

WORLD FOCUS

The newsletter of the World Council of Optometry

January 2011

Puerto Rico 2011

WCO General Delegates Meeting and
COPR World Optometric Congress

Conrad Condado Plaza Hotel, Puerto Rico,
13-17 April 2011



Contact us now to book your place on what promises to be a pivotal gathering focusing on three key issues affecting optometry throughout the world.

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Unmissable!

...continued from previous page

Puerto Rico 2011

This unmissable event, set in the superb surroundings of the Conrad Condado Plaza Hotel on the beautiful Caribbean island of Puerto Rico, is being held in conjunction with the Colegio de Optometras de Puerto Rico (COPR) annual conference and world optometric congress.



It provides all WCO members with the opportunity to influence its future strategy and policy and to join WCO Standing Committees debates on three 'big questions' :

Public health

How should WCO define optometry in a way that has resonance in all countries irrespective of their public health challenges?

Education

Does multi-entry/multi-exit training help or hinder the position of optometry globally?

Legislation, registration and standards

Who are WCO's key stakeholders? How can relationships be developed with stakeholders for the benefit of optometry and to ensure the global influence of WCO?



Book now!

A special 'early bird' price for bookings made before 31 January 2011, is just \$500 (\$550 after 31 January) to include:

- Attendance at two days of WCO meetings, including the Standing Committee meetings on Wednesday 13 and the General Delegates Meeting on Friday 15 April
- Full day visit to the Inter American University of Puerto Rico School of Optometry and Special Olympics presentation on Thursday 14 April
- Attendance at three days of COPR's Optometry World Congress on Friday 15, Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 April
- Welcome reception on Friday 15 April
- Reception and Gala Dinner Dance on Saturday 16 April
- Refreshments and buffet lunch on Wednesday 13 – Saturday 16 April inclusive

A partner programme is available for \$200 to include:

- Entrance to the Welcome Reception on Friday

- Reception and Gala Dinner on Saturday
- Lunch on Wednesday, Thursday (if attending the School of Optometry) and Friday
- Breakfast on Saturday and Sunday

A selection of optional visits, on Wednesday 13 April and Sunday 17 April, will be available for partners and delegates including a drive to the El Yunque rainforest, tour of the Bacardi distillery, San Juan city tour and Bioluminescent Bay Kayak.

Download a booking form today from www.worldoptometry.org and send it to WCO – PR2011, 42 Craven Street, London WC2N 5NG United Kingdom, email: pr2011@worldoptometry.org, or fax: +44 (0) 207 776 4368.

Limited bursaries are available for this event from the World Optometry Foundation. Contact: pr2011@worldoptometry.org.



Optometry honours an outstanding life

The WCO's annual International Optometrist of the Year Award was awarded posthumously in 2010 to Dr Tom Little, who was killed whilst leading a humanitarian health mission in Nuristan province, Afghanistan.

Each year, this prestigious award recognises an individual who has shown *"outstanding commitment and contribution to both the profession of optometry and the community at large"*.

Commenting on the award at the WCO's World Conference on Optometric Education in September, WCO President Professor George Woo said: "Dr Little had dedicated his life to providing eye and vision care in a very difficult and challenging environment. Our thoughts

are with his family, friends and colleagues and the WCO is proud to recognise Dr Little as an outstanding individual and professional."

Dr Little was working for International Assistance Mission, which is estimated to have benefited an estimated 5 million Afghans since 1966.

Originally from Kinderhook, New York, Dr Little had worked in Afghanistan for more than 30 years. He was a former member of the WCO Public Health Committee and presented at the 2008 WCO World Optometric Globalisation Conference in London. He was a graduate of the Advanced Standing International Program at New England College of Optometry and an adjunct

Faculty member of the College. He was also involved in Volunteer Services for Optometry/ International.



A life well lived

Chip Parker, an active participant in WCO from 1999 until 2006 and a close friend of Dr Little since 1977, provides this moving testimonial:

"Tom Little walked into the optical laboratory at the NOOR Eye Institute sometime in 1977 with a small bag of optical tools and stated that he was a licensed optician from New York and was wondering if he could be of help. He was there on another mission but had some free time. He started coming on a regular basis. Some months later he told me that the project he was working on was closing and asked if I had more work for him. I said that we did but didn't realise that there would be 33 years of it! None of us had any idea what that would mean.

From the days before the Russians first came in 1978, through the Russian invasion and subsequent withdrawal, the civil war crisis, early 90s, the Taliban, late 90s, the American invasion post 9/11 and until his death on 5 August 2010, Tom found something to do working through virtually every job at the hospital and clinics except surgery. He organised and oversaw the training of surgeons, nurses, technicians; he set up Afghanistan's first ophthalmic manufacturing pharmacy. He recruited visiting professors and short term personnel. He managed the hospital administration while carrying on a clinical load. His love was the optical lab and the clinic. He always found time for that even when it meant spending late nights, sometimes by gas lamp, finishing other jobs.

As the security situation declined, fewer and fewer organizations and people were left to do the work but Tom and his wife Libby stayed to do what could still be done to keep eye care accessible to those who needed it in Kabul and in the outlying provinces. Many would say today, that had it not been for Tom the eye work in Afghanistan would have totally collapsed. In later years when the people and the organisations began to return, Tom and Libby were there to welcome them.

Much of Tom's career was without formal training. His father was an ophthalmologist in a small town in upstate New York. Unusually he had a special interest in refracting and taught Tom and employed him in his office as an assistant and an optician.

Tom came to Kabul with that experience and all his pre-med requirements, a couple of Master's degrees in unrelated fields, but no professional credentials beyond his optician's license. He started working with me in the clinic and I monitored his work and saw him strengthen in his clinical skills. We had a good library in our teaching hospital so it served almost as an independent residency programme for Tom.

In the early 2000s, Tom found a window in his schedule and started to work toward getting a degree in optometry. The World Council was kind enough to invite and sponsor him to some of their conferences. At one of these I spoke to Bina Patel and

David Heath of New England College of Optometry (NECO) and told him of Tom's unique background. We all met together in Orlando at a WCO conference in the early 2000s. One of my arguments was: 'Professionally we want to claim this guy as one of ours.' The profession can now be proud that we can. With credit to David and Bina, who supported Tom's request, he was admitted to the NECO accelerated programme. I don't think they were disappointed. Tom received his degree with honours and went back to Afghanistan professionally strengthened and now credentialed to do the work he had been doing all his life.

There is so much more to the story. The faith that brought him to Afghanistan, Tom's expression of his faith by his deeds, adventures that would make Indiana Jones look like a wimp, the deep and abiding friendships, the cold, the bullets, artillery shells and bombs, the diseases, the poor food, thousands of people helped that otherwise would have been blind.

I think his wife Libby will tell their story. I am encouraging her to do so. Watch for it, you won't want to miss it.

For now I'll just leave it at this: In a world where so much is said and so little is done Tom chose to say little and do much. Afghanistan and all whose lives he touched, will miss him and mourn his death but be gladdened and encouraged by a life that was well lived."

Chip Parker

Optometric education in the spotlight

The challenges and trends in optometric education took centre stage in September 2010 when nearly 270 speakers and delegates representing 44 countries gathered in Durban, South Africa for the sixth World Conference on Optometric Education (WCOE).

Under the banner of *Meeting Societies Needs; Challenges and Trends in Optometric Education*, presentations were divided into three different categories:

- Developing appropriate human resources
- Strategies in providing quality education
- Trends and development in optometric education

The three day event included twenty lecture presentations, six workshops, twenty six poster oral presentations with a session of round table discussions and seven regional educational reports.

The official welcoming presentation was given by Professor George Woo; WCO President, who announced the International Optometrist of the Year award to Dr Tom Little (see full article on page 3), who was killed in August 2010 on a health mission in Afghanistan.

During the first day, lectures and presentations were given under the themes of:

- Linking current and planned national and regional optometric education

models to national and regional health services delivery

- Developing optometric faculty and student research experience
- Developing appropriate human resources

WCOE delegates were also able to attend and participate in various sessions offered at the same time by the World Congress on Refractive Error (WCRE), taking place concurrently with the WCOE meeting.

Some of the highlights included presentations on human resource development needs, especially in countries within Africa, the importance of understanding public health needs and sharing educational resources.

Day two included lectures and several workshops under the themes of:

- Strategies in providing quality education and curricular development
- Models of improving the effectiveness of optometric educators in clinical settings

Subjects covered included sharing educational expertise (either globally or



with individual institutions) and how this can be useful in curricular development, faculty expertise and providing effective clinical experience.

Workshops shared techniques on improving the effectiveness of optometric educators in didactic and clinical settings.

Delegates also had the opportunity to visit the Optometry department at KwaZulu- Natal University hosted by Professor Percy Khathushelo and his faculty and staff, or attend workshops provided by Essilor.

Day three focussed on:

- evaluating quality and effectiveness of optometry programmes
- postgraduate degree programmes - development and challenges
- quality assurance of optometric programmes

Representatives from each of the WCO regions presented reports on recent and future activities on optometric education and development and challenges within their region.

Delegates also heard presentations on innovative methods of assessing student competencies and life long learning and issues relating to continuing education.

Closing presentations were given by Professor Brien Holden, CEO of Brien Holden Vision Institute and Tone Garaas-Maurdalen, WCO President-Elect. Prof Holden spoke about the WCRE conference and the importance of being involved in reducing uncorrected refractive errors globally and Ms Garaas-Maurdalen who encouraged educators to continue to strive for harmonisation in the optometric progression and work with organisations to reach the Vision 2020 goal.

Copies of presentations and meeting papers are now available to download at www.worldoptometry.org



Prestigious award double

Durban-based Professor Kovin Naidoo, Global Programmes Director of the International Centre for Eyecare Education in South Africa and Professor Brien Holden from the Brien Holden Vision Institute, Australia were jointly awarded the Schwab Social Entrepreneur Award for Africa 2010 at the regional World Economic Forum in Tanzania. The award acknowledges outstanding leaders or visionaries who pursue poverty alleviation with entrepreneurial zeal and whose efforts are characterised by innovation, sustainability, reach and social impact. It also recognises their efforts in building strong and sustainable organisations.



Final piece now in place to complete WCO structure

The WCO's international structure is now fully complete with the addition of the Eastern Mediterranean Council of Optometry (EMCO) to the regional fold.

Approval was given by the WCO Governing Board at its meeting in Durban in September last year for EMCO to complete its six-region structure – joining North America (US and Canada), Latin America, Asia Pacific, Europe and Africa. Although there have been WCO country members from the Eastern Mediterranean for many years, they have previously not come together to form a regional organisation.

The seeds for the new organisation were first sown at a meeting of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness in Bahrain in 2008, when Bob Chappell, then WCO President, met with optometrists from Saudi Arabia and Jordan. They were enthusiastic about the opportunity to establish an Eastern Mediterranean Council of Optometry to support and develop optometry in the region. Discussions took place over the next two years and finally on 19 June 2010 the first meeting of EMCO took place as part of the 13th Congress of the Syndicat des Opticiens et Optométristes du Liban in Beirut.

There are currently 10 EMCO member countries: Bahrain, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Syria.

Dr Ali Bukhamseen from Saudi Arabia was elected as its first President, Walid Mikdashi from Lebanon as Vice-President and Hasan Minto from Pakistan as General Secretary.



“There are nearly a billion people in our world who live in poverty. Every profession needs to work together to reach this sector of society”

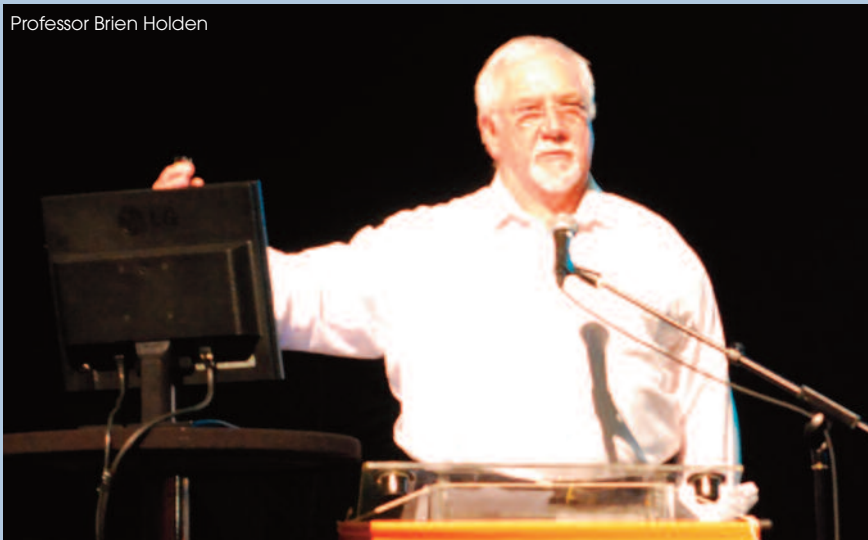
eye care sector. In 2007 he was awarded International Optometrist of the Year by the World Council of Optometry and has also received the African Optometrist of the Year award in recognition of his achievements in promoting optometric care in developing countries.

He said: “There are nearly a billion people in our world who live in poverty. Every profession needs to work together to reach this sector of society. While I am very appreciative and feel very honoured to receive this award, I do not want to create the impression I am one of only a few chosen people who can make a difference. I urge all eye care professionals to get involved in public health efforts to help alleviate the staggering figure of 670 million people suffering with avoidable blindness or vision impairment in this world because they simply don't have access to basic eye care.”

In 2010, Professor Naidoo also received the Essilor Award for Outstanding International Contributions to Optometry from the American Academy of Optometry, which recognises extraordinary international contributions to optometry or international eye care.

Prof Naidoo (pictured above right) is a previous recipient of WCO World Optometrist of the Year Award, chair of WCO Public Health Committee and a well known global leader in the

Professor Brien Holden



World view

New President for ECOO

Armin Duddek has been elected as the new President for European Council of Optometry and Optics (ECOO) and together with a newly elected Executive Committee, serves a two year term from November 2010.



Armin Duddek

A German national, Mr Duddek (44) is a qualified optician and optometrist. Since 1993, he has been in full-time optometric practice as a contact lens specialist in Zürich, Switzerland. In 1997, he bought the contact lens supply company Prolens. Since 2000, he has been President of the Swiss Society of Optometry and Optics (SBAO) and has been part of the Swiss delegation to ECOO.

Mr Duddek said: "ECOO has successfully established itself as the 'face' of optometry and optics in Europe. The challenges facing our profession are considerable. The Executive Committee and I look forward to working with all ECOO members to promote our common vision: to achieve greater recognition and harmonisation of the scope of practice of optometry and optics across Europe and establish optometry as the main provider of primary eye health."

Dr. Julie-Anne Little is ECOO's new President Elect, Jesus García Treasurer, Peter Gumpelmayer is Chairman of the Professional Services Committee and Benedek Raak Chairman of the Economic Committee.



All of them will serve as members of the new Executive Committee, together with Dr Wolfgang Cagnolati, who will continue to sit on the Executive Committee as Immediate Past President, Bob Chappell, Chairman of the Board of Management and Ulrich Adam, Secretary General.

For further information, visit www.ecoo.info or contact Ulrich Adam, email secretariat@ecoo.info

New council for Spain

The Spanish General Council of Optometry was inaugurated in Madrid in 2010 as the umbrella organisation representing its optic and optometric collegial organisation through the existing autonomous Colleges in the Spanish State, together with the National College.

Juan Carlos Martinez Moral has been appointed as Chairman, while

continuing as Dean of the National College of Opticians-Optometrists.

The General Council's main function is unitary representation of the profession in state and international areas and it will therefore defend the rights and safeguard the professional interests of opticians-optometrists on a national and international level.



Consejo General
de Colegios
de Ópticos-Optometristas

News in brief

Education online

The WCO Education Committee has set up an online forum exclusively for its members to enable discussion of international optometry issues. The WCO Education Committee is chaired by Professor Maurice Yap of Hong Kong Polytechnic University and has representatives from WCO regions around the world.

For more information on the work and members of the Education Committee visit www.worldoptometry.org

Free global learning - online

TOA online is a global learning materials resource for continuous professional development (CPD) of eye care professionals worldwide. Best of all, it is absolutely free and available to all. Take a look at www.toatraining.com and sign up today!

News from CARIOA, the Caribbean Optometry Association

- CARIOA President, Dr Jillia Bird of Antigua represented Caribbean optometrists at last autumn's Latin American Optometric Congress in Chile. Dr Bird delivered a lecture entitled: Caribbean/Latin American collaboration to raise awareness of Glaucoma. In her presentation, she highlighted the importance of recent regional Glaucoma awareness activities in the light of new research showing Latin American Glaucoma prevalence rates as high as those in Caribbean and American Blacks. During the Congress, Dr Bird was also elected to the Latin American Optometric Association's (ALDOO) Board as Caribbean representative.
- This year's annual one-week Mobile Medical Mission Hospital will see optometrists teaming with ophthalmologists, ENT and other practitioners to provide humanitarian eye care for the poor in St Vincent, West Indies from 22-30 May. In St Vincents there is a 16% incidence of glaucoma and a 50% incidence of diabetic and hypertensive retinopathy, as well as a 30% incidence of cataracts.
- The new CARIOA Governing Board is: President Dr Jillia Bird, Antigua & Barbuda; President Elect Michelle Ming, Guyana; Treasurer/Past President Nigel St Rose, Trinidad & Tobago; Committee Member Dr Jones Efenemokwu, Trinidad & Tobago; Committee Member Dr Luis Mora, Puerto Rico; Committee Member Romanus Thomas - St Lucia.

More information at www.carioa.org

Empowerment for eye care in Chile

Eye care in Chile has taken a major step forward following the approval of a bill enabling medical technologists with a speciality in ophthalmology to carry out the same duties as an optometrist, including therapeutics and diagnostics.

The bill is expected to become law in June and also allows optometrists who studied abroad to have their credentials validated by the University of Chile so that they too can practice.

Special Olympics partnership opens eyes around the world



A new partnership between the WCO's global optometric education body and Special Olympics Inc will help increase volunteer recruitment, visibility and clinical research for the Special Olympics Lions Club International Opening Eyes programme.

Since 1998, WCO has been instrumental in assisting Opening Eyes in the identification of interested eye care professionals to become trained Clinical Directors and leaders in their home states, regions or countries - enabling Opening Eyes to provide screening and intervention services in over 80 countries.

The growth continues. Over 80,000 athletes have now been provided with prescription eye glasses through Opening Eyes with the involvement of over 12,000 eye care professionals from across the vision care sector. With the support of Lions Clubs International Foundation and in partnership with optic industry leaders Safilo and Essilor, Opening Eyes has been able to formally address the gaps in quality vision care for those with intellectual disabilities - a disparity that exists both in developing as well as developed world nations.

As part of the partnership agreement, demonstration Opening Eyes screenings will take place at future WCO annual conferences, including the next General Delegates Meeting at Puerto Rico in April. Volunteers for the Opening Eyes programme are always welcome - many eye care professionals have stated it is one of the most gratifying experiences of their professional career. For more information, visit www.specialolympics.org



Special Olympics



Lions Clubs International



Refractive Error moves onto higher global agenda

A significant step forward was taken at the 2010 World Congress on Refractive Error (WCRE) in Durban, South Africa to heighten concern for the current inadequate levels of eye care services worldwide, for what is the leading cause of blindness and vision impairment in the world today.

Attended by more than 600 eye care professionals, researchers, government and industry representatives from all over the world, the key outcome of the congress was a commitment document which reaffirms the intentions of the 2007 Durban Declaration but demands more efforts for the provision of quality eye care based on evidence. It also suggests associating eye care more closely with the broader poverty and development agenda.

The 2007 Durban Declaration, signed at the inaugural WCRE, advocated public health strategies to end unnecessary blindness and uncorrected refractive error which affects more than 670 million people worldwide.

It recognises refractive error as a major public health issue and a significant contributing factor to poverty in the world. It resolves to:

- Create global awareness of the impact



Prof George Woo, Dr Mohammed Babar Qureshi, Prof Kovin Naidoo, Prof Gullapalli Nageswara Rao

of refractive error on sufferers, their families and community and the need for services

- Lobby national governments and world health care agencies for the policies, services and resources required to meet the needs
- Strive to overcome the barriers that prevent those with refractive error and low vision from obtaining the same services, rights and opportunities as others

- Ensure refractive error services are prioritised in planning and development of national health plans
- Invest in training eye care workers and professionals
- Support the establishment of global distribution channels to make high quality spectacles available
- Work to build relationships with private sector and service providers to expand the availability of sustainable services

For full details of the 2010 Durban Commitment, *Vision Health and Development; Enhancing our Commitment to the Durban Declaration on Refractive Error*, go to <http://icoph.org/downloads/DurbanCommitment2010.pdf>

For more information on the World Conference on Refractive Error, see www.icree2010.co.za

Call for comments on code

A code of conduct for WCO members is awaiting your comments before getting the green light.

The code, developed by the Legislation, Registration and Standards Committee and approved by the governing board will be presented for approval at the General Delegates Meeting in Puerto Rico in April. In the meantime, WCO members have until 11 February 2011 to make comments on the draft code, by email to Laura Prieto, Executive Administrator at laura.prieto@worldoptometry.org.

The proposed code

- 1 To keep your patients' eye, vision and general health your first priority
- 2 To respect the rights and dignity of patients regarding their health care decisions
- 3 To advise your patients whenever consultation with, or referral to, another optometrist or other health professional is appropriate
- 4 To ensure confidentiality and privacy of patients' health and other personal information
- 5 To strive to ensure that all people have access to eye and vision care
- 6 To maintain and advance your professional knowledge and skills
- 7 To maintain your practice in accordance with professional health care standards
- 8 To promote ethical and cordial relationships with all members of the health care community
- 9 To maintain the dignity, honour and integrity of the optometric profession

Fellowship honour for Uduak

WCO Board Member and Chair of the African Council of Optometry, Uduak Udom has just completed a Commonwealth Professional Fellowship in the UK hosted by WCO.

The fellowship was awarded to Uduak to enable her to network with organisations in the UK which promote vision and eye care with a view to developing workshops and leadership training for optometrists across Africa.

“The emphasis of the fellowship was not just to be a one-way route of information”

Based at the College of Optometrists’ offices in London for three months, Uduak made full use of her time, including volunteering to Vision Care for Homeless People in London and visiting Moorfields Eye Hospital and Manchester Royal Eye Hospital, the latter visit hosted by the President of the College of Optometrists in the UK, Dr Cindy Tromans. Uduak also visited the schools of optometry at City University in London, Aston University in Birmingham, and Manchester University

and met with representatives of all of the many bodies in the UK which has an involvement in optometry and optics. She also visited both independent and multiple practices, including the independent practice of former WCO President Bob Chappell.

Commenting on her time in the UK, Uduak said: “The emphasis of the fellowship was not just to be a one-way route of information and briefings for me, but for the organisations I met with to gain more knowledge and understanding of eye and vision public health issues in developing countries, particularly Africa. This will in turn help them to adjust their policies and plans for programmes.”

Putting this two-way influence into practice, Uduak found there were no optometrists on the editorial board of the Community Eye Health Journal when she attended a meeting. As a result, she is now a contributor to the journal and the board has recognised the need for an optometrist to sit on the board. This is being followed up by the College of Optometrists.

In another example, as a result of a visit by Uduak, Keeler ophthalmic instruments factory in Windsor, have agreed to train

instrument maintenance technicians for the African region and to hold regular seminars on ophthalmic instrumentation for Nigerian optometry students, with a view to extending this provision to other parts of Africa.

During her fellowship, Uduak endeared herself to college staff with her interest in its work and its role as a professional body, as well as her great sense of fun. She has now recommended that WCO encourages its members to apply for further fellowships and plans for this are now being put in place. Although Uduak met all her objectives during her UK stay, she says the broader effect will be seen when she starts to put in place regional and national plans for professional development.

Commonwealth Professional Fellowships are for mid-career professionals from developing Commonwealth countries to spend periods (typically up to three months) with a relevant UK host organisation in their field for a programme of professional development. For more information about the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission, go to www.cscuk.org.uk



Uduak is pictured at the College of Optometrists' London offices with Bryony Pawinska, CEO of the College and Company Secretary of WCO (left) and Chris Hull, Head of Dept of Optometry at City University.

IAPB position statements on adjustable spectacles and re-cycling used spectacles

The following draft position statements from IAPB, which are awaiting final approval, are endorsed by WCO.

IAPB draft position statement on adjustable spectacles

There are an estimated 670 million cases of blindness or vision impairment (153 million people with impaired far vision and 517 million people with impaired near vision) simply because they are unable to access an appropriate eye examination and spectacles. Far vision impairment alone costs \$269 billion a year in lost productivity. The massive volume of cases, and consequent scale of disability and economic impact caused by uncorrected refractive error (URE) has led to various attempts to provide short-cut refractive care. Adjustable spectacles, with the optical power either set in an eye examination or self-adjusted, have been promoted by several companies and organisations as a potential solution.

IAPB recognises the good intentions behind these short-cuts and spectacle technology but advises that its members and other parties engaged in promoting eye health should exercise caution with or avoid adjustable spectacles at this time. In deciding whether and how to use adjustable spectacles in future, the following areas should be considered.

Sustainability

It is critical that refractive services are provided in a manner that contributes to affordable, high quality eye care for all patients irrespective of social standing. Isolated provision of spectacles is detrimental to the human resources and service delivery systems that are necessary for sustainable eye care services, and so should be avoided whenever possible.

- Adjustable spectacles that are affordable, comfortable, cosmetically acceptable and optically accurate may have a role contributing to sustainability when used by trained

personnel within the recognised service delivery system of the jurisdiction

- Adjustable spectacles used in a way (e.g. self-adjusted for optical power) that undermines trained personnel working within recognised service delivery systems do not have a role

Children

Refractive care for children must involve an examination of the visual system to avoid complications, e.g. far-sightedness can cause eye turns, lazy eye, headaches and fatigue if not detected, measured, diagnosed and corrected adequately; near-sightedness can be over-prescribed leading to headaches, sore eyes and interference with the normal growth of the eye.

- Adjustable spectacles self-adjusted for optical power have no role in provision of refractive care to children due to their inability to control accommodation (the eye's focusing power)
- Adjustable spectacles used by trained personnel within recognised service delivery systems would need to be comfortable and cosmetically acceptable to children – variables such as size, weight and lens centration would require child-specific models

Benchmarking against ISO standards and the conventional options

Adjustable spectacles may be part of the solution to the global problem of vision impairment from uncorrected refractive error provided they meet ISO standards and are comparable to conventional ready-made and custom-made spectacles in the following areas:

- Affordability
- Quality (optical, appearance, comfort, durability)
- Deliverability via an eye examination conducted by a trained person

“The Programme Committee supports the training of a skilled workforce via its membership who are able to accurately prescribe, and reliably fit spectacles”

These benchmarks promote quality eye care services including refractive care at all levels. The case load and relative simplicity of correcting refractive error means the bulk of refractive care is most efficiently dealt with at the primary level. However, screening for eye disease and management of potential complications associated with spectacles must be built-in.

REPCOM is unaware of any adjustable spectacles that achieve the first two benchmarks at present, and knows of adjustable spectacle manufacturers promoting self-adjustment in place of the third benchmark.

- Affordability and quality benchmarks appear more likely to be achieved in future by Alvarez lens system adjustable spectacles than by fluid-filled adjustable spectacles
- Adjustable spectacles that are many times more expensive, less comfortable and less cosmetically acceptable than the conventional options (custom-made and ready-made spectacles), or which do not achieve ISO standards for mounted spectacle lenses, do not have a role

Summary

Adjustable spectacles used as a corrective device prescribed within the



1. Pair of modern, high quality, new Ready Made Spectacles. Price US \$ 2.20
2. Pair of modern, high quality, new Spectacle Frames. Price US \$ 1.50

affordability-quality-trained personnel paradigm provide an acceptable addition to the other available options. However claims that using them as 'self-adjustable spectacles' only have positive vision care outcomes are untrue. There are detrimental effects on eye disease case finding, prevention of blindness from eye diseases, the sustainability of eye care services, cross-subsidy systems that ensure access for all people, and care for people with 'non-standard' refractive conditions such as astigmatism. Much more evaluation and systems development is necessary before 'self-adjustable spectacles' could be promoted as a safe option for refractive error correction.

IAPB draft position statement on re-cycling used spectacles

Each year, Eye Care Non Governmental Organisations and Institutions are inundated with offers of used spectacles to be recycled in the developing world. IAPB recognises the good intentions behind these donations but advises that its members and other parties engaged in promoting eye health should no longer accept second-hand spectacles for the following reasons:

Recycling spectacles is not cost-effective
For the donating country:

- The cost of supplying used spectacles is high due to collection, transport, cleaning, sorting and storage costs. This means that in real terms they cost far more than new ready-made spectacles as well as custom spectacles made in a local facility
- Used spectacles are unlikely to last as long as new spectacles. Replacing them would be costly to the recipient, both in financial terms and in terms of the time it would take them to reach the nearest eye-care facility. Affordable,

high-quality modern spectacles are readily available and are robust

For the receiving country:

- There is a high cost of clearance through customs, transporting, storage, measuring and labelling powers, or knocking out the lenses so that just the frames can be reused
- There is an expectation that donated spectacles should be given out free, but the additional cost of management and distribution has to be taken into account
- Bulk purchase of spectacles, or the frames and lenses needed to make up spectacles, is also possible through established outlets in Africa and Asia, which brings down the price

Everyone, regardless of their circumstances, has a right to clear, comfortable vision

- Spectacle prescriptions are usually quite complex (consisting of spherical & cylindrical powers and axis & lens centration for each eye), making it very difficult to match the prescription of used spectacles to patients' prescriptions. If used spectacles cannot be matched to a patient, then the spectacles cannot be recycled
- Recycled spectacles are often damaged or scratched, which makes them inappropriate for further use

Everyone has a right to have spectacles that look attractive and fit comfortably

- People all over the world want to look attractive. People with refractive errors, including children, often reject second-hand spectacles because they find them cosmetically unacceptable as they can look old-fashioned or out-of-date, or spectacles designed for males are being offered to females

- Because second-hand spectacles were prescribed for a particular individual, the frames can often be uncomfortable for another user simply because they don't fit properly, even after adjustment

Used spectacles can cause an environmental problem

- Often massive quantities of used spectacles are collected only to be dumped as unusable, inappropriate stock - thus causing a major environmental problem in the recipient's country

Local facilities are being supported to provide appropriate low cost high quality eye care

- IAPB believes that low cost high quality eye care should be available to all. There are Optical Workshops and Public Health Eye Care facilities in many countries providing high quality low cost modern spectacles and other eye health services. The Programme Committee supports the training of a skilled workforce via its membership who are able to accurately prescribe, and reliably fit spectacles

“Much more evaluation and systems development is necessary before ‘self-adjustable spectacles’ could be promoted as a safe option for refractive error correction”

Completed questionnaires required for scope of practice survey

Completed questionnaires sent out to all WCO members in 2010, have so far been returned by six countries – more are needed to complete the scope of practice survey, which will provide a valuable tool to members.

Overseen by the WCO Legislation, Registration and Standards Committee the questionnaire will capture important data to be used as a tool for analysing gaps, so that all WCO member countries and regions can use the information when preparing their strategies for developing optometry in their own country/region.

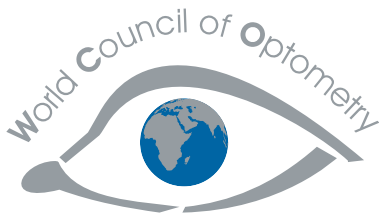
It will be a valuable member benefit as most of the data will only be available for internal use by member countries and regions.

The survey has been funded jointly by the Norwegian Association of Optometry and the College of



Optometrists in the UK. Please make sure that you have a named contact in your country who can complete the questionnaire. Click here to complete the questionnaire or visit www.pellesweb.no/wew/extranet/index.php. If you have any questions, please contact Pelle Knusden at pelle@optikerforbund.no.

Membership subscriptions now due



Remember to renew your WCO membership. Renewal documentation has been sent with this newsletter. If you have enjoyed reading this issue of *World Focus* make sure you receive your next issue by renewing, just one of the many benefits membership brings.

If you have any queries on your WCO membership, please contact laura.prieto@worldoptometry.org

Contributions please!

If you have some news you would like to share with your fellow WCO members around the world, then please send us your articles or information for inclusion in the next issue of *World Focus*. The next issue will be published in May 2011 following the WCO's General Delegates Meeting in Puerto Rico. Please submit your stories no later than 30 April 2011 to laura.prieto@worldoptometry.org.

World Focus is published by WCO every six months to keep its members

abreast of the latest optometry news and developments.

Since July 2008, the World Council of Optometry and World Optometry Foundation have been administered and hosted by the College of Optometrists in the UK. The College headquarters, in the heart of London beside Trafalgar Square, has meeting rooms, a comprehensive library and a museum, which WCO members are welcome to visit. More details at www.college-optometrists.org.



Events calendar 2011

For the latest Optometry events around the world go to www.worldoptometry.org

2-6 March

SECO International LLC Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, USA. www.seco2010.com

13-17 April

WCO General Delegates Meeting, San Juan, Puerto Rico. www.worldoptometry.org

1-5 May

ARVO Annual Meeting, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA. www.arvo.org

6-8 May

European Academy of Optometry and Optics (EAOO) 3rd Annual Conference, Prague, Czech Republic. www.eaoo.info

12-14 June

92nd ARBO Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA. www.arbo.org

15-19 June

American Optometric Association (AOA) Congress, Salt Lake City, Utah, USA. www.optometrymeeting.org

12-15 October

American Academy of Optometry 2011, Boston, Massachusetts, USA. www.aaopt.org

13 October

World Sight Day