

Semi-Annual Report Fall 2016

Organization Name:

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Section on Ophthalmology (SOOp)

Councilor: Gregg Lueder, MD, FAAP

The Section on Ophthalmology is consistently recognized by the AAP Board as an exemplary and productive Surgical Subspecialty Section for the enormous volume of initiatives and activities proposed and completed by members of the Section. The influence of the Section on the AAP is much larger than would be predicted by its small size. Increasing the size of the section membership can only increase the effectiveness of the Section in carrying out its mission to help our patients and thereby our members.

1. Governmental Activities:

The Section continually monitors vision-screening legislation throughout the country via the AAP Washington Office and the Department of Community, Chapter and State Affairs.

- Full time pediatric subspecialty advocate in the AAP DC office
- Health Care Reform Implementation
 - The Affordable Care Act requires all health plans to cover, with no cost-sharing for families, the preventive services for children recommended in *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children and Adolescents, 3rd ed.*
- In January 2016, the AAP Section joined forces with the AAO and AAPOS to challenge an appeal from the American Optometric Association on the National Quality Forum's decision to endorse (for trial use) a quality measure related to vision screening in children. After testimony from AAP and AAO experts on an NQF call in early January, the measure, which encourages early screening for vision impairments in preschool age children, remains on track for adoption by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services after a ratified vote by the National Quality Forum approving it for trial use.
- In June 2016, the AAP provided public comment on the American Optometric Association (AOA) clinical practice guideline, "Comprehensive Pediatric Eye and Vision Examination," notifying the National Academy of Medicine of their concerns with the AOA publishing an NAS (formerly IOM)-recognized guideline on the topic of comprehensive eye exams. The AAP reiterated in its letter that it embraces vision screening (not universal eye examinations) as an effective means of working with families to identify children in a practical manner with treatable vision problems.
- Support of AAO Initiated Advocacy Efforts
 - Sharon Lehman, Section Chairperson participated in the Ophthalmic Advocacy Leadership Group (OALG) Mini-Meeting Call in February 2016.
 - The SOOp has long been a supporter of Congressional Advocacy Day. The AAP Section participated as a supporting organization once again in 2016.
 - The AAP Section sponsored a participant, Dr. Smith Ann Chisholm, in the 2016 Advocacy Ambassador Program at the AAO's Mid-Year Forum.

2. Socioeconomic Activities:

The Section continues to monitor managed care advocacy efforts via the AAP Washington Office and the Department of Community, Chapter, and State Affairs.

- On an ongoing basis, the AAP Section on Ophthalmology works with the AAP Committee on Coding and Nomenclature (COCN) to resolve issues with existing CPT codes, comment on proposals for new CPT codes, etc. For example, the Section and COCN have recently been involved with work related to the devaluation of existing code 99174.
- On an ongoing basis, the AAP Section on Ophthalmology is asked by insurers and managed care companies to review new policies or policies being considered for release. For example, recently, the Section reviewed and provided feedback on an Amerihealth Caritas policy on Therapeutic Contact Lenses and on UnitedHealthcare policies on Instrument-Based Ocular Screening, Vision Screening, and Removal of Impacted Cerumen.
- In December 2015, the AAP sent a letter to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services expressing great concern about recent substantial, double-digit cuts in the 2016 RBRVS Medicare physician fee schedule that affect procedures of the nasolacrimal duct frequently performed on children. The AAP expressed its opposition to these cuts, and strongly asserted that they will negatively affect children who need these services.
- In February 2016, the AAP sent a letter to the largest national and regional carriers informing them of new AAP published recommendations for vision screening. The letter urges payers to provide benefits coverage and appropriate payment for vision screening, particularly instrument based screening, based on the newly published recommendations. AAP Chapters, pediatric councils and members can also use this letter in their discussions with payers. A copy of the letter can also be accessed by AAP members along with other AAP letters to carriers on the AAP Member Center, private payer advocacy page at: https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/payeradvocacy_policy_vision_screen.pdf

3. Public Service Activities and EyeCare America Activities:

- In February 2016, the AAP approved provisional endorsement of the “See The Blackboard” campaign. The objective of the “See The Blackboard” campaign is to increase awareness among parents of preschool-aged children about the importance of getting their children’s vision screened with subsequent examination, if needed, and the link between poor vision and learning problems. In early 2016 “See The Blackboard” was invited to make application to the Ad Council; our AAP endorsement is to be noted in the application.
- The Section is in the beginning stages of working with the FDA to increase parental/public awareness about the dangers of lasers (laser pointers and laser toys) to the eyes. Plans include development of a press release, development of a new AAP patient education brochure, development of a new page on healthychildren.com, notices in AAP NewsOnCall, AAP SmartBrief, etc.
- The section publishes a pamphlet for parents, titled “Your Child’s Eyes,” which explains how vision develops and alerts parents to specific problems by defining them and discussing warning signs that should be evaluated by a pediatrician or ophthalmologist. The most recent version of the “Your Child’s Eyes” brochure was released in May 2016 and is made available to subscribers of AAP’s PatientEducationOnline service. In addition, excerpts from the brochure are now available on HealthyChildren.org – “Warning Signs of Vision Problems in Infants & Children,” “Vision Screenings” and “Infant Vision Development: What Can Babies See?”

- The Section maintains a website with links to valuable resources regarding pediatric ophthalmologic issues: <http://www.aap.org/sections/ophthalmology>.
- On an ongoing basis, the Section works with staff from AAO to support EyeSmart initiatives by sending out important eye health messages via AAP's daily SmartBrief.
- The AAP actively supported the CDC's third annual Contact Lens Health Week in August 2016. A notice about Contact Lens Week was posted in AAP SmartBrief on 8/22/16. In addition, HealthyChildren.org tweeted throughout this week, pointing to its page on contact lens health, and AAP.org tweeted as well.
- The AAP worked with the Head Start National Center on Health to develop a vision fact sheet, "Vision Screening: A Fact Sheet for Early Care and Education Programs," which was distributed to Head Start program managers in September 2015. A revised version of the Fact Sheet was made available in January 2016 after the release of the new AAP policy documents.

4. Membership Activities:

The Executive Committee of the Section is:

Chair: Sharon Lehman, MD, FAAP

Chair-Elect: Daniel Karr, MD, FAAP

Immediate Past Chair: David Granet, MD, FAAP

At Large: Donny Suh, MD, FAAP

At Large: Geoffrey Bradford, MD, FAAP

At Large: Steven Rubin, MD, FAAP

At Large: Ken Nischal, MD, FAAP

AAO Liaison: Pamela Williams, MD, FAAP

AAPOS Liaison; Christie Morse, MD, FAAP

AACO Liaison: Shelley Klein, CO

AAO Councilor: Gregg Lueder, MD, FAAP

Manager: Jennifer Riefe

- As of November 1, 2016, Dr. Daniel Karr will take over as Section Chairperson, Dr. Geoffrey Bradford will become Chairperson-Elect, and Dr. Sharon Lehman will become Immediate Past Chair. In addition, Dr. John Roarty will join as a new member of the Executive Committee.
- The Section has worked with the AAP Department of Membership to formalize the half off national AAP dues arrangement that has been in place for all Section members since 2010, when the Section met with success in doubling its membership while participating in a membership pilot program. In May 2013, the half off dues arrangement was recognized formally by the AAP, and a commitment was made for it to remain in place as long as the Section maintains its membership above 200 or until a new model is put in place that meets the needs of all parties. Current Membership is at 204.
- The Section hosted a social reception at the 2016 AAPOS meeting in April in Vancouver for networking and membership recruitment purposes.
- The Section had an exhibit booth at the AAPOS Annual Meeting in April 2016 in Vancouver.
- The Section developed and submitted advertisements for the syllabus of the November 2015 Pediatric Subspecialty Day meeting, which is held the before the start of the annual AAO meeting, as well as for the syllabus of the April 2016 AAPOS annual meeting.

- The Section has a joint membership agreement in place with the American Association of Certified Orthoptists (AACO). As a result, orthoptist membership in the AAP has doubled, and dues have been cut in half for all orthoptist members – from \$60 to \$30 annually.
- The Section has committed to putting out a biannual newsletter to keep members better informed of section activities, a strategy for increasing member retention. A section newsletter was published in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 (the spring issue is available at: http://downloads.aap.org/DOSP/SOOpBox_Spring16_FINAL.pdf). The next one will come out prior to the AAO meeting in October 2016.
- The Section has submitted an advertisement for the 2016 AAO Pediatric Subspecialty Day syllabus.
- The Section is working to add a liaison from the AAPOS Committee on Young Ophthalmologists to its Executive Committee. The Section leadership would like to engage the new liaison in a discussion about how the section can do more to support young physicians, and in turn, draw in more young pediatric ophthalmologist members.

5. Annual Meeting and Educational Activities:

- At the 2016 AAP National Conference and Exhibition (NCE), the Section will sponsor a session titled, “Vision Screening in Your Practice: Fast, Easy, and Accurate,” two sessions titled “Everything You Wanted To Know About Ophthalmology but Were Afraid To Ask: Challenging Cases,” a session on the “The Red Swollen Eye,” a joint effort with the AAP Section on Infectious Diseases, two hands-on sessions titled “Eye Examination Skills Using the Ophthalmoscope,” and a special session titled, “Dyslexia: What Pediatricians Need to Know,” a joint effort with the AAP Section on Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics.
- Bob Gross and Steve Lichtenstein have offered one of the longest running courses at the NCE on an annual basis. Their course, “Eye Examination Skills Using the Ophthalmoscope,” has been given for over 20 years and has long been recognized by the NCE Planning Group as one of the most successful educational sessions at the NCE, from both a content and attendance standpoint.
- For the second time, the SOOp partnered with the American Association of Certified Orthoptists to offer a joint symposium at the AACO annual meeting, which took place in conjunction with the AAO annual meeting in November 2015. The AACO/AAP Symposium was titled “Mild TBI: A Team Approach” and provided CME to physician attendees; Approximately 100 learners attended. The SOOp plans to partner with AACO on a symposium biennially.
- The Section sponsors a workshop at the AAPOS meeting to explore conditions of concern for the pediatrician and pediatric ophthalmologist. For the 2016 AAPOS annual meeting in April, the AAP offered a workshop titled, “Myopia- Pathogenesis, Control and Treatment: A Practical Update for the Clinician.” A proposal will be submitted for the 2017 AAPOS meeting by the upcoming deadline of September 9, 2016.
- The Apt Lecture, given every other year at AAPOS, is sponsored by the Section on Ophthalmology and the funds for that are housed within the AAP. The next Lecture will be given in 2017 by Dr. Marilyn Miller.
- The SOOp has an agreement with AAPOS to co-sponsor the Pediatric Ophthalmology Subspecialty Day program that is held in conjunction with the AAO Annual Meeting. The immediate past 2015 meeting was a big success, and we look forward to the 2016 event set to take place this October.

- The Section has partnered with and provided funds to AAPOS to support a joint AAO/AAPOS/AAP Section exhibit at a number of important meetings annually (including the AAP's National Conference and Exhibition) to provide information to other health workers about pediatric eye health. The booth will travel to the AAP NCE in October 2016.
- In June 2016, the AAP endorsed a new "Practical Guide for Primary Care Physicians: Instrument Based Vision Screening in Children," which is to be published by the Children's Eye Foundation, the Foundation of the AAPOS. Plans are being put in place for publication of the Guide and for its dissemination to pediatricians via AAP communication channels.

6. Other Activities:

- On an ongoing basis, the Section is asked to review and provide feedback on relevant AAP publications and policy statements as well as national health care related publications that the AAP is asked to review as an organization. For example, recently, the Section has been asked to provide feedback on the 3rd edition of an AAP publication, *Pediatric Dermatology: A Quick Reference Guide*, an article from the AAP Section on Environmental Health on "Sun Blindness and the Importance of Wearing Sunglasses in Winter," the *Red Book 2018, 31st Edition* policy manual, an AAP Council on Children with Disabilities clinical report entitled, "Shared Decision-Making in Childhood Disabilities: Pathways to Consensus," and the 2016 NCQA Patient-Centered Specialty Practice Recognition Program Standards.
- The Section periodically audits the full list of AAP statements, clinical reports, and technical reports in progress to determine if there are ophthalmic considerations that require review by the Section.
- A new joint AAP/AAPOS/AAO/AACO policy statement on "Visual System Assessment in Infants, Children, and Young Adults by Pediatricians" and a supporting clinical report, "Procedures for the Evaluation of the Visual System by Pediatricians," were released online on December 7, 2015. In addition, they appeared in the January 2016 print edition of *Pediatrics*. Thanks to lead author, Sean Donahue, and co-authors, Geoff Bradford and James Ruben, for their work on these very important documents.
- In February 2016 the AAP Board approved the intent to revise the 2013 joint AAP/AAPOS/AAO/AACO policy statement on the "Screening Examination of Premature Infants for Retinopathy of Prematurity." Work is now underway on a first draft of that revision.
- The Section sponsored the publication of an article in the Focus on Subspecialties column of AAP News in May 2016 (released online in April) on the Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group (PEDIG): "Network Investigates Treatments for Common Pediatric Eye Problems" Katherine A. Lee; *AAP News* April 6, 2016.
- Work is underway to revise the 2010 clinical report on "The Eye Examination in the Evaluation of Child Abuse."
- In August 2016, the AAP agreed to sign on as a signatory on the AAO Position Paper on "Comprehensive Guidelines for The Co-Management of Ophthalmic Post-Operative Care".
- The AAP Board is currently considering endorsement of the AAPOS policy statement on "Orthoptists as Physician Extenders".
- The Section nominated member, Dr. Stacey Kruger, to participate in the AAO's 2017 Leadership Development Program (LDP); Dr. Kruger was awarded a spot in the program. We are thrilled that this is the second year in a row that our Section's nominee has been selected.

- Dr. Sharon Lehman will attend the Surgical Advisory Panel (SAP) meeting at the NCE in October 2016. The SAP is a panel of the chairpersons of all the Surgical Sections of the AAP. The Chair of the SAP sits on the AAP Board as an advisor, representing the views of the Surgical Subspecialist within the AAP.
- Dr. Geoff Bradford has been appointed as the AAP Section on Ophthalmology representative to the SAP's new Subcommittee on Optimal Timing for Surgery. Concern has been raised about the safety of the medicines used for anesthesia and sedation in young children. Given this, there is an interest within the SAP in developing a list of surgeries for which the timing of surgery is particularly important with respect to the child's development or for optimal function; 1-2 volunteers from each of the AAP's surgical sections will serve on the subcommittee
- The section continues to work on monitoring and implementing its strategic plan.

7. Major Initiatives for the Year

- Publication of one AAP/AAO/AAPOS/AACO Policy to address all aspects of vision screening, replacing separate policies on the Red Reflex Exam, Instrument Based Screening, and the Eye Exam by Pediatricians; Assuring alignment with the new 4th Edition of *Bright Futures* and educating pediatricians and third party payers about procedures and payment for office based preventative services related to children's vision.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gregg Lueder, MD, FAAP, FACS, FAAO

Councilor, Section on Ophthalmology of the American Academy of Pediatrics