

SYMPOSIUM: Public Health/Environmental Vision Section Presents:

Sustainable Humanitarian Efforts in International Eyecare

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Course Description:

Preventable blindness and vision impairment is a major problem, particularly in the developing world. Humanitarian efforts of the past were spirited but typically addressed only the symptoms of the problem. In recent years there has been an enlightened shift to work on sustainable solutions. Education and training of a vision care workforce and the educational structure to support that training is part of the solution. New technologies such as telemedicine also have a role to play.

Course Learning Objectives:

- To gain perspective on the international burden of preventable blindness and vision impairment.
- To understand the type of interventions that make sense from a public health perspective.
- To delve into the history of humanitarian eyecare interventions and understand the evolution that is taking place as the emphasis on sustainment changes this important work.
- To learn about the role education plays in sustainable development.
- To learn about the state of optometric education in the developing world.
- To examine the role telemedicine might play in education and extension of services in the developing world.

**I. International Avoidable Blindness and Vision Impairment:
Where do we stand?**

Alfred Sommer MD MHS

- A. Epidemiology of ophthalmic disease burden and vision impairment.

- a. Prominent Disease Threats.
 - b. Potential to Treat
- B. Perspectives on previous interventions.
 - a. Vitamin A
- C. Insight on the way ahead in preventing blindness and vision impairment.

II. **The Changing Model of Humanitarian Eyecare**

D. Ellis Potter OD FAAO

- A. History of VOSH interventions in the developing world.
 - a. Focus on overwhelming immediate need
 - b. Donated Glasses
 - c. Equipment
 - d. Repurposing Local Site
- B. Impact of Missions
 - a. To Individual
 - b. To Local Health System (Unintentional)
 - i. Short Term
 - ii. Long Term
- C. Paradigm Shift
 - a. Shift To Focus on Sustainment
 - b. Emphasis on Integration/Augmentation of Local System
 - c. Establishing Designated Clinics
 - d. Staffing Model
 - e. Role of Education

III. Education: The Ultimate Sustainment Tool

Gerald E. Lowther OD PhD FAAO

- A. Involvement of the World Council of Optometry (WCO)
 - a. WCO Vision and Mission
 - i. Education Committee
 - ii. Fellowship Committee
 - b. WCO/WHO Initiative in Africa
- B. US Optometric Institution Activities
 - a. ASCO Survey of International Involvement
 - b. Examples of Collaborative Involvement
 - i. Ramkhamhaeng University
 - ii. Guanajuato Eye Care Center
 - iii. NEWENCO Ctr for International Advancement of Optometry
 - iv. PCO Office of Professional Studies and International Programs

- C. Activities of International Optometric Institutions
 - a. Optometry Giving Sight
 - b. Brien Holden Vision Institute (formerly ICEE)
 - c. International Association of Contact Lens Educators (IACLE)
- IV. The Role of Telemedicine in Sustainable Development
Ronald Weinstein (Founding Director, Arizona Telemedicine Program, U of Arizona)
 - A. State of Telemedicine
 - a. Development of Telemedicine
 - b. Network Bandwidth and Cost/Equipment Limitations
 - i. Improvement with Streaming Compression
 - ii. Satellite Internet Coverage
 - iii. Mobile Telephone (mHealth)
 - iv. Reduced Cost Barrier for Simple Systems
 - B. How Telemedicine Integrates Into Humanitarian Eyecare
 - a. Increases availability of Developed Nation's Providers
 - b. Fits Well c Education of Host Nation Providers
 - c. Examples of Use
 - d. Advantages and Disadvantages