

# Eye Care Professionals



If you feel that your loved one would benefit from additional vision care services, there are several options for follow-up. Please discuss which one would most benefit your loved one with their primary care physician.

## **Optometrist (OD)**

- Trained to examine, diagnose, treat, and manage *some* diseases and disorders of the eye and visual system. They are able to do the following:
  - determine the presence of vision problems and visual acuity
  - prescribe eyeglasses and contact lenses
  - prescribe eye exercises, low vision aids, and vision therapy
  - prescribe medications to treat eye diseases.
- Does not perform eye surgery and are not trained to care for and manage *all* diseases and disorders of the eyes.
- Completion of pre-professional undergraduate education and four years of professional education in optometry.
  - Some optometrists may complete a one-year optional residency in a specialized area, such as neuro or behavioral.
  - Optometrists have not attended medical school.

## **Optician**

- Assist optometrists and ophthalmologists in providing complete patient care before, during, and after exams, procedures, and surgeries.
- Can help to fit eyeglasses and contact lenses, following prescriptions from ophthalmologists and optometrists. They also help customers decide which eyeglass frames or contact lenses to buy.
- Do not test vision or examine eyes for disorders/diseases
- Typically complete a two-year technical degree and are able to:
  - analyze and interpret eye prescriptions
  - determine the lenses that best meet a persons needs
  - oversee ordering and verification of eye-related products from start to finish;
  - dispense, replace, adjust, repair, and reproduce previously ordered contact

## **Optometrist w/ Fellow from College of Vision & Development (FCOVD)**

- Same education as the Optometrist (OD), with additional training in vision therapy and rehabilitation.
- COVD offers optometrists and vision therapists the opportunity to become certified in vision development and vision therapy. The Board certification process is administered by the International Examination and Certification Board of the College of Optometrists in Vision Development.

## **Ophthalmologist (MD)**

- Qualified to deliver total eye care, meaning vision services, eye examinations, medical and surgical eye care, diagnosis and treatment of disease, and visual complications that are caused by other conditions, like diabetes.

# Eye Care Professionals

- Training emphasizes eye disease and surgery
- Specialize in the medical and surgical care of the eyes and visual system, and also the prevention of eye disease and injury.
  - They can be either doctors of medicine (MD) or doctors of osteopathy (DO).
- Completion of four years of pre-medical undergraduate education, four years of medical school, one year of internship, and three or more years of specialized medical and surgical training in eye care.

## **Neuro-Ophthalmologist (MD)**

- Same education as Ophthalmologist (MD)
- Specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases/disorders that affect vision and perception as a result of neurological damage