifestyle factors that may impact myopia.
- The increased risks to long-term ocular health that myopia brings.
- The available approaches that can be used to manage myopia and slow its progression.

The standard of care resolution can be found in its entirety on the World Council of Optometry’s website, [here](#).

WCO and myopia management category leader, CooperVision, recently announced a global partnership to raise awareness of myopia progression and encourage optometrists to embrace a standard of care to manage the condition. The partnership will establish a global resource to include multi-lingual myopia management resources and programming that currently have not been widely accessible or actively addressed in certain sectors or countries.

“The facts and statistics cited in the resolution and approved by WCO’s Board of Directors on behalf of our 38 affiliate members, and 45 country member organizations who represent more than 114,000 optometrists, are undeniable,” said Folkesson. “I am calling on all of our country member organizations to pass their own resolution, or take a similar action, to publicly declare their support for the establishment and implementation of a standard of care centered around evidence-based approaches to treat myopia progression.”

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¹ World Report on Vision, 2019. World Health Organization

² Holden et al. - Global Prevalence of myopia and high myopia and temporal trends from 2000 through 2050. Ophthalmology 2016. 123(5):1036-1042

About the World Council of Optometry

The World Council of Optometry (WCO) is an international membership-based non-profit organization for individual optometrists, industry professionals and optometric organizations that envisions a world where optometry makes high quality eye health and vision care accessible to all people. Its mission is to facilitate the development of optometry around the world and support optometrists in promoting eye health and vision care as a human right through advocacy, education, policy development and humanitarian outreach. To learn more, please visit www.worldoptometry.org or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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