Role of Optometrist in a Community Hospital- a pilot collaboration in North Lantau Hospital

**Sum R(1), Ip J(1), Ko CF(2), Ma HM(3)**

(1)School of Optometry, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, (2)Department of Medicine and Geriatrics, North Lantau Hospital, Hospital Authority, (3)Department of Accident and Emergency, North Lantau Hospital, Hospital Authority

**Keywords:**
- Optometry
- eye care

**Introduction**

**Objectives**
To demonstrate the collaboration between Optometrists and North Lantau Hospital on eye screening for patients with chronic eye symptoms or diabetes.

**Methodology**
An optometric screening service was set up at Integrative Community Health Centre at Lai King (A satellite clinic of PolyU) in 2014. The Centre received referrals from Department of Medicine and Geriatrics (M&G) and Department of Accident and Emergency (A&E) in North Lantau Hospital. Doctors in hospital will triage and refer patients with chronic eye symptoms like chronic floaters, blurry vision, watery eye and diabetic retinopathy (DR) screening to the Centre. Appointment could be made within 2 weeks. A report with clinical findings and suggestions from Optometrists were sent to the referring doctors for further action. Patients were charged HK$60 for the optometric screening.

**Result**
From March 2014 to January 2015, 74 patients were referred for optometric screening
(63 from M&G; 11 from A&E). 73% came for DR screening, 24% of them had DR and 1 patient required prompt referral to eye specialist for clinically significant macular edema (CSME). Seventeen cases had blurry vision complaints, 35% of them can be improved by spectacle correction. Other reasons of referral included presence of chronic floaters and watery/dry eyes. In total, 5 patients (6.8%) were suggested to refer to eye specialist (3 cases of significant cataract, 1 case of CSME and 1 case of RPE detachment). The role of Optometrist in handling chronic eye symptoms and retinopathy screening can be demonstrated by this collaboration. Sight-threatening eye conditions can be triaged in a timely manner and visual impairment secondary to refractive error could be improved with spectacle prescription. We hope to facilitate the eye care service through this collaboration.