

Eye Care about My ABCs

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A Healthy Eyes Healthy People
Project Sponsored in part by the
AOA and VSP



Introduction

- The diabetes epidemic continues to be a major concern in the United States.
- Identification of medically underserved people living with diabetes, and linkage to medical care continues to be a major challenge.
- Less published research has focused on the importance of eye health as a component of community health programs designed to detect diabetes and diabetes related eye disease.

Introduction: Challenges

- Lack of follow-up to ensure patients follow through with consistent appointment.
- Studies have shown that patients are not evaluated or treated in a timely fashion

Diabetes Report: Indiana

- B/w 15% and 27% of people with diabetes in Indiana have been diagnosed with diabetic retinopathy. *(BRFSS, 2002)*
- According to 2003 BRFSS, 60.2% of people with diabetes in Indiana, depending on age, have an annual dilated eye exam.
- *Significantly below the Healthy People 2010 target of 75%.*

The ABCs of Diabetes

- **A1C**-test measures average blood glucose levels over the last 3 months, high levels can lead to diabetes problems.
- **Blood Pressure** -high blood pressure causes heart disease and damages your blood vessels, raising your chances for eye problems
- **Cholesterol**-bad cholesterol, or LDL, builds up and clogs your arteries

ABC Program (A1C, Blood Pressure, Cholesterol)

- A health promotion program designed to help reduce diabetes-related ocular morbidity among people who are medically underserved.
- One aim focuses on community based outreach and identifying individuals with diabetes.
- Other aim focuses on increasing referral opportunities to medical practitioners such as optometrists.
- Program implemented through the Eye Care Community Outreach (ECCO) Program.

ABC Program at a glance

- Statewide initiative for optometrist to intervene early in the onset of diabetes.
- Optometrists play significant role as the first medical professionals to detect many diseases and conditions
- Based on CDC's Healthy objectives:
28-1, 28-5, and 5-13 using the train the trainer concept to reduce diabetes related ocular morbidity

ABC program at a glance

- Increasing health care professionals' awareness.
- Strengthen the vision care referral system for people with diabetes who are underserved
- Thus, helping patients control the ABCs of diabetes.
- ABC toolkits and diabetes presentation provided to healthcare professionals and educators.

ABC Program at a glance

- Not only does an eye exam detect diabetes or diabetic eye disease but can be the first step in detecting the following:
 1. Sickle Cell Anemia
 2. High Cholesterol
 3. Cardiovascular Disease
 4. Sexually Transmitted Infections
 5. Multiple Sclerosis

ABC program at a glance

- Individuals may visit optometrist more frequently than primary care physician to maintain vision for daily activities.
- Thus, eye doctors are often the first people to intervene, educate, and aid in the prevention of complications from diabetes.
- In both clinical practice and patient education, optometrist help patients understand and control ABC's of diabetes.

ABC program outcomes

- Effectiveness of the project is assessed by quantity and quality of education and training sessions with optometrist and community organizations.
- Potential health impact is assessed using number of referrals for dilated eye exams and outcomes associated with referral intervention

ABC program outcomes

- Number of enrolled optometrist (47)-up from 23 the previous year.
- Number of enrolled ophthalmologist(16)-up from 5 the previous year.
- 2005-17 educational sessions
- 2006-48 educational sessions with an increase of 182% from previous year.
- Total of 1641 individuals living with diabetes identified.

ABC Program Outcomes

- 2005 fiscal year-860 referrals to the ECCO program.
- 2006 fiscal year-1902 referrals with a 121% increase.
- 773 ECCO patients with diabetes have had eye exams; of those, 19 were diagnosed with diabetes as a result of their eye exam. (patients uninsured or underinsured)
- Of the 773 ECCO patients with diabetes, 17% were diagnosed with Diabetic Retinopathy, (n=131).
- Over 51% (n=67) of retinopathy cases being new diagnoses.

ABC Program Outcomes

- Central component of intervention is a donated comprehensive eye exam.
- Connection to medical services such as referral to primary care physicians/low cost clinics, insurance coverage, and/or consultation/ surgeries for further eye care services to optimize quality of health.
- Follow up for continuity of care b/w primary care and eye care.

Affiliated parties to ensure program success

- American Optometric Association - www.aoa.org
- Vision Service Plan (VSP) – www.vsp.com
- Prevent Blindness Indiana-www.pbeye.org
- Eye Care Community Outreach (ECCO)—
 - Kelli Barker, MSW and Dewana Allen, MPH
 - Helping Hoosiers find and afford eye care.
- John F. Yannessa, Ph.D.
 - Assistant Professor, Department of HPER, Coastal Carolina University
- Edwin C. Marshall, OD, MS, MPH
 - Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Administration, Professor of Optometry, and Adjunct Professor of Public Health, School of Medicine