

Summer 2008



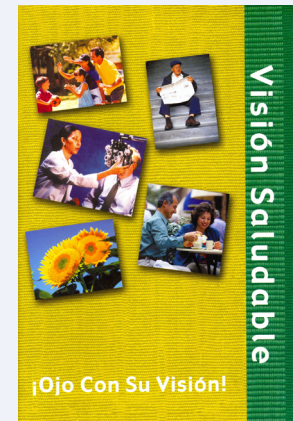
Letter from the Chair of the NEHEP Planning Committee

On behalf of the National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) Planning Committee, I am pleased to announce the launch of the redesigned NEHEP Website. The site is well organized and easy to navigate, making it an efficient way to find information and educational materials that will assist you in your eye health education efforts. You can learn more about this helpful resource in the article, “The NEHEP Website Has a New Look.”

Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 to October 15) is a time to honor the significant contributions that Hispanic/Latino Americans have made to our country and to celebrate the culture and traditions of U.S. residents who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico, and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. To mark the occasion, you will find several articles highlighting information and program efforts that focus on the Hispanic/Latino community. Hispanic Heritage Month presents a wonderful opportunity to reach out to the Hispanic/Latino community about the importance of eye health. Be sure to take a look at the wide variety of Spanish-language materials and ideas on how to use them on the NEHEP ¡Ojo con su Visión! (Watch out for your vision! Spanish-language program) Webpage at www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/programs/ojo/index.asp.

In addition to these stories, you will find articles about the efforts of two non-profit organizations. The American Foundation for the Blind is a leader in expanding possibilities for people with vision loss. Their new initiative focuses on making information on medication labels and package inserts more accessible to people experiencing significant vision loss. The other article is about a new resource, *Taking a Closer Look at AMD*. This booklet is from the Alliance for Aging Research, an organization that works to improve the health and independence of Americans as they age.

Educational Resource Spotlight: Visión Saludable



Order this and other materials online at <http://catalog.nei.nih.gov/>.

2009 Healthy Vision Community Award Applications are Available

Visit:
www.healthyvision2010.org/news/hvca/



Healthy Vision Community Programs Database

This easy-to-search resource can help you learn about new ways to address eye health issues and replicate eye health-related

Let us know about stories you would like to see in *Outlook* and about your efforts to promote NEHEP messages and use NEHEP materials. Please share this issue of *Outlook* with others interested in making vision a health priority.

Eve Higginbotham, M.D.

Chair, National Eye Health Education Program Planning Committee
Dean and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs
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projects in your community. Visit the Healthy Vision Community Programs Database at <http://community-based.shs.net/>.

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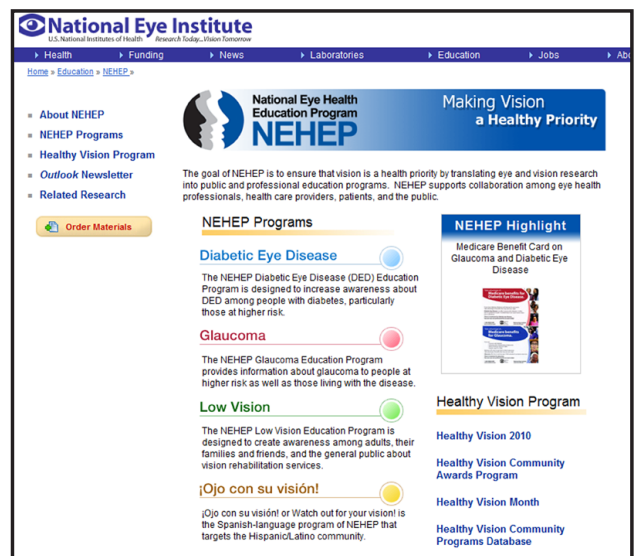
The NEHEP Website Has a New Look!

In order to better assist and facilitate the development and implementation of eye health education programs at the community level, the National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) has updated and redesigned its website. You can visit the site at www.nei.nih.gov/nehep.

This newly designed site provides a variety of information and resources that community-based organizations, health professionals, and health educators can use to increase awareness about eye health. Each of the NEHEP program area pages, Glaucoma, Diabetic Eye Disease, Low Vision, and ¡Ojo con su Visión! (Watch out for your vision!—Spanish-language program), is designed to provide easy access to resources and materials that can be used with patients, the public, and by health professionals. Each program page also has direct access to audiovisuals and graphics such as print and radio public service announcements that organizations can customize and distribute to reach people at higher risk. Community outreach plays an important role in increasing awareness about eye health, so each program page also provides suggestions for activities people can try in their community.

In addition to educational resources and materials, quantitative and qualitative NEHEP-related research, studies, and reports are available on the site. Many of these reports provide valuable information that can be used to tailor educational programs in terms of how best to reach target audiences with eye health messages.

The Healthy Vision Program section of the NEHEP site provides direct links to websites that can assist in promoting eye health in the community. These include links to the Healthy Vision Community Awards Program, Healthy Vision 2010, the Healthy Vision Community Programs Database, and Healthy Vision Month.



NEHEP programs provide health care professionals with information, materials, and resources to educate patients and the public about eye health and the importance of comprehensive dilated eye examinations. The NEHEP Website is meant to serve as a “one stop shop” for valuable resources to help you develop or enhance your eye health education efforts. We hope you visit the site often!

KAP Highlight: Hispanics



As the largest minority group in the United States, Hispanics/Latinos often face many health disparities. This is particularly true as it relates to eye health. Results from the 2004 Los Angeles Latino Eye Study (LALES), a population-based prevalence survey of eye disease in Latinos aged 40 years and older, found that Latinos (primarily of Mexican ancestry) have some of the highest rates of visual impairment and blindness, especially among older adults.¹ The Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Related to Eye Health and Disease (KAP) Survey, a national survey conducted in English and Spanish by the National Eye Institute and Lions Clubs International Foundation, found that compared with other racial/ethnic groups,

Hispanics experience disproportionate rates of knowledge about eye health, too.

Hispanic respondents reported the lowest access to eye health information, knew the least about eye health, and were the least likely to have their eyes examined among all racial/ethnic groups participating in the survey. They reported having heard about glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration (AMD), and diabetic eye disease less than non-Hispanic adults. Specifically, 61 percent of Hispanic adults compared to 94 percent of non-Hispanic adults reported that they have heard of glaucoma. Twenty-eight percent of Hispanic adults compared to 55 percent of non-Hispanic adults report that they have heard of AMD. Thirty-seven percent of Hispanic adults compared to 52 percent of non-Hispanic adults report that they have heard of diabetic eye disease.

When asked if they had seen or heard anything about eye health or disease in the past 12 months, 59 percent of Hispanics reported having seen or heard something about eye health in places such as TV/commercials, doctors' offices, clinics and community health screenings, and in magazines and newsletters. Conversely, 41 percent of Hispanics reported that they had not seen or heard anything about eye health or disease in the past 12 months.

In terms of eye health practices, 69 percent of Hispanic adults reported having had their eyes examined sometime in the past by a health care provider. The top four reasons for having an exam were: 1) a regular checkup (45%); 2) had trouble seeing (17%); 3) needed new glasses or contact lenses (10%); and 4) had an eye infection, injury, or eye disease (6%). Of those who had their eyes examined, 56 percent reported having had a dilated eye exam.

Regular comprehensive dilated eye examinations play a key role in helping people maintain vision by detecting eye diseases in their early stages, before vision loss occurs. Dilated eye exams are especially important for populations at higher risk for eye diseases such as glaucoma and diabetic eye disease, both of which have a high prevalence in the Hispanic population. The KAP Survey found that recommendations from primary care providers, family members, and coworkers had the greatest influence among Hispanics to have an eye exam. But, we all have a role to play in increasing awareness about eye health.

The findings from the KAP Survey emphasize the continued need to educate adults, particularly Hispanics, about eye health and eye disease. The National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP) will use information from this survey to raise awareness and tailor its outreach activities about eye health and disease to Hispanic populations. Other organizations can also use these findings when developing their own eye health education outreach.

For more information about the KAP Survey and to download a full copy of the report, visit www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/kap.

To learn more about NEHEP activities, resources, and materials for Hispanics, visit the ¡Ojo con su Visión! (Watch out for your Vision! Spanish-language program) Webpage at www.nei.nih.gov/nehep/programs/ojo/index.asp.

References

¹ Varma, R., Ying-Lai, M., Klein, R., Azen, S. P., and Los Angeles Latino Eye Study Group. (2004). Prevalence and risk indicators of visual impairment and blindness in Latinos: The Los Angeles Latino Eye Study. *Ophthalmology*, 111(6), 1132-1140.

Connecting with a Local Hispanic Community about Eye Health

It is a reality that eye health disparities exist in the Hispanic/Latino community. For many Spanish-speaking low-income residents in the Northern Virginia and greater DC metro areas, particularly those who only speak Spanish, accessible eye care services are almost nonexistent.

In 2004, the Hispanic Institute for Blindness Prevention (HIBP), a non-profit organization, was established to address this need. The core mission of the Institute is to contribute to the reduction of blindness among low-income families and those with limited access to health care within the Hispanic/Latino community. HIBP works to increase the number of Hispanics/Latinos who have dilated eye exams at appropriate intervals and to reduce uncorrected visual impairment due to refractive errors—these practices are consistent with the vision objectives of Healthy People 2010.



HIBP initiated services to the community by organizing eye health screenings in partnership with a variety of non-profit organizations and local health departments. Currently, HIBP partners with more than 30 organizations. This arrangement facilitates the ability to conduct outreach at health fairs, faith-based institutions, and other community events. “Our success has translated to over 27,000 patient screenings per year since 2006—less than three years since HIBP was established in 2004,” said founder and Executive Director, Germán Valbuena.

HIBP uses an active, multifaceted approach to get the word out about events that offer vision screening. This includes doing interviews for Hispanic newspapers, working one on one with churches and community health centers, and going door to door with flyers to inform people in the community. On multiple occasions, Mr. Valbuena has used the National Eye Institute (NEI) publication *Glaucoma: What You Should Know* to provide information to the Hispanic community during a 30-minute radio program. He then invited listeners to call in with questions.

HIBP also uses vision screening events to address other health issues. Blood pressure and glucose screenings are typically included, along with a health needs assessment that is used to determine a patient’s top three healthcare priorities. Based on screening results and the health needs assessment, patients are given referral forms to see doctors in the HIBP network of eye care and other health providers for follow-up.

Everyone who has a vision screening is provided with their results on the spot and given the NEI *Visión Saludable (Healthy Vision)* booklet and *Don’t Lose Sight of Glaucoma* brochure. Other NEI materials are also made available everywhere vision screenings take place, including the Spanish versions of *Glaucoma Eye-Q Test*, *Diabetic Retinopathy: What You Should Know*, *Age-Related Macular Degeneration: What You Should Know*, and *Cataract: What You Should Know*.

In addition to two mobile units used to offer screenings at various locations, HIBP works with the Mexican and Salvadorian Consulates to provide preventive health services to a pool of 300 potential clients a day. Consulates provide a trusting atmosphere that results in a better chance to do follow-up and help people understand the importance of investing in their health. In 2007, HIBP extended its offerings by establishing its own clinic in a Hispanic/Latino community in Falls Church, Virginia.

As an organization, HIBP faces ongoing challenges that include establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships and strategic alliances with other organizations; bringing sustainability to the program; and conducting ongoing outreach to health professionals to bring them into the network of providers for referral.

“In general, HIBP has become a trusted conduit to health care and social services in the Hispanic community,” said Mr. Valbuena. “I see it more as a social enterprise, rather than a charity that provides the Hispanic community with vision and other healthcare services that are accessible, affordable, and culturally competent.”

For more information about the Hispanic Institute for Blindness Prevention, contact Germán Valbuena, Executive Director, at 703-533-8872 or Opticservice@yahoo.es.

NEI Participates in AARP's "Life @ 50+" National Event & Expo

AARP is celebrating its 50th anniversary with their annual Exposition at the Washington DC Convention Center September 4-6, 2008. The National Eye Institute (NEI) along with several other eye-related organizations will share a Vision Pavilion inside the exhibit area of the convention center. Some of these organizations include the Macular Degeneration Partnership, who is organizing the Vision Pavilion, and the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington, who will be conducting glaucoma screenings (see a complete list of sponsors below). The Wild Blueberry Association of North America will be providing samples of blueberries and discussing their nutritional value as an antioxidant. A low vision area will also be part of the Vision Pavilion and will display low vision devices and software provided by Enhanced Vision and Eschenbach. Some of the interactive kiosks from the NEI traveling exhibit, THE EYE SITE, will also be on display.



During this three-day event, the Vision Pavilion will have a presentation stage that will include several speakers from eye-related organizations and NEI's Dr. Emily Chew, Deputy Director of Epidemiology and Clinical Research; Dr. Rachel Bishop, Chief, Consult Services Section; and Dr. Raphael Caruso, staff clinician in the Ophthalmic Genetics and Visual Function Branch.

Throughout the Exposition, there will be lifestyle sessions held in a separate area from the Vision Pavilion. One of the highlights will include a lifestyle session by well-known nutritionist, Joy Bauer, who appears regularly on *The Today Show*.

The theme for the Vision Pavilion will be "Life begins at 50; Vision loss doesn't have to."

You must register to attend the 50+ Expo. Registration includes a one-year membership and can be done online at http://www.aarp.org/aarp_benefits/natl_events/dc/registration/.

Vision Pavilion Sponsored by:
Macular Degeneration Partnership
National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health
Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington
American Foundation for the Blind
American Optometric Association
Foundation Fighting Blindness
HumanWare
Wild Blueberry Association of North America
Reader's Digest Partners for Sight Foundation

Alliance for Aging Research Takes a Closer Look at AMD

A new resource takes a close look at age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and the exciting new advances that are offering hope to the close to 9 million Americans affected by the disease.



AMD is the leading cause of lost independence in Americans over the age of 60. In order to raise awareness about the disease, the Alliance for Aging Research updated its popular consumer brochure—*Taking a Closer Look at Age-Related Macular Degeneration*. The brochure answers important questions about AMD, provides tips on reducing risk, and includes the latest information on many of the exciting new research advances. All information was scientifically reviewed by the National Eye Institute. It is designed for those recently diagnosed with the disease or who want to learn more about prevention, but is also popular among eye care professionals who use the brochure's Amsler Grid for screening.

The brochures are available for 45¢ each and can be ordered through the Alliance's website at www.agingresearch.org or by calling 202-293-2856.

Additional AMD resources, as well as an electronic version of *Taking a Closer Look*, are available online at the Alliance's AMD Health Corner.

Rx Label Enable: American Foundation for the Blind Calls for Accessible Medication Labels

In today's society, medications—both over the counter and prescription—are an important factor in maintaining health. However, the print on medication labels and package inserts is typically very small, posing a serious health threat to the 20 million, and growing, Americans experiencing significant vision loss. To address this critical public health issue, the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB, www.afb.org) has embarked on the Rx Label Enable campaign to ensure that people with vision loss have ready access to the vital information available to all consumers via prescription labeling and related documentation, enabling them to take medications safely, effectively, and independently.

For individuals with vision loss, not being able to read medication labels and related information is a particularly dangerous problem. Currently, people with vision loss must rely on memory, use compensatory strategies or devices, or depend on someone else for help. As a result, many people with vision loss and older adults with reduced visual acuity are unable to "access" important instructions for use and safety information from prescription labels and Consumer Medication Information. Through the campaign, they are encouraging individuals with vision loss and



their families to complete an online survey telling AFB about problems they are having with identifying their medications. AFB plans to use this information to bring about needed policy changes in medication labeling standards.

There are essentially no federal guidelines for pharmacists to follow in making prescription labels accessible. As part of the Rx Label Enable campaign, AFB teamed up with the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists Foundation (ASCP) to develop the “Guidelines for Prescription Labeling and Consumer Medication Information for Persons with Vision Loss.”

The Guidelines provide pharmacists and pharmacies with specific format recommendations for making important medication information accessible to patients with vision loss and will serve as a resource for persons with vision loss and organizations serving this population. They also contain suggestions for making information accessible to people for whom larger print is not useful and general information on assistive technology, resources, and services that pharmacists and pharmacies can share with their patients with vision loss.

For consumers who have trouble reading their medication labels, and pharmacists who want to better serve their customers, information on the Rx Label Enable campaign and the full set of prescription labeling recommendations can be found at www.afb.org/pharmacistguidelines.

Healthy Vision Community Award Spotlight: Erie Family Health Center

As a 2007 NEI Healthy Vision Community Award (HVCA) recipient, the Erie Family Health Center in Chicago, IL implemented a comprehensive eye health education awareness and referral component as part of their existing diabetes education and management program. This program consists of education on glucose monitoring, nutrition, physical activity, foot care, and eye care.



The Erie Family Health Center provides comprehensive health services to nearly 30,000 patients annually. The target population for the Eye Health Promotion and Education Program is low-income Hispanics living with diabetes. Erie currently cares for 1,800 patients with diabetes enrolled at its three large primary healthcare centers. Of these patients, 98 percent are aged 20 years and older and 88 percent are Hispanic.

Erie employs three diabetes health educators who coordinate the treatment of patients with diabetes and provide one-on-one, culturally competent, bilingual health education. For the eye care component of the program, the educators provide comprehensive education on the risks and effects of diabetic retinopathy. They use the NEI video, *Don't Lose Site of Eye Disease*, and *Diabetic Eye Disease: An Educator's Guide* flipchart to stress the importance of eye exams. Erie also distributes Spanish-language versions of the NEI brochures *Don't Lose Sight of Diabetic Eye Disease* and *Diabetic Retinopathy: What You Should Know*

and hangs the NEI Spanish-language diabetic eye disease poster (*Lo bello entra por los ojos...no deje que la diabetes cierre esa ventana* [Beauty enters through the eyes. Don't let diabetes close the window.]) in rooms used for diabetes education to publicize the issue.

To raise general public awareness about diabetic retinopathy, the health educators conduct and participate in events such as health fairs and community presentations. They also have used the public access channel in Chicago to provide information on diabetes care, including eye health. This approach allows for live call-ins throughout a 30-minute program to ask questions and get answers.

Some of the accomplishments resulting from Erie's Eye Health Promotion and Education Program efforts for 2007 include—

- Providing individual eye health education to 801 patients.
- Participating in 10 community health fairs that provided information about the importance of eye health to more than 1,600 community members.
- Hosting a public access television show on complications of diabetes and providing information on diabetic eye health.
- Referring 90 percent of patients with diabetes to a local community eye care provider for a dilated eye exam.

In January 2008, the Erie Family Health Center became the recipient of an HVCA renewal to expand the resources and outreach of its Eye Health Promotion and Education Program. With this renewal, they will work on implementing the following activities this year:

- Reaching more than 1,400 individuals through health fairs and community outreach events.
- Hiring a diabetes care coordinator to provide support and case management services.
- Creating a comprehensive Vision Care Resource Guide to provide Erie staff with information on referral resources in their community.
- Creating diabetic eye disease information packets that are to be given to newly diagnosed patients with diabetes.

For more information about the Erie Family Health Center Eye Health Promotion and Education Program for people with diabetes, contact Lauren Muskovitz, Manager Health Promotion, at 312-432-7454 or jmuskovitz@eriefamilyhealth.org.

To learn more about the HVCA Program, visit <http://www.healthyvision2010.org/news/hvca/>.

On the Road with NEI

The National Eye Institute (NEI) regularly exhibits at national meetings across the country. Exhibits provide an opportunity to share information and publications, promote NEI messages and resources, and strengthen links with partner organizations. Upcoming NEI exhibits are listed below. If you plan to attend any of these meetings, please stop by and say “hello”!



National Association of Community Health Representatives

Education Conference
Riviera Hotel and Casino
Las Vegas, NV
July 29-31, 2008
Riviera Grand Ballroom E

American Association of Diabetes Educators

Annual Meeting
Washington Convention Center
Washington, DC
August 6-9, 2008
Booth Number 2409

AARP

Life@50+ National Event & Expo
Washington Convention Center
Washington, DC
September 4-6, 2008
Booth Numbers 3638-3749

National Indian Council on Aging

Biennial Conference
Greater Tacoma Convention & Trade Center
Tacoma, WA
September 5-9, 2008