

## **The World Council of Optometry and CooperVision Partner to Define and Promote a Standard of Care to Treat Myopia Progression**

**ST. LOUIS, March 17, 2021**—The World Council of Optometry (WCO) and CooperVision have announced a global partnership to raise awareness of myopia progression and encourage optometrists to embrace a standard of care to manage the condition.

“Myopia is arguably the most widespread epidemic faced by the global optometry community. Yet despite the increased prevalence and severity of the condition and its detrimental impacts on eye health, a standard of care does not exist to stem myopia progression. That is a disservice to our profession, patients and public health,” said Paul Folkesson, president, World Council of Optometry. “Together with CooperVision, which has been instrumental in creating the myopia management category over the past decade, we can make an even greater impact by providing the platforms, tools and support needed for further progress.”

Myopia, commonly known as near-sightedness, causes light rays to focus at a point in front of the retina rather than directly on the surface. It is projected to affect the vision of approximately five billion people globally by 2050, more than doubling today’s numbers.<sup>1</sup> Myopic progression has been linked to sight-threatening conditions later in life such as cataracts, retinal detachment, glaucoma and myopic maculopathy.<sup>2</sup>

The joint initiative’s standard of care definition and promotion will be centred around evidenced-based approaches without bias toward any particular treatment methodologies. In many cases, the latest resources related to the early intervention, control and correction of myopia have not been widely accessible or actively addressed in certain sectors and countries. The partnership between WCO and CooperVision will establish a global resource to include multi-lingual myopia management resources and programming, among other elements that will be separately announced in the coming months.

“The World Council of Optometry and CooperVision share a vision of a planet where myopia is effectively managed and controlled, not just corrected at a young age,” said Gary Orsborn, OD, vice president of Global Professional, Medical & Clinical Affairs for CooperVision. “The WCO has a clear, resounding and respected voice within the global optometric community, and we are thrilled to partner with them on this important topic.”

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<sup>1</sup> Holden et al, - Global Prevalence of myopia and high myopia and temporal trends from 2000 through 2050. *Ophthalmology* 2016. 123(5):1036-1042

<sup>2</sup> Flitcroft DI. The complex interactions of retinal, optical and environmental factors in myopia aetiology. *Prog Retin Eye Res.* 2012;31:622-60.

### **About the World Council of Optometry**

The World Council of Optometry (WCO) is an international membership-based non-profit organisation for individual optometrists, industry professionals and optometric organisations that

envisioning 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 [worldoptometry.org](http://worldoptometry.org) or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

### **About CooperVision**

CooperVision, a division of CooperCompanies (NYSE:COO), is one of the world's leading manufacturers of contact lenses. The company produces a full array of daily disposable, two-week and monthly soft contact lenses that feature advanced materials and optics, and premium rigid gas permeable lenses for orthokeratology and scleral designs. CooperVision has a strong heritage of addressing the toughest vision challenges such as astigmatism, presbyopia, childhood myopia, and highly irregular corneas; and offers the most complete portfolio of spherical, toric and multifocal products available. Through a combination of innovative products and focused practitioner support, the company brings a refreshing perspective to the marketplace, creating real advantages for customers and wearers. For more information, visit [www.coopervision.com](http://www.coopervision.com).

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