A course to strengthen the capacity of health personnel to manage eye patients at primary-level health facilities in Nigeria.
# Contents

Adaptation.................................................................................... I  
Foreword...................................................................................... II  
Acknowledgement................................................................... III  
Introduction and purpose....................................................... iv  
Abbreviations.............................................................................. v  

**THE BASICS**  
The primary Eye care training manual......................... 1  
Aim and objectives ................................................................. 1  

**PART 1.**  
Primary eye clinical algorithms........................................... 2  
Algorithm 1: Loss of vision .................................................... 3  
Algorithm 2: Red eye ............................................................... 4  
Algorithm 3: Swelling/lump on eye or abnormal lashes...... 5  
Algorithm 4: Trauma ............................................................... 6  
Algorithm 5: Children aged 5 years and under ............... 7  

**PART 2.**  
PEC clinical skill protocols .................................................. 8  
Assessing a person with an eye problem......................... 9  
Distance vision screening procedure ................................ 9  
Near vision screening procedure ..................................... 11  
How to determine the power of near vision spectacles ...... 12  
How to instil eye drops.......................................................... 13  
How to apply eye ointment ................................................. 14  
Cleaning eyelids ................................................................. 14  
How to epilate offending lashes...................................... 16  
Making an eye pad .............................................................. 17  
Applying an eye pad ......................................................... 17  
Making an eye shield ......................................................... 18  
Applying a warm compress ................................................ 20  
How to irrigate the eye ...................................................... 20  
How to evert the upper eyelid ............................................ 21  
Applying an eye pad .......................................................... 21  
How to refer a patient ....................................................... 22  
How to counsel a patient ................................................... 23  
Counselling protocol on using medications ............... 24  
How to do a good health talk ............................................. 24  

**Appendices** ............................................................................. 26  
PEC record card and referral card .................................. 27  
Healthy eyes — Messages for all ages ......................... 29  
Healthy eye messages for children, mothers and caregivers ............................................................................. 30  
Sample case studies ......................................................... 32  

**List of Contributors** ............................................................ 38
Adaptation

Adaptation This manual has been modified and adapted for use by the Nigerian National Eye Health Programme (NEHP) of the Department of Public Health, Federal Ministry of Health with relevant stakeholders with the kind support of Christoffel Blinden Mission Seeing is Believing Programme (CBM-SiB). “This translation was not created by the World Health Organization (WHO). WHO is not responsible for the content or accuracy of this translation. The original English edition shall be the binding and authentic edition”.
Foreword

The World Health Organisation estimates the number of people of all ages visually impaired globally to be 285 million, of whom 39 million are legally blind. The major causes of visual impairment are uncorrected refractive errors (43%) and cataract (33%); with cataract being the number one cause of blindness (51%). The Nigeria national blindness and visual impairment survey showed that 84% of blindness is avoidable in Nigeria. The causes include treatable cases like cataract, refractive errors, glaucoma, uncorrected aphakia, and diabetic retinopathy; and also preventable causes such as onchocerciasis and corneal scarring from measles, trauma or trachoma.

Lack of awareness and lack of access to eye care services are some of the reasons why many Nigerians remain visually impaired or seek unorthodox and often disastrous treatment options. There is a direct link between access to care and prevalence of blindness, so bringing eye care closer to the people is a logical step in addressing the problem in Nigeria. Primary eye care (PEC) is a vital component of primary health care and it includes the promotion of eye health, the prevention and treatment of conditions that may lead to visual compromise, as well as rehabilitation of those who are already blind. This will potentially change the future of eye care services, currently mostly limited to urban hospitals, to a nationwide blindness prevention effort, which starts at the community level.

This manual, as produced by WHO, is therefore an important tool towards implementation and integration of PEC into Primary Health Care. To further make the manual more relevant and easily understood locally, it has been adapted and domesticated for the Nigerian primary health care worker. It describes all the essential steps necessary for PEC, which include the identification of common blinding eye conditions such as cataract, treatment of minor cases such as red eye and lessons on referral of cases that require secondary or tertiary level care with varying degrees of urgency.

Use of the essential lessons in this manual will contribute significantly to prevention of eye diseases and blindness at the primary level of health care. It is hoped that an effective referral network to secondary and tertiary levels of eye care, where there are facilities and personnel trained in the treatment of major ocular diseases, will also be established for every PHC worker trained. With existing government commitment to PHC reform, Nigeria has an excellent opportunity to implement PEC, potentially making eye-care accessible and equitable for all citizens.

This document is therefore an important tool and a step in the right direction in our effort to bridge the "access to service" gap, an important strategy in blindness prevention and poverty eradication. I therefore endorse its use for the delivery of primary eye care services in Nigeria.

Dr. E. Osagie Ehanire, MD, FWACS
Hon. Minister of Health
Acknowledgement

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Finally, I want to thank Dr Okolo Oteri, head of the National Eye Health Programme and Dr Abdull M Mahdi the national resource person for their efforts towards finalizing and actualizing this document.

Dr. U. M. Ene-Obong
Director, Department of Public Health
Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidance in the design, implementation and evaluation of a course that aims to build and strengthen the capacity of health personnel to manage eye patients at primary-level health facilities in Nigeria. The course falls within the remit of continuous professional development in its broadest sense. Its content focuses on simple evidence-based practice that can be easily carried out in primary-level health facilities all over Africa.

This manual is intended for use by course directors and facilitators. Its intended audience includes all persons who wish to commission, support or offer a course serving the above aims, including pre-service training. This manual sets out the requisite steps for the preparation and organization of such a course.
# Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HMIS</td>
<td>HEALTH MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS</td>
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<td>MOH</td>
<td>MINISTRY OF HEALTH</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCDS</td>
<td>NON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES</td>
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<tr>
<td>PEC</td>
<td>PRIMARY EYE CARE</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHC</td>
<td>PRIMARY HEALTH CARE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>VISUAL ACUITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION</td>
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THE BASICS
The primary Eye care training manual

This manual is designed for health personnel such as nurses and clinical officers (such as medical doctors, nurses, midwives, community health extension workers) working at primary-level health facilities. These workers are often the first professional point of contact for patients with eye diseases. The manual builds on their existing professional expertise and experience as health workers or trainees. In addition to extending the general skills, the manual aims to impart the specific skills required for everyday interventions in patients with eye diseases at the primary care level. What it does not do is attempt to turn trainees into mini eye specialists in respect of the specific topics addressed. This manual is not designed for personnel without formal medical training.

Aim and overall objectives
The aim of the manual is to strengthen the ability of primary-level health workers to successfully manage patients with eye complaints presenting at primary health care facilities.
PART 1
PRIMARY EYE CLINICAL ALGORITHMS
ALGORITHM 1

LOSS OF VISION

I cannot see close e.g. when reading

Measure distance vision

Vision normal in both eyes

Measure near vision

Near vision normal

Reassure

Near vision abnormal

Refer for reading glasses

I do not see far or my vision is blurry

Measure distance vision

Vision normal in both eyes

Vision abnormal in one or both eyes

Ask: "Did it happen suddenly or gradually?"

Sudden loss in one or both eye

Near vision abnormal

Refer urgently

Near vision abnormal

Refer

BLUE = question or examine
GREEN = carry out a procedure
ORANGE = refer soon but not urgently
RED = refer as an emergency
ALGORITHM 2

THE RED EYE

MY RED EYE

Measure distance vision

Vision normal

Ask: "Do you have pain, discharge or itchiness?"

Only Redness No Pain, No Discharge, No Pus

Itchy Watering feels like sand in the eyes

Reassure measure blood pressure and refer if elevated

Advise to wash eyes with clean water frequently. Give allergy medications

Refer if worse or no change in 2 days

Discharge (Pus)

Advise/Demonstrate to wash eyes. Give topical antibiotic

Vision abnormal

Ask: "Did it happen suddenly or gradually?"

Gradual loss

Moderate to severe pain

Provide help for pain, discharge or itch and refer

Mild pain

Provide help for pain, discharge or itch and refer urgently

Sudden loss

Pain

Give pain killer and refer urgently

Give pain killer and lubrication drops

Refer if worse or no change in 2 days

Vision normal

Ask: "Do you have pain, discharge or itchiness?"

Vision abnormal

Ask: "Did it happen suddenly or gradually?"
ALGORITHM 3

SWELLING/LUMP ON EYE OR ABNORMAL LASHES

GROWTH OR SWELLING OR ABNORMAL LASHES

Swelling or Lump

1. Measure distance vision
2. Examine to determine where the growth/swelling is

Any growth/swelling on the eyeball

Ask: Is it painful

Yes

Refer urgently

No

Refer

Whole eyeball or whole eyelid area

Refer urgently

Swelling/growth on the eyelids

Ask: Is it painful

Yes

Advise and demonstrate how to use warm compressers

No

Refer

Lashes

1. Measure distance vision
2. Ask for feeling of foreign body
3. Examine to determine location

Eye lashes are full of crust

Show how to clean eye lashes. Give antibiotic

Eye lashes touching the eyeball

Epilate or Refer
ALGORITHM 4

MY EYE WAS INJURED

Ask: "How were you injured?"

- Chemical
  - Irrigation for 10 minutes
  - Measure distance vision if possible
  - Instil eye ointment and cover
  - Refer urgently

- Fire/Hot Liquid
  - Measure distance vision
  - Referral urgently

- Foreign body
  - Measure distance vision. Look for foreign body
  - If cannot see foreign body:
    - Cannot remove with cotton bud
    - Cover and refer urgently
  - Can see foreign body
    - Instil eye ointment and cotton bud
    - Refer urgently

- Knock or blow on the eye
  - Measure distance vision
  - Vision normal
    - Treat pain, tetanus toxoid, shield eye
  - Vision abnormal or eyeball/skin open or broken
    - Treat pain, reassure.

Chemical

Measure distance vision if possible

Instil eye ointment and cover

Refer urgently

Cover and refer urgently

Refer urgently
CHILD HAS AN EYE PROBLEM

Ask: "What problem does the child have?"

The eye(s) has/have an abnormal appearance (colour, shape, size, direction)
OR
The child does not see or look towards or follow a face, bright object or light

Examine child's eye to confirm

Give Vitamin A to children with measles or diarrhoea (MCI guideline)

Refer immediately

Baby aged 0 to 3 months with swollen eyes with discharge

Examine child's eye to confirm

Clean the eyes, start on antibiotic drops, give antibiotic injection if baby has fever (MCI guideline)

Refer immediately

Child older the 3 months with discharge or itchy eye

Examine child's eye to confirm

Give antibiotic drops for discharge and allergy drops for itchy eyes

Refer immediately if no improvement in 3 days
PART 2
PEC CLINICAL SKILL PROTOCOL
Remember - wash your hands before and after all procedures!

ASSESSING A PERSON WITH AN EYE PROBLEM

YOU WILL NEED
1. A torch/pentorch
2. Pen and record card

PREPARATION
1. Find a space which is properly lit.
2. Seat the person comfortably.
3. Always explain to the person what you are going to do.
4. Record the name, age, sex and date.

METHOD
• Greet the patient warmly.
• Ask the person "Why did you come and see me?"
• Record if they say they have pain, redness, loss of vision, eye injury, swellings or lumps on their lids or anything else indicating which eye is affected.
• Test distance vision (except children who can not understand).
• Test near vision (in those aged 40 and above).
• Examine the person’s eyes.
  1. The white should be completely white (with a few red veins).
  2. The black should be completely black.
  3. The eyes should be the same size.
  4. The eyes should look straight ahead.
• Ask the person to close their eyes.
  5. The lids should open and close normally (lashes should face outwards, not inwards, lids should be smooth).
• Record what you see.
• Choose the correct algorithm in order to reach a management decision.

DISTANCE VISION SCREENING PROCEDURE

YOU WILL NEED
• Distance vision screening chart
• String measuring 3 metres
• Pen and record card

PREPARATION
• Find a space that is properly lit (not too dark, bright or looking into the sun).
• Seat the person comfortably.
• Always explain to the patient what you are going to do.

METHOD
• Hold the vision chart close to the person. Explain that you will point at one of the Es and they should state where the “arms” point. Make sure that the person understands by asking them to indicate the direction of the arms.
• If the person normally wears spectacles to see in the distance, tell them to put their glasses on during the test.
• Measure 3m from the person using the prepared 3m string or tape measure.
• Ask the person to cover their left eye, so that you can test the right eye.
• Stand beside the vision chart and point to one of the 6/60 Es. Ask the person to indicate the direction of its arms.
  • If the person does not indicate the right direction, move to the next E and ask them to point again. If the person is unable to point in the right direction for any E, they are functionally blind. Write down R: cannot see 6/60.
  • If the person points in the right direction for each E, go to the next level: 6/12 Es.
• Point to the first E on the 6/12 row of Es. Ask the person to indicate the direction of the arms of the E. Note the response. Move to the next E. Continue until all the Es in the 6/12 row have been shown to the person.
• If a person can see 4 or all 5 of the 6/12 Es, write down: R 6/12.
• If they can only see 1, 2 or 3 Es correctly, write down: R: cannot see 6/12, but can see 6/60.
• Now ask the person to cover the right eye and repeat the test with the left eye.

INTERPRETATION OF DISTANCE VISION RESULTS

Abnormal vision
• If the person cannot see 6/60 Es with one or both eyes, they are functionally blind and need to be referred urgently.
• If the person cannot see 6/12 Es with one or both eyes, their distance vision is abnormal: they need to be referred as well.

Normal vision
• If the person can see the 6/12 Es they have normal distance vision.

FIG. 1: TESTING DISTANCE VISION.
Courtesy: Ciku Mathenge
NEAR VISION SCREENING PROCEDURE

YOU WILL NEED

- Near vision screening chart
- Pen and record card

PREPARATION

- Find a space that is properly lit (not too dark, bright or looking into the sun).
- Seat the person comfortably
- Always explain to the patient what you are going to do.

METHOD

- For screening near vision, hold the vision screener at the testing distance of 40cm from the person’s eyes.
- The test should be undertaken with both eyes open, and if the person wears spectacles for near vision they should put them on.
- If the person can see the N8 line, write down: Near N8.
- If the person cannot see the N8 line, write down: Near: cannot see N8.

INTERPRETATION OF NEAR VISION RESULTS

Abnormal vision
- If the person cannot see N8 with both eyes, their near vision is abnormal.

Normal vision
- If the person can see the N8 line, they have normal near vision.

FIG. 2: TESTING NEAR VISION WITH N8 CHART AT 40CM.
Courtesy: Ciku Mathenge
HOW TO DETERMINE THE POWER OF NEAR VISION SPECTACLES

IMPORTANT
This test is only to be used once it has been confirmed that:
1. distance vision is normal
2. the patient is aged 40 years and above

YOU WILL NEED
• Near vision chart
• Pen and record card
• +1.50, +2.00, +2.50, +3.00 spectacles

PREPARATION
• Find a space that is properly lit.
• Seat the person comfortably.
• Always explain to the person what you are going to do.

METHOD
• Check that both eyes are open.
• Use the 40 cm string to show the patient where they should hold the reading chart.
• The print on the chart represents N8 near vision. Point to the print on the chart and ask them if they can see it clearly.
• If the patient cannot see N8 start testing with the +1.50 glasses.
• Ask the patient if they can see the N8 line. Keep the chart 40cm away from the eyes.
• If the patient cannot see N8 with +1.50DS, try with the next stronger power and continue until they see the N8 clearly.
• Once the patient says they can see the chart clearly, try again with the next weaker power. Allow the patient to decide which power is preferable and record this on the record chart. If the person cannot see N8 with any of the four powers then refer.

ISSUE THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL PATIENTS RECEIVING READING GLASSES.
1. Tell the person that these spectacles are to be worn for near vision only. Their distance vision will be blurred. Ask them to look up and confirm this.
2. Ask the person to clean their spectacles by washing them with soap and water and drying with a soft cloth.
3. Record the power of the spectacles on the person’s record card and on a piece of paper for their own keeping.
4. Advise the person that they will probably need a stronger power of spectacles in about 2 years.
5. Ask the person if they have a relative with glaucoma. If yes, refer for a complete eye check.
6. Ask the person if they have diabetes. If yes, advise them to have a complete eye check once a year.

**HOW TO INSTIL EYE DROPS**

**YOU WILL NEED**
- Eye drops and ointment
- Wipe tissue/wet swab
- Pen and record card

**PREPARATION**
- Find a space that is properly lit.
- Seat the person comfortably.
- Wash your hands with soap and water and dry them with clean tissue paper.

**METHOD**
- Ask the patient to tilt their head backwards and look up. Explain that they might taste the drops in their throat.
- Shake the eye drop bottle and inspect it to make sure that you have the correct medication and it has not expired.
- Explain to the patient what you are doing as you instil the drops.
- Gently pull down the patient’s bottom eyelid by retracting it with your index finger. This creates a pocket.
- Hold the bottle a few centimetres above the eye. Press the bottle so as to release one drop of the medication into the lower eyelid pocket, without allowing the dropper to touch the eye.
- Wait a second and then release the bottom eyelid.
- Instruct the patient to close their eye and press gently for a few moments with a finger over the corner of the eye next to their nose. This will keep the drops in the eye so that they can take effect. Wipe away any excess medication which leaks out when they close their eyes.
- For the other eye, ask the patient or caregiver to instil the drops so that you can check it is being done properly.
- If you have to put in more than one kind of eye drop at a time, it usually does not matter which eye drop is instilled first. However, allow 3-5 minutes between instilling different eye drops so that the second eye drop does not wash out the first.

![Image of eye drop instillation](Photo: Pak Sang Lee. Courtesy: Sally Parsley Community Eye Health Journal)
HOW TO APPLY EYE OINTMENT

METHOD
• Ask the patient to tilt their head backwards and look up.
• Shake the eye ointment tube and inspect it to make sure that you have the correct medication and it has not expired.
• Explain to the patient what you are doing as you apply the ointment.
• Gently pull down the patient’s bottom eyelid by retracting it with your index finger. This creates a pocket.
• Hold the nozzle of the tube approximately 2.5cm above the eye.
• Apply a line of ointment about 1 cm long to the inner edge of the lower eyelid from the nasal corner outwards.
• Ask the person to close their eyes.
• Wipe away any surplus ointment which may emerge when the patient closes their eye.
• Secure the nozzle cap.
• For the other eye, ask the patient or the caregiver to instil the ointment, so that you can check it is done properly.
• Explain to the patient that their vision will be blurry for a few minutes.

EYE DROP AND EYE OINTMENT TIPS
• Do not evert the eyelid too much as instilled eye drops may spill out onto the cheek.
• Do not allow the eye drops to fall onto the cornea as they can sting: this may alarm the patient and cause loss of confidence.

CLEANING EYELIDS

YOU WILL NEED
• Sterile gauze swabs or cotton buds
• Do not use large cotton wool balls as these can leave can fluff on eyelid margins, become an irritant and even cause complications
• Saline or water

METHOD
Top lid
• Take a folded gauze swab or cotton bud.
• Moisten the swab or bud with the saline or water.
• Ask the patient to close both eyes.
• With the swab or bud, clean gently along the eye lashes in one movement from inner to outer canthus.
• Discard the swab or bud after use, if the eye lashes need further cleaning use a new swab or bud.

FIG. 5: HOW TO CLEAN THE EYE AND EYE LIDS
Photo: Pak Sang Lee. Courtesy: Sally Parsley Community Eye Health Journal

Bottom lid margin
• Ask the patient to look up
• With one hand take a moistened sterile swab or bud
• With the index finger of the other hand gently hold down the lower eyelid.
• With the swab or bud clean gently along the lower eyelid margin in one movement from inner to outer canthus.
• Discard the swab or bud after use. If the lower eyelid margin needs further cleaning use a new swab or bud.

FIG. 6: HOW TO CLEAN THE UPPER AND LOWER EYE LIDS
Photo: Pak Sang Lee. Courtesy: Sally Parsley Community Eye Health Journal
Top lid margin

- Ask the patient to look down.
- With one hand take a moistened sterile swab or bud.
- With a thumb or a finger of the other hand gently ease the upper eyelid up against the orbital rim (just below the eyebrow).
- With the swab or bud clean gently along the upper eyelid margin in one movement from inner to outer canthus.
- Discard the swab or bud after use. If the upper eye lid margin needs further cleaning use a new swab or bud.

Lid cleaning tips

- Extra care is needed when cleaning the upper eyelid! Try to keep the cornea in view throughout and avoid touching it with the gauze swab or cotton bud.
- It may be necessary to repeat any part of the above procedure, if the eyelids are very sticky, until all debris/discharge is removed.

Remember – always use a new swab or bud each time!

HOW TO EPIULATE OFFENDING LASHES

YOU WILL NEED

- Local anaesthetic drops, if available
- Epilation forceps
- Paper towel or swab

PREPARATION

- Explain the procedure, advising the patient that they may experience some discomfort but that it is important to relax and keep still.
- Position the patient comfortably
- Reassure and encourage them by stressing that relief should be felt immediately after the epilation

METHOD

- Instil a drop of local anaesthetic if available
- Examine the eye with a bright source of light to see the offending lashes
- Firmly grasp the offending lash at its base with the forceps and remove
- Clean the lid margins
- Apply antibiotic ointment
- Explain to the patient that he/she will be referred for further management

FIG. 7: HOW TO REMOVE AN OFFENDING EYE LASH USING AN EPIILATION FORCEPS
Photo: Abdull MM.
MAKING AN EYE PAD

YOU WILL NEED
• Cotton wool
• Two pieces of gauze
• Scissors
• Measuring tape

METHOD
• Place the cotton wool between the two pieces of gauze on a clean surface.
• Cut the cotton wool and gauze into an oval shape measuring approximately 5 × 6 cm.

FIG. 8: HOW TO MAKE AN EYE PAD
Photo: Pak Sang Lee

APPLYING AN EYE PAD

YOU WILL NEED
• Adhesive tape
• Eye pad
• Scissors

PREPARATION
• Seat the person comfortably
• Explain what he/she wants to do to the patient
• Wash hands
It is important to remind the patient to try not to open the affected eye under the pad.

**METHOD**
- Ask the patient to close both eyes.
- Position the eye pad diagonally over the closed lids and secure the tape to the patient’s forehead and cheek.
- Apply a second and third piece of tape, as shown in the picture, to ensure the eye pad lies flat.
- Eye protection can also be provided with an eye shield. The shield shown in the picture is produced commercially and is called a “Cartella shield”.
- Eye pads and shields, if not available as commercial products, can be made very easily as shown in the next protocol.

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**MAKING AN EYE SHIELD**

**YOU WILL NEED**
- Adhesive tape
- Thin cardboard or old X-ray film
- Circular object (e.g. cup or glass) approximately eight centimetres in diameter
- Pencil
- Scissors

**METHOD**
- Draw a circle on the cardboard, using the circular object and then cut around it.
- Make a single cut into the centre, i.e. half the diameter of the circle.
• Make the cardboard into a cone shape.
• Secure the cone shape with adhesive tape.
• To apply: attach one piece of tape to the cone and place over the affected eye.
• Add a second piece of tape to secure the shield.

FIG. 9: HOW TO MAKE AN EYE SHIELD
Photo: Pak Sang Lee.
### APPLYING A WARM COMPRESS

**YOU WILL NEED**
- Clean piece of cloth/face towel
- Bowl of hot water

**METHOD**
- Soak a clean piece of cloth or face towel in hot water and squeeze out
- Avoid excessively hot compresses (in order to avoid scalding, particularly in children).
- Hold it to the affected eye for 5–10 minutes.
- Repeat three to four times daily until the lump is gone.

### HOW TO IRRIGATE THE EYE

**YOU WILL NEED**
- Local anaesthetic eye drops if available
- Towel/waterproof sheet
- Cotton buds
- Small holder with pouring spout, e.g. feeding cup or any other container/water bottle
- Irrigating fluid: saline/universal buffer solution, if available. Otherwise, clean water at room temperature should be used.

**METHOD**
- Instil local anaesthetic eye drops if available.
- With the patient sitting or lying down, protect the neck and shoulders with the waterproof sheet/towel.
- If there is a chemical burn affecting one eye only then tilt the head so that the water does not flow into the unaffected eye.
- Gently part the eyelids.
- Pour the fluid slowly and steadily, from a distance of no more than 5cm, onto the front surface of the eye, and importantly, inside the lower eyelid and under the upper eyelid. Use copious amounts of fluid, e.g. 1 or 2 big bottles of saline solution.
- Evert the upper eyelid.
- Ask the patient to move the eye continuously in all directions while the irrigation is under way for at least 15 minutes (30 minutes is better).
- Remove any residual foreign bodies with moist cotton buds.
- Check and record visual acuity when the procedure is finished.
HOW TO EVERT THE UPPER EYELID

Never evert the upper eye lid if a penetrating injury or corneal thinning (e.g. due to ulceration) is suspected.

YOU WILL NEED

• Cotton buds, paper clip or small blunt object, e.g. pen cover

METHOD

• Ask the patient to look down.
• With one hand, hold the eyelashes of the upper eyelid between thumb and index finger.
• With the other hand, place a cotton bud or other small blunt object on the upper eyelid midway from the eyelid margin.
• Turn the eyelid against steady and gentle pressure on the upper eyelid.
• On completion of the examination and removal of the foreign body, ask the patient to look up and the eyelid will return to its normal position.

FIG. 10: TESTING NEAR VISION WITH N8 CHART AT 40CM.
Courtesy: Ciku Mathenge

APPLYING AN EYE PAD

YOU WILL NEED

• Local anaesthetic drops, if available
• Cotton buds, or clean cloth or swab
• Saline or cooled boiled water

PREPARATION

• Explain the procedure, advising the patient that they may experience a brief increase in discomfort but that it is important to relax and keep still.
HOW TO REFER A PATIENT

YOU WILL NEED

• Pen and paper or referral form

• Details of the place (and person) to whom you are referring. It is important to know if ophthalmic services are available and when. Some idea of the approximate costs involved is also important.

METHODS

Your referral note should include:

• Patient details: Name of the patient, age, sex and address, and date of referral. (Example: Abdullahi Ali, age 45 years, Male, from Keffi Local Government, 1 June 2019.)

• Referring facility details: Name and telephone number of referring clinic and name of referring person. (Udi Okonkwo, Bwari Primary Health Care Centre, 01234567890, Mrs Kefas.)

• Information about the eye condition: Patient complaint, details of eye assessment and vision, details of what you did or prescribed (“painful red right eye”, “foreign body too deep to remove”, “R cant see 6/12”, “gave tetracycline ointment”). If you have not provided first aid as shown in the algorithms, indicate this and note why in the patient record as well as the referral form.

• Your explanation to the patient and caregiver (if present) should be comprehensive:
  • explain why they need to be seen by a specialist eye care provider
  • insist firmly but gently on the seriousness of the condition
  • state whether the referral is urgent, requiring immediate attention, or can be undertaken at their convenience
  • mention the benefits of attending and risks of not attending
  • specify where and when the specialist eye care provider is available and the approximate cost – explain, if a treatment has been started, that that is not definitive.

• Ask the person or caregiver directly “Which questions do you have?” so that they feel at ease posing questions.

• Ask the referral specialist for feedback about the referral, so that you can provide follow-up care, and confirm that your management and referral were correct. If referral was inappropriate you can learn from this experience, and improve your assessment and management next time.
HOW TO COUNSEL A PATIENT

PREPARATION

“Counselling is a form of helping that is focused on the patient’s needs, as perceived by the patient, and not on what others consider these needs to be.”

(Fathers P, Stevens S. Improving the patient’s experience. Community Eye Health J 2008; 21(68): 55-57) Successful delivery of eye care will be easier if the eye care team is able to:

- provide information to patients
- instil confidence in patients
- convince them of the need for treatment or follow-up. Improved communication allows patients to:
  - recall information better
  - experience greater satisfaction with their health care
  - give genuine and informed consent
  - cooperate more fully.

Patients tend to spend less time in hospital and recover more quickly. As a result, they are likely to talk about their good experience to other members of their community, thus stimulating better uptake of services.

Remember that every patient must be treated with dignity: this is a basic human right, especially in the health care setting where people feel more vulnerable.

The care delivered to patients must not be in any way restricted because of their age, gender, creed, nationality, political beliefs or other factors. A patient’s culture plays an important part in their perception of dignity. It is important to show that you respect the patient’s values. For example, ask the patient which name they prefer to use or whether they have a particular title.

METHOD

- Create a relation of trust during the initial part of the consultation:
  - greet the patient
  - use polite forms of address
  - listen without interrupting the patient when they are talking
  - appear unhurried
  - use language the patient understands
- Determine what the patient expects from the consultation
- Explain clearly to the patient what you intend to do (i.e. management)
  - describe the plan for managing the current problem
  - mention health promotion and lifestyle issues if relevant
  - try to relate your management plan to the patient’s expectations
  - ask the patient for their views or questions about your management plan
- Allow the patient to have the final word about the management plan
• Come to a joint agreement on the decision made:
  • record the agreement clearly on the patient’s chart
  • note what the patient has agreed to do and what you intend to do
• Explain how to use the medication if provided, when to return for follow-up or how to attend a referral appointment.

COUNSELLING PROTOCOL ON USING MEDICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simplify when to use</th>
<th>Match the treatment to the person’s daily routine, e.g. instead of saying “use the drops every 4 hours”, say “use the drops every time you have a meal and once before sleep”.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruct the person</td>
<td>Explain to the person what to do, show them how to do it, let them try.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>If appropriate, give them written information.</td>
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<td>Tell the person when they should come to see you next, and explain which signs might indicate that they should come to see you sooner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meet patient needs</td>
<td>Find out what the person believes about their problem, and the treatment.</td>
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<td>Discuss any reasons why they think they may not be able to attend a referral.</td>
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<td>Follow up the treatment, and help them find solutions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patient and family care</td>
<td>Show a caring attitude.</td>
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<td>Use open-ended questions and active listening.</td>
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<td>Include the person and the caregiver in decisions made about the treatment.</td>
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<td>Explain in a clear and direct way, and use language the person can understand.</td>
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<td>Make sure the person understands: ask if they have any questions.</td>
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<td>Evaluate use</td>
<td>Ask the person to repeat important instructions.</td>
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<td>Ask the person how they used the treatment at their next visit.</td>
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</table>

HOW TO DO A GOOD HEALTH TALK

YOU WILL NEED
• A place for a health talk: it can be held
  • in a health facility, at the beginning of the day, when the patients have arrived and before staff attend to them
  • in a hospital ward
  • on the radio or in the community.
• The subject matter. This can be decided by the health staff, who may have a programme topic for the month. Often the subject matter is related to the eye health concerns in the community such as talking about nutrition and or immunisation in children with measles, or prevention of cross infection in epidemic keratoconjunctivitis “Apollo”
• The talk is usually held in the local language, which makes communication considerably easier.
• Visual aids may be used: such as posters.

METHODS
• The health talk will be better if the educator keeps the BASE model in mind, and knows what the community’s beliefs, attitudes, subjective norms and enabling factors are. This will help the educator to address people’s concerns and fears, to deal respectfully with them, to build on useful existing customs and to keep their problems and shortcomings in focus.
• Ensure that a knowledgeable member of staff delivers the health talk

This table displays some characteristics of good and bad health talks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>BAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• two-way communication – lots of interaction with the audience</td>
<td>• one-way lecture – only the health worker talks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• short and entertaining – one or two key messages o</td>
<td>• long and boring – too many messages for the audience remember</td>
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<tr>
<td>• subject matter practical – deals with important local issues</td>
<td>• subject matter theoretical – decided on without considering local priorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• visual aids used</td>
<td>• no visual aids used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• simple, understandable language</td>
<td>• lots of technical/English words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• speaker is friendly, respectful and approachable; audience is encouraged to participate and ask questions</td>
<td>• speaker behaves like a schoolteacher – e.g. a member of the audience has to stand up to ask a question, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• creates a jolly atmosphere with lots of laughter and interruptions</td>
<td>• insists on a formal atmosphere, audience silent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• checks if the audience has understood</td>
<td>• doesn’t check for understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADVANTAGES OF HEALTH TALKS
• There is considerable evidence that health talks are effective ways of passing on health information (and passing on knowledge is an important part of empowerment).
• A fairly large number of persons can be brought together for a talk.
• Because staff know their patients and community, messages are usually highly relevant to the health problems and culture of the community.
• Often people come to health care facilities only when they are sick. Health talks convey important information to them about disease prevention which they would otherwise miss.
• Benefits of health talk can be shared with the family or community members not present

LIMITATIONS OF HEALTH TALKS
• The educator may be talking to people who are already “converted” to modern health care: those who really need the information may not come to the health centre at all.
• People may resent being kept waiting for the sake of a talk – they have their lives to live.
• Knowledge can be passed on by a health talk, but not skills. It is also difficult to empower and motivate people just by talking to them.
• Often relatively junior staff members, with less knowledge and experience, are obliged to deliver the talk.
APPENDICES
PEC RECORD CARD

Name ________________________________________________ Female □ Male □
Age ________ Date ______________________ Address ____________________________________________

**Presenting complaint** (tick as many boxes as required. Indicate “R” or “L” or mark “both” if both eyes affected)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>R</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>□ with pain</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>□ with discharge</th>
<th>□ itchy</th>
<th>□ dry</th>
<th>□ poor distance</th>
<th>□ near vision</th>
<th>□ gradual</th>
<th>□ sudden</th>
<th>□ chemical</th>
<th>□ hot liquid/flame</th>
<th>□ foreign body</th>
<th>□ knock/blow</th>
<th>□ whole eyeball swollen</th>
<th>□ lump on lids</th>
<th>□ growth on eyeball</th>
<th>□ lashes turned in</th>
<th>□ severe pain</th>
<th>□ pain not severe</th>
<th>□ Other symptoms</th>
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**Eye Assessment** (tick as many boxes as required, adding details as necessary)

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RIGHT EYE DETAILS</th>
<th>WITH DISCHARGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distance vision</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cannot see 6/60</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can see 6/60 but not 6/12</td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can see 6/12</td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Near vision</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cannot see N8</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can see N8</td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The white of the eye is white (with a few red veins)</strong></td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The black of the eye is black and shiny</strong></td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The eyes are the same size</strong></td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The eyes look straight ahead</strong></td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The lids are normal: close well, no growths</strong></td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The lashes should face outwards; clean</strong></td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other signs of abnormality</strong></td>
<td>□ YES</td>
<td>□ NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Management (Please provide details of each management option)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management</th>
<th>First Aid</th>
<th>Medication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referral</td>
<td>Urgent</td>
<td>Non-urgent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Advice given

Other

Health facility

Tel:

Name
Healthy eyes —
Messages for all ages

1. Use protective eyewear when working with objects that might damage your eyes: welding, chemicals, projectile metal or wood, etc.
2. If chemicals, or substances that burn or sting, come into contact with your eye, immediately rinse your eye with clean water for at least 15 minutes.
3. If you have an eye problem go to your nearest health care facility as soon as possible. Go immediately if you have an eye injury, if your eyes are painful or if your vision suddenly becomes poor.
4. Do not put any medication into your eyes unless prescribed by a health care provider.
5. Protect your eyes from excessive sunlight with, for example, hats, scarves, sunglasses or umbrellas.
6. If you have diabetes prevent your eyes from going blind by having a complete eye examination at least once a year, and by checking your blood sugar regularly.
7. If you have a relative with glaucoma, have an eye examination for glaucoma at least once a year.
8. If you have problems seeing small nearby objects or when reading, you may need glasses for near work.

HEALTH MESSAGES WHICH ARE IMPORTANT FOR EYE HEALTH BUT ARE ALSO INTEGRATED INTO OTHER PROGRAMMES:

9. Wear seat belts to avoid injuries including eye injuries.
10. Keep hands and faces clean to avoid infections, including eye infections.
11. Protect your health, including your eye health, by not smoking.
Healthy eye messages for children, mothers and caregivers

1. Prevent serious eye infections in newborn infants:
2. Their eyes immediately after birth and if available, instil antibiotic eye medication.
3. A baby with swollen eyelids and severe eye discharge needs treatment immediately: seek help from the nearest health facility.
4. To avoid your child being lifelong blind, seek help from an eye care provider as soon as possible if:
   - the child’s eyes do not look normal
   - the child does not look towards or follow a face, bright object or light source – or if someone thinks the child may have eye or vision problems.
5. Children should not play with or near sharp objects to avoid eye injuries.

HEALTH MESSAGES WHICH ARE IMPORTANT FOR EYE HEALTH BUT ARE ALSO INTEGRATED INTO OTHER PROGRAMMES:
1. Promote exclusive breastfeeding for six months.
2. Mothers and children should be fully immunized including against rubella and measles.
3. Regular vitamin A supplementation of pre-school children is important for good vision and healthy growth.
4. Children should eat foods like fish, dark green leafy vegetables, carrots and fruits to keep their eyes healthy.
5. Children should be secured in car seats and with seat belts.
Sample case studies

VISION LOSS – DISTANCE VISION

John: “Nurse – I’ve noticed that when I’m in class I can’t see the blackboard unless I sit near the front. This is difficult for me as I’m always late and find the front desks taken.”

Nurse: “How old are you?”

John: “I’m 22 years old and in my second year at University.”

Nurse: “When did you first notice this problem?”

John: “It wasn’t so bad when I was in first year but now it’s worse.” Nurse: “Let me test your vision.” He finds he can see 6/60 but not 6/12.

1. VISION LOSS – DISTANCE VISION

Margaret: “My son, these days when I look at things I feel like I’m looking through smoke.”

Nurse: “How long has this been happening?”

Margaret: “I noticed it first about 8 months ago but I feel the smoke is getting thicker.”

Nurse: “Margaret, I want you to relax and I will examine your eyes.”

2. SUDDEN VISION LOSS

Juma and Halima come into the clinic looking frantic.

Juma: “Nurse, I’m so worried. My wife has been coughing terribly all night. Then when we woke up she said she couldn’t see anything with her right eye.”

Nurse: “I’m sorry to hear that. Halima can you describe what happened?”

Halima: “My son, I’m sure I’ll be blind forever. I’ve been having this bad cough. It disturbs me so much at night. But last night I felt a strange feeling in my eyes.” (Cough, cough) “I didn’t think so much about it as it was dark. I was shocked this morning to find my right eye is only seeing darkness. The funny thing is I feel no pain.”

Nurse: “Halima have a seat. Here is some water. Drink some.” (Halima drinks)

Nurse: “Let me examine your eyes, and then we will talk. I’ll have to give you something for that cough as well.” (Finds Halima cannot see 6/60) What does the nurse do?

3. VISION LOSS - NEAR VISION 1

Mr Hassan: “My daughter, I have a problem reading my bible these days. The letters have become too small.”

Nurse: “How old are you Mr Hassan?”
Mr Hassan: “I’m still young as my wife will tell you; I’m now 59 years old”.
Nurse: “Let me examine your eyes and then I’ll tell you how I can help you”.

Pretends to examine patient
Nurse: “Mr Hassan, your eyes look completely normal and you can see very far”.
Mr Hassan: “I know that, nurse. I just can’t understand why I can’t see my bible. Is it the devil tricking me?”

4. **VISION LOSS – NEAR VISION 2**
Mrs Kolawole: “My son, I have a problem putting thread into a needle these days”.
Nurse: “Have a seat. I’m sure I can help you. How old are you Mr Kolawole?” Mrs Kolawole: “Only 43 years old. My last born is still breast feeding”.
Nurse: “Let me examine your eyes and then I will tell you how I can help you”.
Pretends to examine patient
Nurse: “Mrs Kolawole, your eyes look very good. You can see very far. But I know what your problem is. I will help you”.

5. **VISION LOSS - DISTANCE AND NEAR**
Mr Ode: “Ekaette, my daughter, I’ve a problem with my eyes. I make diamond rings but these days I can’t see the small pieces of diamond”.
Nurse: “How is Jamila? Let me examine your eyes and then I’ll tell you how I can help you”.
Nurse: “Mr Ode, how old are you? I think I know what your problem is. Age is catching up”.
Mr Ode: “Yes oh my pikin…..I reached 50 last week”.
Nurse: “OK, let me examine you now”.

Nurse examines Mr Ode’s distance VA and finds it abnormal (Can see 6/12 but not 6/60). The eyes look normal. What does she do next?

6. **SAMPLE CASE – ALGORITHM 3**
Agbani walks into the clinic with half her face covered with a scarf
Nurse: “How can I help you?”
Agbani: “I don’t want anyone to look at my face. Yesterday my lower lid was a bit itchy but when I woke up this morning, I have this painful lump and my face looks so ugly”.
Nurse: “Let me have a look, Agbani”.
Nurses sees a small red lump on Agbani’s right lower lid.
Nurse: “Agbani, you don’t look ugly and you don’t need to cover your face. Is this the first time you have this problem?”
Agbani: “No, last year I had a similar one on the upper lid but it disappeared after a few days”. Nurse: “OK, Agbani let me test your sight then I’ll tell you how I will help you with this”. Nurse finds vision is 6/12 both eyes
7. **A young tourist**
   Pierre, 26 years old, is brought to Kubwa Health Centre with a severe injury of the face after falling off a taxi motorbike. One of his eyes is bleeding a lot and he is very worried as he cannot see at all. However, when you clean away the blood you find that he can see normally.

   This case can be used for algorithm 4 "Trauma" regarding counselling (reassuring the patient that he is not blind) and referral

8. **Mr John is a trainee at the University of Brilliance.**
   He went fishing on Lake Jabi and had a nasty accident. You look at his eye and almost faint. The fish hook has gone right through. You must refer him to a specialist immediately. What do you do next?

9. **Mrs Okonkwo saw you yesterday at Freedom health centre and you gave her reading glasses.**
   She was very happy. Today she has brought her baby. The baby was born with only one eye but Mrs Okonkwo was too shy to ask for help before. Her mother-in-law had told her that such a baby is a curse to the family. But now she is so happy with what you did for her yesterday she is sure you can help her. Mrs Okonkwo shows you her 5-month old baby. You realize that the baby has one seeing eye; the other eye is shrunken and looks completely white. What do you do?

   This case can be used for algorithm 5 "Children aged 5 years and under" regarding counselling and referral

   PowerPoint photo cases are available in the presentation "Normal and abnormal eyes". Create additional case studies as appropriate.
# Eye Health Referrals Register

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Date (dd/mm/yyyy)</th>
<th>Hospital/Registration Number</th>
<th>Name of Patient (Surname first)</th>
<th>Age (Yrs)</th>
<th>0-14yrs</th>
<th>15-39yrs</th>
<th>≥40yrs</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>13. Referred from (name of facility/specialty)</th>
<th>14. Reason for Referral</th>
<th>15. Referred to (name of facility/specialty)</th>
<th>16. Summary of treatment provided</th>
<th>Completed?</th>
</tr>
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18. Completed by: Name_________________________ Designation:_____________________ Sign:__________ Date:__________

19. Approved/Reviewed by: Name_________________________ Designation:_____________________ Sign:__________ Date:__________
Eye Health Facility Feedback Form

IN-COMING REFERRAL SLIP
(To be returned to originating facility)

Name of Health Facility: ________________________________
State: ____________________ LGA: ____________________ Ward: ____________________
Name of Patient/Client: ____________________________________ Age: ________ Sex: [ ]
Hospital Number: ______________________________________

Diagnosis ____________________________ Treatment provided ____________________________ Follow-up instructions. ____________________________

Receiving personnel: ____________________________ Date/Sign: ____________________________
Contact Phone Number: ____________________________ Email: ____________________________
### Eye Health Facility Referral Form

**OUT-GOING REFERRAL SLIP**

- **Name of Referring Health Facility:**
- **State:**
- **LGA:**
- **Ward:**
- **Name of Patient/Client:**
- **Hospital Number:**
- **Age:**
- **Sex:**
- **Contact Phone Number:**
- **Email:**
- **Description of eye condition**
- **Reason for referral**
- **Provisional Diagnosis**
- **Treatment Provided**
- **Name of Health Facility referred to:**
- **Attn to(Unit):**
- **Referring Personnel:**
- **Date/Sign:**
- **Contact Phone Number:**
- **Email:**
# List of Contributors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Positions and Organizations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. U. M. Ene-Obong</td>
<td>Director, Public Health, Federal Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Evelyn Ngige</td>
<td>Director, Department of Public Health, Federal Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Okolo Oteri E.</td>
<td>Head, National Eye Health Programme, Federal Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Abdul Mohammed</td>
<td>Consultant Ophthalmologist, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital, Bauchi State (National resource person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Juliana Nathaniel</td>
<td>Programme Director, CBM-SIB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Josseph Bassey</td>
<td>Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health, Cross River State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Adurosakin O. Felix</td>
<td>Medical Officer, National Eye Health Programme, Federal Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adedoyin Adeleke</td>
<td>Scientific Officer, National Eye Health Programme, Federal Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Chris Elemuwa</td>
<td>Director, National Primary Health Care Development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Anyati Ngutor</td>
<td>Ophthalmic Nurse, Alex Ekwueume, Federal University Teaching Hospital, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Onabanjo Margaret</td>
<td>Ophthalmic Nurse, Ikorodu General Hospital, Lagos State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Olufumilayo Bankole</td>
<td>Consultant Ophthalmologist/CMD, Ikorodu General Hospital, Lagos Stat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Sanni Halimat</td>
<td>Ophthalmic Nurse, Federal Medical Centre, Keffi, Nasarawa State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Abdulganiyu Yakubu</td>
<td>Ophthalmic Nurse, School of Nursing, Gwagwalada, FCT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Funmilola Areola</td>
<td>Admin Officer, Trachoma Unit, Neglected Tropical Diseases Division, Federal Ministry of Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Selben Penin</td>
<td>Consultant Ophthalmologist, Sightsavers, Abuja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela Uyah</td>
<td>Eye Health Programme Officer, Christoffel Blinden Mission, Abuja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Rita Momoh</td>
<td>Consultant Ophthalmologist University of Benin Teaching Hospital, Benin city, Edo State (Public Health Group, OSN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Paul C. Wanjie</td>
<td>Consultant Ophthalmologist, Federal Medical Centre, Keffi, Nasarawa State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Abalis Dasat</td>
<td>Health And Nutrition Development Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Kingsley Adimabua</td>
<td>M &amp; E officer, Christoffel Blinden Mission - Seeing is Believing Project, Abuja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edidiongabasi E. Ekpo</td>
<td>Administrative Officer, Christoffel Blinden Mission - Seeing is Believing Project, Abuja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Azaki Azaki</td>
<td>Ophthalmic Nurse, Federal Medical Centre, Keffi, Nasarawa State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Kode Sunday</td>
<td>National Eye Centre, Kaduna state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Iko Ibanga</td>
<td>Country Director, Pro-health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Amina Hassan</td>
<td>Consultant Ophthalmologist/CMAC, National Eye Centre, Kaduna state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Sanjay Upadhyay</td>
<td>Tulsi chanrai foundation eye hospital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson Josephine</td>
<td>Ophthalmic Nurse, Tulsi chanrai foundation eye hospital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Olufunmike Ani</td>
<td>Consultant Ophthalmologist, Chair, Ophthalmological Society of Nigeria, Public Health Group.</td>
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