On 13 September 2017, the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) marked 160 years of working to improve eye health worldwide.

ICO’s roots were first planted in 1857 when ophthalmologists from 24 countries convened in Brussels for the first International Congress of Ophthalmology. The meeting, later renamed the World Ophthalmology Congress® (WOC), is the longest continuous international medical meeting.

In the years since, the ICO has grown to be the primary international consortium representing and serving 155 national, regional and subspecialty associations of ophthalmologists. The ICO works with professional ophthalmologic societies, non-governmental development organizations (NGOs) and related organizations worldwide to enhance ophthalmic education, increase access to high-quality eye care, and to preserve and restore vision. Together, we are building a “World Alliance for Sight.”

More than 22,000 ophthalmologists in 80 countries have taken ICO Examinations to evaluate their knowledge or meet requirements in their countries to practice ophthalmology. The ICO Fellowships, Exams, WOC, Center for Ophthalmic Educators, and Teaching the Teachers Initiative, provide thousands of emerging and established eye care leaders with educational resources and a strong network to further their efforts.

Through the ICO Fellowships program, more than 800 ophthalmologists from low-resource countries have been provided invaluable opportunities to increase access to eye care in their countries.

The ICO has also played a key role in the establishment of the Magrabi–ICO Cameroon Eye Center, a regional training center in Yaoundé, Cameroon – the only regional subspecialty training center in Francophone Africa.

“Thanks to the dedication of ICO Members and partners over the past 160 years, we are proud of the impact we have been able to have and the important role we play in helping to improve eye care and to reduce blindness and vision loss around the world,” said ICO President Hugh Taylor, AC, MD.

To learn more about the ICO, we invite you to please follow these links to visit our Fellowship and Exam programs, the Center for Ophthalmic Educators, and the World Ophthalmology Congress®.
Data for causes of vision impairment and blindness form an important basis of recommendations in public health policies. In line with this, the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) has released updated statistics for the prevalence of blindness and low vision. The updated statistics provide the latest global estimates of the prevalence of blindness and visual impairment in the world.

The key findings are as follows:

* 36 million people are blind,
* 217 million people with severe or moderate visual impairment (distance),
* 253 million people visually impaired (in 2015),
* 1.1 billion people with near-vision impairment,
* Visual impairment prevalence has dropped from 4.58% in 1990 to 3.38% in 2015,
* 89% of visually impaired people live in low and middle-income countries,
* 55% of visually impaired people are women.

For years these prevalence estimates were increasing, but now for the second time since IAPB began releasing this data there is a reduction in the number of people who are blind or suffer from low vision.

In addition, these numbers show that progress is being made to close the gender gap in eye care.

This update is very encouraging and affirms the effectiveness of work supported by the ICO and our Members and partner NGOs to increase access to eye care around the globe.

While the prevalence of blindness has decreased globally, and vision for millions of people has been saved, there is still much to do.

The Vision Loss Expert Group published two articles in The Lancet in conjunction with World Sight Day that offer both valuable statistics and concerning analysis:

- The global level of blindness caused by cataracts in adults over age 50 has remained almost unchanged, declining from 36.7 percent in 1990 to 35.1 percent in 2015, with a further decline to 34.7 percent predicted by 2020.
- As the population aged 50-plus is set to rise dramatically, stalled progress on cataracts and other causes of blindness—and the progressive nature of those diseases—means the number of blind individuals is expected to triple by the year 2050.

- A lack of access to eye health care in low- and middle-income countries has slowed progress.


Along with these estimates, the IAPB has created a Vision Atlas which hosts causes data and country-level progress indicators, plus commentary from experts on a variety of eye health issues.

By bringing all this information together, the Vision Atlas becomes a powerful tool for advocacy, planning and fundraising.

On World Sight Day 2017, the IAPB Vision Atlas was published, which presents this complex data through maps and infographics along with context and expert commentary.

The Atlas is an effective new tool for understanding these trends and for advocating an increased commitment to eye health.
SOUTH EAST ZONAL REPORT

FETHA launches its state of the art functional low vision clinic!!!

Earlier in the year, the Department of Ophthalmology, Federal Teaching Hospital, Abakiliki, (FETHA) Ebonyi state launched its low vision clinic. It attracts referrals from the entire southeast region and part of the south-south region, serving a population of over 20 million people. It has a full staff complement of 2 internationally trained low vision specialists and a low vision record clerk, with oversight functions performed by the paediatric ophthalmologists.

Still in its infancy, it has successfully delivered low vision to over 60 satisfied patients. The vision of this centre is to provide comprehensive rehabilitative services for patients with low vision in order to achieve optimal and functional visual rehabilitation to carry out daily activities of living. And it is doing just that. Staff at the clinic have evaluated and prescribed low vision devices for patients with glaucoma, Retinitis pigmentosa, Oculocutaneous albinism, Maculopathy, Myopia, Optic atrophy and Macular dystrophy. The Low Vision Clinic, Paediatric Ophthalmology Clinic and entire staff of FEHTA eye clinic, express their sincere appreciation to the dynamic leadership and unstinting support of the CMD- Dr Emeka Onwe Ogah and the management team.

Low vision services with electronic video magnifiers
Handheld portable video magnifier
Handheld illuminated magnifier
Binocular telescope being used by a patient with low vision
SOUTH SOUTH ZONAL REPORT
DELTA STATE OSN

Preamble
Since 2005, the Delta state Chapter of the OSN has celebrated world sight day in collaboration with other eye health workers. This year we decided to focus on reducing cataract blindness in view of the recent call by both the WHO and the OSN for all ophthalmologist to intensify efforts to reducing cataract blindness everywhere. As such we embarked on a free cataract screening/surgeries campaign to create awareness about cataract and other common causes of blindness and the availability for treatment of eye conditions within the state.

In line with the theme of this year’s World Sight Day, the Ophthalmologists working in the State decided to Make Vision Count by screening 500 persons and carry out 50 free cataract surgeries across three local government areas of the State.

The activity was carried out in two weeks, the Week 1, for screening of cases and week 2 for surgeries. The world sight day proper was marked with a rally, more screening and surgeries.

The WSD rally was Chaired by Hon Ovuzuorie Macaulay, a Former Secretary to the State Government and indigene of the LGA, with the Honourable Commissioner for Health represented by the permanent Secretary as special guest of honour. A welcome speech/lecture on common causes of blindness and harmful eye practices was given by the Chairman of the State OSN Chapter, Dr(Mrs.) Gloria Patrick – Ferife. Goodwill messages were presented by the South-South coordinator of the OSN, Dr (Mrs) F.N Ejegi and the Chairman of the Local Government area. Two of the beneficiaries responded on behalf of others.

Outcome
- A total of 379 persons were screened and 40 cataract surgeries. We also carried out pterygia surgeries for 4 patients with blinding pterygia.
- The communities reached were appreciative of the programme. The Chairman of the Local government area promised to partner with the OSN on eye care for the people of the area.
- We carried out repairs of the water pumping machine and some plumbing and electrical works in this primary Health Centre where surgeries were done.

Appreciation
To all Ophthalmologists in the State, the Local Eye NGOs, Ophthalmic Nurses, Dortemag Ventures, Linkabs Pharma and the Honourable Commissioner for Health.

Report compiled by:
Dr(Mrs.) Benedicta Akpe (Chairman – Organizing Committee)

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NEWS FROM OSN ZONES AND CHAPTERS (CONTD.)

Sights from Delta state OSN World Sight Day 2017 activities

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EDO STATE OSN

Report: World Sight Day 2017 Activities, OSN Edo State Chapter

The Ophthalmological Society of Nigeria, Edo State Chapter, participated actively in the 2017 WSD celebrations with health promotion, screening, and media events in the electronic media (Television and Radio) aimed at creating awareness and sensitising the general public about eye health issues as well as rendering service to members of the public. The activities were carried out by OSN members mainly in Benin City and Irrua.

Media events: the four television programmes and one Radio programme were:
1. Health Plus NTA Benin – A health documentary which featured a 30-minute interview on common eye diseases and care of the eyes with Dr. Rita O. Momoh (OSN, Edo Chapter Chairperson) was aired on 12th October 2017
2. This Morning on ITV - An early morning, live, talk show on Independent Television Network which featured Dr. Femi Obazee and Dr. Nosa Ogbevoen as co-guests with an Optometrist representing their association was aired from 8.00am on World Sight Day.
3. An hour long Live talk -show programme on NTA, Iruekpen, on Thursday 12th October, featured two Ophthalmologists based in Irrua and a nurse, who educated members of the public about eye health and answered questions from a phone-in audience.
4. Living with disabilities- a morning programme on Edo Broadcasting Service featured a discussion about eye health and management of visual impairment and blindness with Dr. John Paul Okoro on Friday 13 October 2017
5. Healthy Living- on ITV Radio featured Dr Efe Akpata in a live phone-in programme the following Thursday, 19th October, where she communicated in local language (pidgeon English) with a phone in audience.

Two eye health teams led by Dr. Anita Alikah and Dr Wilson Ovienra respectively , visited Don Bosco Science Academy, Ukhun and Lumen Christi International High School, Uromi, Edo State, where they gave a presentation/ lecture on Eye Health to students and staff. In addition, 45 students and staff were screened in Don Bosco Science Academy and blinding ocular conditions such as glaucoma/ glaucoma suspects were picked in 7 of them. Members of management of the University of Benin Teaching Hospital also had their eyes screened during this year’s World Sight Day as a service to the hospital by the members of OSN, Edo State Chapter.

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Dr Femi Obazee and Dr Ogbovoen on the morning show ITV on WSD

Eye health team from Irrua with principal and staff of Don Bosco Science Academy
NEWS FROM OSN ZONES AND CHAPTERS (CONTD.)

RIVER/BAYELSA STATES OSN
The world sight day was well celebrated with various activities which included
1. Free Eye screening
2. Public enlightenment programs
3. CME program for all doctors with a view to enlightening our colleagues and seeking their partnership in eye care
The world sight day activities took place at De Edge Hotel and Resort in GRA, Port Harcourt on the 12th of Oct. 2017.
There was free eye screening of members of the public and doctors who attended the CME program. A total of 90 adults were screened and those who needed further attention were referred to BMSH or UPTH.
A total of 56 doctors registered and for the CME. 5 CPD points were awarded for the CME.
The topics and resource persons for the CME are as follows:
i. Make vision count delivered ........Dr G.I Nathaniel
ii. Combating the scourge of Glaucoma in the Niger delta ...Dr E.A. Awoyesuku
iii. Refractive errors in children .. Leveraging on the school eye health ..Dr I. Aprioku
iv. Diabetic eye disease ..Dr Fiebai .B.
v. How to recognise Cataract ...Dr. C. G. Nwokocha.
We also organized public enlightenment program on the electronic media with Two studio appearances on Nigeria info and Wazobia Fm in Port Harcourt. The activities were aired on NTA 10 Port Harcourt and Nigeria Info.
In Bayelsa state, a walk for sight was organised at the Federal Medical Center in Yanagoa with a view to enlightening the public on the need for eye check. There were also public enlightenment programs both on radio and television stations (Royal FM and AIT) Free eye screening was carried out at the federal medical center, Yenagoa where many people were screened for eye diseases.  

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NEWS FROM OSN ZONES AND CHAPTERS (CONTD.)

Sights from Rivers and Bayelsa states OSN World Sight Day 2017 activities

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NEWS FROM OSN ZONES AND CHAPTERS (CONT'D.)

More sights from Rivers and Bayelsa states OSN World Sight Day 2017 activities

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NEWS FROM OSN ZONES AND CHAPTERS (CONT'D.)

More sights from Rivers and Bayelsa states OSN World Sight Day 2017 activities
Home testing could catch rapid glaucoma decline years earlier than clinical exams
This computer simulation study suggests home monitoring may improve detection of rapid visual field progression in glaucoma, even with low compliance. Researchers simulated longitudinal visual field results for both stable and progressing glaucoma patients with varying compliance rates and monitoring schedules (in clinic or at home). Weekly home monitoring using an iPad app could detect rapid field loss in 0.9 years, even with 63% compliance. In contrast, biannual examinations with the Humphrey Field Analyzer would require 2.5 years to detect the same decline. The findings imply home monitoring could lead to earlier intervention and improved outcomes for rapidly progressing patients.  Ophthalmology, December 2017

Permanent vision loss appears rare after MEK inhibitor therapy
Serous retinal disturbances in patients treated with mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase (MEK) inhibitors rarely lead to lasting visual impairment, according to findings from this retrospective study. An analysis of MEK inhibitor–associated subretinal fluid from 25 cancer patients revealed unique pathology associated with the use of these chemotherapy agents. In contrast to central serous chorioretinopathy, MEK inhibitor–associated fluid accumulates exclusively in the sub-interdigitation zone, and the RPE and choroid layers remain normal. The authors emphasize that MEK inhibitors did not cause irreversible vision loss or serious eye damage.  Ophthalmology, December 2017

Dexamethasone implant provides little benefit to patients with chronic DME
This multicenter phase 2 study from the DRCR Network explores the efficacy of corticosteroids for people with DME who are refractory to anti-VEGF therapy. A group of 116 patients with persistent vision loss and edema was randomized to Ozurdex dexamethasone implants or sham, each in combination with monthly ranibizumab. After 6 months, steroid-treated eyes had significantly reduced retinal thickness compared with control eyes. However, the study group gained only 0.5 letters more than the sham group (P=0.73), suggesting a limited role for steroids in individuals who do not respond to anti-VEGFs. JAMA Ophthalmology, in press

Case series offers insights into antibiotic susceptibility of corneal ulcers
This retrospective study examined patterns of bacterial resistance among microbial keratitis cases at a single hospital in Texas. Of 96 eyes, 61.5% were culture-positive: Pseudomonas was most common, followed by coagulase-negative Staphylococci. Contrary to the investigators’ assumption, ulcers caused by Gram-negative bacteria were associated with better vision outcomes than those caused by Gram-positive bacteria, likely due to reduced drug resistance. All cultured species were susceptible to vancomycin. The authors recommend an empirical therapy of tobramycin and vancomycin—avoiding fluoroquinolone monotherapy—while culture results are pending. British Journal of Ophthalmology, November 2017

Prophylactic sclerostomy reduces cataract-related complications in nanophthalmos
This is the first prospective trial to assess the safety of cataract surgery with concomitant sclerostomy in nanophthalmic eyes. Sixty patients were randomized to cataract surgery alone or combined with a single-quadrant sclerostomy. The surgeon performed phacoemulsification or manual small-incision cataract surgery, depending on cataract severity. The sclerostomy group experienced fewer overall complications, although the difference was not significant (17.2% vs. 38.7%, P=0.065). Uveal effusions, however, were significantly more common in the control group (4 vs. 0; P=0.04). The authors note that earlier surgery with phacoemulsification was linked to lower risk of complications. American Journal of Ophthalmology, November 2017

Declining incidence of AMD found among Europeans
Using data from 14 population-based studies, researchers assessed the prevalence of all forms of AMD among Europeans. After extrapolating data from more than 42,000 adults, the overall rates of early and late AMD were calculated at 13.2% and 3.0%, respectively, in patients aged 70 or older from 1990 through 2013. The prevalence of visual impairment in AMD patients with choroidal neovascularization decreased significantly after 2006, when anti-VEGFs became widely implemented (66.2% vs. 79.8% before 2006). The authors also observed a decreasing prevalence of AMD in elderly subjects after 2006, which they attribute to widespread adoption of healthier lifestyles. Ophthalmology, December 2017

Anxious personality traits linked to central serous chorioretinopathy
Investigators of this prospective, case-control study assessed physiologic and psychologic risk factors in central serous chorioretinopathy (CSCR). The multicenter study included 83 consecutive CSCR patients and 83 controls who answered a questionnaire about potential risk factors. Multivariate analysis revealed an association with obsessive-compulsive behavior (OR 11.5), Type A personality (OR 4.4), stress (OR 4.7), premature ejaculation (OR 4.8) and increased caffeine intake (OR 1.26), which all share a common pathway of catecholamine breakdown triggered by psychosocial stress. The authors suggest personality assessment tools may help identify patients at high risk of developing CSCR. Ophthalmology Retina, November–December 2017
**Dilute bleach best for disinfecting tonometry equipment**

The latest Ophthalmic Technology Assessment explores the most effective method for disinfecting reusable tonometers. Evidence from 10 studies suggests that dilute bleach eliminates both adenovirus and herpes simplex virus, while 70% isopropyl alcohol can reliably eliminate only herpes. None of the methods tested (ethanol, 70% isopropyl alcohol, dilute bleach or mechanical cleaning) can eliminate prions, so the authors recommend single-use tips or disposable covers when treating patients with suspected Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. Equipment should be inspected regularly because any disinfectant method can eventually damage tonometry prisms.  *Ophthamology, December 2017*

**High-vacuum setting improves phacoemulsification efficiency**

This prospective clinical trial explores how vacuum settings affect phacoemulsification efficiency. Two experienced surgeons used a phacoemulsification machine with monitored forced infusion to perform cataract surgery on 158 eyes. They used a high-vacuum setting (600 mm Hg) on one half of the lens and a low-vacuum setting (350 mm Hg) on the other half. Heminuclei treated with the high setting required less ultrasonic energy and had a significantly shorter removal time (27.8 vs. 33.6 seconds; P<0.001). Neither group experienced complications. *Journal of Cataract and Refractive Surgery, September 2017*

**Intense pulsed light treatment reduces dry eye inflammation**

This double-masked trial is the first to assess the effect of intense pulsed light (IPL) treatment on cytokine levels in patients with dry eye due to meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD). A group of 44 patients (88 eyes) was randomized to 3 monthly IPL treatments or sham light exposure, each followed by meibomian gland expression. At week 12, tears from IPL-treated eyes showed reduced concentrations of IL-17A, IL-6 and prostaglandin E2 compared with baseline values and improved significantly more than control eyes. These findings support anecdotal evidence that IPL can effectively treat dry eye disease associated with MGD. *American Journal of Ophthalmology, November 2017*

**New findings challenge link between SSRIs and cataract**

Using records from a large primary care database, researchers assessed whether long-term use of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) is associated with increased risk of cataract. The study included more than 410,000 patients at least 40 years old, both with and without cataract, and found no difference in risk among users of any SSRI medication compared with nonusers (OR 0.99). There was also no significant risk associated with use of serotonin noradrenalin reuptake inhibitors or monoaminoxidase inhibitors. Subgroup analysis of patients under 65 years revealed a slight increased risk (OR 1.24) that warrants further investigation. *Ophthalmology, November 2017*

**Xen 45 microstent comparable to trabeculectomy for uncontrolled glaucoma**

The largest study to evaluate standalone trabeculectomy vs. ab interno gelatin microstent (Xen 45, Allergan) implantation found that the procedures have similar safety and failure profiles. The authors reviewed data from 169 eyes that underwent trabeculectomy and 185 eyes that received the Xen 45, both with adjunctive mitomycin C. Complete success rates were similar at 10 months between groups, as were the risk factors: Patients with diabetes fared worst, and white patients fared best. Overall, the findings suggest the microstent is a promising minimally invasive alternative to trabeculectomy. *Ophthalmology, November 2017*

**Aqueous humor biopsy could permit in vivo genetic analysis of retinoblastoma eyes**

This study found that aqueous humor from retinoblastoma eyes contains tumor-derived DNA that can be analyzed as an alternative to tissue biopsy. Researchers evaluated aqueous humor samples (0.1 ml) from 2 enucleated retinoblastoma eyes and 1 from a child who was undergoing treatment. Genetic analysis of the fluid revealed tumor-derived, cell-free DNA containing regions of chromosomal gains and losses. These findings suggest that aqueous humor biopsy may be useful in patients undergoing salvage therapy, when tumor tissue is unavailable. The new method could also prevent extraocular seeding of tumor cells, which can occur with traditional tissue biopsy. *JAMA Ophthalmology, November 2017*

**Early findings show gene therapy may aid LHON patients at disease onset**

This phase 1 study reports visual outcomes in 14 patients with Leber hereditary optic neuropathy (LHON) who received a single intravitreal injection of an investigational AAV2-mediated gene therapy. The authors treated the worse eye of patients with chronic (group 1) or recent (group 2) bilateral vision loss, and the better eye of patients with recent unilateral vision loss (group 3). During follow-up ranging from 3 to 24 months, vision improved by 3 or more lines in 17%, 50% and 0% of groups 1, 2 and 3, respectively. The findings suggest greater efficacy for patients with recent-onset vision loss, with mild and transient adverse events. *Ophthalmology, November 2017*
Posterior optic capture may avert vitrectomy during pediatric cataract surgery

Investigators prospectively compared the safety profiles of 2 IOL implantation techniques in children younger than 4 years old. Sixty-one children were randomized to a standard in-the-bag IOL with anterior vitrectomy, or optic capture of an IOL without vitrectomy. During 1 year of follow-up, 1 eye in the standard group developed visual axis obscuration and 2 developed glaucoma. Rates of cell deposits and posterior synechiae were comparable between groups. Optic capture could not be completed in 5 eyes (16.1%), but IOL placement was successfully achieved using other techniques without further complications. *Journal of Cataract & Refractive Surgery, September 2017*