

Winter 2009



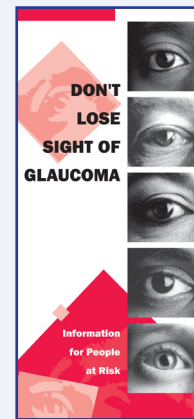
Letter from the Chair of the NEHEP Planning Committee

Public health has been described by the Institute of Medicine as “fulfilling society’s interest in assuring conditions in which people can be healthy.” The National Eye Health Education Program (NEHEP), a long-running public health effort by the National Eye Institute (NEI), supports initiatives to enhance vision care throughout the United States. NEHEP seeks to develop strategic efforts to educate the public and to promote eye exams so that vision health is integrated into people’s lives. As I begin my term as Chair of the NEHEP Planning Committee, I am honored to follow in the footsteps of towering figures in the community of vision care providers—Dr. Bradley Straatsma, Dr. Alfred Sommer, and most recently Dr. Eve Higginbotham—and I look forward to working with leaders in the fields of ophthalmology and optometry to advance our shared mission.

Broadening the reach of high-quality vision care requires increasing awareness among healthcare professionals and the public of scientifically-based health information that can be applied to preserving sight and preventing blindness. NEHEP currently has four educational programs focusing on areas of unmet need: awareness of glaucoma and its treatment, vision health concerns and dilated eye examinations related to diabetes, the needs of people with low vision, and building bridges to connect Hispanics to vision health services. Plans are being developed to add a program focusing on older individuals including attention to age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

The current direction of NEHEP reflects a conscious decision to organize educational programs around populations that are at risk rather than around a specific eye condition. A motivation for re-orienting educational programs around at-risk populations rather

Educational Resource
Spotlight: *Don't Lose Sight of
Glaucoma* brochure



Order this and other materials online at <http://catalog.nei.nih.gov/>.



Healthy Vision Community Programs Database

This easy-to-search resource can help you learn about new ways to address eye health issues and replicate eye health-related projects in your community. Visit the Healthy Vision Community Programs Database at <http://community-based.shs.net/>

