

## Call to Action to Increase Access to Low Vision Rehabilitation Services Dr. Lynne Noon's Last Professional Request

The doctors at the ViewFinder Low Vision Resource Centers have been providing low vision rehabilitation for decades and have been blessed with the wonderful support and patient referrals from our local optometrists and ophthalmologists. We could not have existed without this wonderful network of caring doctors.

However, several studies show that only 15% of visually impaired people in the US receive low vision rehabilitation services. Many eye doctors do not take the time to refer their patients to available low vision rehabilitation service providers and unfortunately most patients are unable to ask for a service that they do not know exists.

For people with a visual impairment there is a large team of specialists and service providers available to help maintain independence and quality of life. Low vision rehabilitation is most effective if people are referred early in the course of their vision loss. For most people, independence is lost when best corrected vision falls to 20/50 as reading and driving become difficult. The standard of care is to refer to vision rehabilitation at this point.

To all eye doctors who feel that low vision rehabilitation services has made a difference in your patient's lives, I ask that you add the following questions to your Patient In-Take Questionnaire:

1. Does your vision make it difficult to read small print, to read the label on your medicine bottle, seeing well enough to shop or to take care of your finances and mail?  
Y N
2. Do you have difficulty seeing at distance including faces, television, street signs or when driving a car during the day or at night? Y N
3. Do you need more light to see or are you bothered by too much light and glare?  
Y N
4. Do you have difficulty getting around outside of your home including problems with depth perception or difficulty seeing curbs and steps? Y N
5. Does your vision interfere with other daily activities and hobbies or make you dependent on others? Y N
6. Would you like to know about available low vision rehabilitation services? Y N

For our ViewFinder patients, if you feel that low vision services have made a difference your life, please ask all of your eye doctors to add the above questions to their Patient In-Take Forms. Together we can all make a difference.

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