



World Glaucoma Week: How Do We Work Towards Collaborative Care? Webinar Takeaway Sheet

'optometry has an integral role in collaboration with ophthalmology in addressing glaucoma in our mutual patients'

- Even in parts of the world where scope of practice does not include therapeutics, optometry has a role to play in the continuum of care for glaucoma.
- It is important to ensure that we, as optometrists, are well educated on the disease -- the signs/symptoms, types, tools for diagnosis, treatment options, and the need for monitoring.
- In areas where collaboration between optometry and ophthalmology exists, open and transparent communication is imperative in ensuring good patient outcomes.

Dr. Johan Semby shared the results of a study that he has undertaken in Sweden.

- One arm of the study included new criteria for optometry to use in making referrals to the eye hospital when they suspect glaucoma, which included an age matched criterion that were tied to IOP along with documented visual field changes suspicious of glaucoma.
- The other arm (control) compared the referrals for anyone with IOP greater than 25 mmHg.

Results:

- Optometrists made more accurate referrals using the new criteria.
- Ophthalmologists at the eye hospital were able to see the referrals in a timely manner as over referrals were drastically reduced.
- Lower wait times allowed for earlier diagnosis and treatment.

This shows that by optometry participating in the early diagnosis, appropriate testing, and improved referral to ophthalmology, we can play a significant part in a model of care that improves patient outcome! The winner is the patient!

Dr. Melinda Toomey reinforced the benefits of collaboration.

- Emphasized that the profession has changed over the past decade with many practitioners advancing to learn new skills to expand their knowledge base and provide current, evidence-based care to their patients
- Showed that a clinician does not need all the expensive tools, but does need to have the tools that provide insight to suspected glaucoma and the understanding of the clinical findings to know that a referral is needed
- Highlighted the integration of collaborative care that is patient-centered
- Emphasized the importance of clear guidelines for effective communication, trust, and delineated roles for both participants in the care of the patient
- Shared several models of delivery that were successful in with optometry and ophthalmology working together

The important message is that it is not a one-way referral process but a closed loop for both communication and care of the patient which leads to optimal care.

If you found this information helpful, please consider [becoming a member](#) of the World Council of Optometry (WCO) to join the unified voice to move optometry forward worldwide. WCO offers membership for individual optometrists, industry professionals and optometric organizations. If you have any questions, please contact alyssa.callaghan@worldoptometry.org.