

Semi-Annual Report Spring 2019

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.

- The AAP is actively engaged in federal advocacy for the needs of academic and subspecialist pediatricians and the children for whom they provide care. Through the AAP Washington Office and dedicated staff for academic and subspecialty issues, the Academy works to promote medical research for children, funding for medical education, child access to needed providers through appropriate payment, and a pediatric workforce able to meet the needs of children across the country.
- The AAP Department of Federal Affairs prepares a semi-annual Academic and Subspecialty Advocacy Report. The most recent report can be viewed at: <https://downloads.aap.org/DOPCSP/Subspecialty%20Report%20Nov2018.pdf>
- In September 2016, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released its “Blueprint for Children: How the Next President can Build a Foundation for a Healthy Future.” The Blueprint outlined policy proposals to advance child health and well-being. Two years later, the Academy assessed the status of federal child health policy and the AAP’s work to realize the vision laid out in the Blueprint. This update outlines the ways in which the Academy’s expertise has helped to protect foundational elements of child health policy and advance new initiatives in the interest of children. The Blueprint update is available at <https://www.aap.org/enus/Documents/AAPBLUEPRINT-Achievements.pdf>. In late 2018, the AAP also unveiled a new document, which looks ahead at federal advocacy efforts to come: “2018 Update: What’s Next in Child Health Advocacy” (<https://www.aap.org/en-us/Documents/AAP-BLUEPRINT-AtStake.pdf>).
- The AAP’s 2019 AAP Legislative Conference will take place April 7 – 9, in Washington, DC. Each year, the conference brings together pediatricians, residents and medical students from across the country who share a passion for child health advocacy. Participants attend skills-building workshops, hear from guest speakers, learn about policy priorities impacting children and pediatricians and go to Capitol Hill to urge Congress to support strong child health policies. This year the conference once again featured a Pediatric Subspecialty Advocacy Track offering specific legislative and skills building workshops uniquely focused on the interests and needs of pediatric medical subspecialists and surgical specialists.

- The AAP is working to reauthorize loan repayment for pediatric subspecialists in the Senate's Title VII Health Professions reauthorization. The Pediatric Subspecialty Loan Repayment Program (PSLRP) would provide pediatric subspecialists \$35,000 in loan repayment annually for up to three years in exchange for practicing in an underserved area.
- The AAP recently led the charge in opposing the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) policy of separating parents and children at the border.
- In February 2019, the AAP assisted the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) with organizational sign-on to letters to the House/Senate requesting an appropriation of \$50 million in gun violence prevention (GVP) public health research funding for the CDC.
- Geoff Bradford, Section Chairperson, and Steven Rubin, Chairperson-Elect, participated in the Ophthalmic Advocacy Leadership Group (OALG) Meeting in January 2019.
- The SOOp has long been a supporter of the AAO's Congressional Advocacy Day.
- The AAP Section annually sponsors a participant in the Advocacy Ambassador Program at the AAO's Mid-Year Forum and will continue this tradition in April 2019.

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, to comment on proposals for new CPT codes, etc. For example, the Section and COCN have recently been involved with work related 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 and Vision Screening.
- The AAP Committee on Child Health Financing (COCHF) is currently authoring a new Technical Report titled, "Beyond Fee-for-Service: New & Evolving Payment Models and Pediatrics," which the SOOp recently reviewed.
- With assistance from the SOOp, the AAP advocated during February 2018 for CMS to delete active PTP edits that bundle CPT codes 99173 (Screening test of visual acuity, quantitative, bilateral), 99174 (Instrument-based ocular screening (eg, photoscreening, automated refraction), bilateral; with remote analysis and report), and 99177 (Instrument-based ocular screening (eg, photoscreening, automated-refraction), bilateral; with on-site analysis) into preventive medicine services CPT codes 99381-99397. CCS responded to the AAP in late February, and the deletions advocated for appear in the July 1, 2018 version of NCCI.
- Related to the bullet point above, the AAP actively worked to urge all payers to likewise remove/override any edits in their claims processing platform for these CPT codes. A statement from AAP private payer advocacy was sent in early March 2018 to the national and largest regional carriers (Aetna, Anthem, Cigna, Humana, HealthNet, HCSC {BCBS of IL, OK, MT, NM and TX}, and UnitedHealthcare). This statement was also provided to AAP Chapter pediatric councils to use in their discussions with regional carriers (ie., regional BCBS plans).

- On September 12, 2018, the AAP Department of Federal Affairs and the AAP Department of State Government Affairs hosted a webinar on Medicaid Payment Advocacy specifically for members of the Section on Ophthalmology.

3. Public Service Activities and EyeCare America Activities:

- 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” (<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/eyes/Pages/Warning-Signs-of-Vision-Problems-in-Children.aspx>), “Vision Screenings” (<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/eyes/Pages/Vision-Screenings.aspx>), and “Infant Vision Development: What Can Babies See?” (<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/Pages/Babys-Vision-Development.aspx>). In 2017, the Section worked with the Children’s Eye Foundation (CEF) to approve posting of the “Your Child’s Eyes” brochure on the CEF website at a discounted price.
- The AAP actively supported the CDC’s fourth annual Contact Lens Health Week in August 2018. A story ran in AAP News leading up to Contact Lens week, which highlighted a CDC study on contact lens usage/safety. AAP News OnCall also featured this news story. In addition, multiple tweets were made from @AmerAcadPeds during the week.
- In March 2019, the AAP will support the CDC’s campaign to promote healthy contact lens wear and care behaviors around Spring Break. The target audience is college-age contact lens wearers, a group at increased risk of eye infections due to poor hygiene habits. Outreach efforts are being coordinated for March 4 – March 8, 2019 to coincide with many universities’ Spring Breaks.

4. Membership Activities:

The Executive Committee of the Section is:

Chair: Geoffrey Bradford, MD, FAAP

Chair-Elect: Steven Rubin, MD, FAAP

Immediate Past Chair: Daniel Karr, MD, FAAP

At Large: Ken Nischal, MD, FAAP

At Large: John Roarty, MD, FAAP

At Large: Donny Suh, MD, FAAP

At Large: Sylvia Yoo, MD, FAAP

AAO Liaison: Stacey Kruger, MD, FAAP

AAPOS Liaison; Christie Morse, MD, FAAP

AAPOS Committee on Young Ophthalmologists Liaison: Honey Hecce, MD, FAAP

AAO Liaison: Sarah MacKinnon, MSc, OC(C), COMT

AAO Councilor: Gregg Lueder, MD, FAAP

Section Historian: George Ellis, MD, FAAP

Manager: Jennifer Riefe

- The Section will host a social reception at the 2019 AAPOS meeting in San Diego in March for networking and membership recruitment purposes.
- The Section will have an exhibit booth at the AAPOS Annual Meeting in March 2019.
- The Section ran an advertisement in the syllabus of the October 2018 Pediatric Subspecialty Day meeting, which is held before the start of the annual AAO meeting; an advertisement will also run in the syllabus of the March 2019 AAPOS annual meeting.
- The Section has had an agreement in place with the AAP 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 Board, and a commitment was made for it to remain in place as long as the Section maintains its membership.
- On a biannual basis, AAP staff shares the list of lapsed SOOp members with the Section Executive Committee; EXCOM members divide up the list and personally reach out to those lapsed members that they each know well to discuss the value of AAP membership to the field of pediatric ophthalmology; this is probably the most effective membership retention activity that the section engages in 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. The most current issue of the newsletter is available at:
<https://downloads.aap.org/DOPCSP/SOOpBox%20Fall%202018.pdf>.
- In 2016, the Section appointed a liaison from the AAPOS Committee on Young Ophthalmologists to its Executive Committee. The Section leadership has engaged the liaison in discussions about how the section can do more to support young physicians, and in turn, draw in more young pediatric ophthalmologist members. This position was recently filled for the second time by Dr. Honey Herce.
- The Section is working to establish subcommittees to engage members outside of the Executive Committee in the work of the section. Recently, we recruited new members for the Section's Nominations Committee as well as its Committee on Retinopathy of Prematurity; in addition, we established a new committee on Concussion jointly with AAPOS.
- In March 2019, the Section membership will vote on a proposed bylaw referendum which would allow residents and medical students to join the Section going forward.

5. Annual Meeting and Educational Activities:

- At the 2018 AAP National Conference and Exhibition (NCE) in November, the section sponsored two hands-on sessions titled "Eye Examination Skills Using the Ophthalmoscope," two audience-response sessions titled, "Pediatric Ocular Emergencies You Can't Afford to Miss; When to Refer and When to Treat?," and one selected short subject session titled, "Learning Disabilities: What Pediatricians Need to Know".
- The Section sponsors a workshop at the AAPOS meeting to explore conditions of concern for the pediatrician and pediatric ophthalmologist. At the 2019 AAPOS annual meeting the SOOp will offer a workshop titled, "Cortical/Cerebral Visual Impairment 2019: What You Need to Know to Diagnose and Treat."
- For the third time, the SOOp partnered with the American Association of Certified Orthoptists to offer a joint educational symposium at the AACO annual meeting in Fall 2017. The 2017 event was titled "When to Image the Pediatric Patient: A Team Approach" and was quite successful, drawing in approximately 150 people, including 15 physicians.

- 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 SOOp will sponsor the biennial Leonard Apt Lectureship at the 2019 Pediatric Ophthalmology Subspecialty Day program; Sub-Day is the new venue for the lectureship, which has historically been presented at the AAPOS Annual Meeting in odd years.
- The Section has partnered with AAO, AAPOS, and CEF to support a joint children's eye health exhibit booth, which travels to a number of important meetings annually (including the AAP's National Conference and Exhibition). The AAP has invested in a second booth for use at the NCE and covers all costs of the display at NCE (with the exception of the shipping costs for AAPOS, AAO, and CEF materials to the meeting). The booth traveled to Orlando for the 2018 AAP National Conference and Exhibition in November.
- The AAP has an established team of individuals within its Disaster Preparedness Workgroup who are actively involved with implementing the national Zika virus response. The AAP has funding from the CDC to conduct outreach activities for AAP members over the next year. As the AAP considers ideas for outreach activities as well as plans for future joint meetings with the CDC re: the national Zika response, the effect of Zika on the eyes continues to come up as an area where experts are needed. As such, the SOOp recruited ophthalmologist Zika experts, Linda Lawrence and Grace Prakalapakorn, to join the AAP/Section, and they have become involved with the AAP's initiatives on this front.
- In August 2018, the Section along with the AAP Council on Child Abuse and Neglect hosted a webinar titled "Is it All in the Eyes? The Eye Examination in the Evaluation of Child Abuse" to coincide with the publication of a revised joint AAP/AAO/AAPOS/AACO clinical report on the topic.

6. Other Activities:

- In May 2018, the Section sponsored the publication of a "Focus on Subspecialties" article in AAP News: "Are old wives' tales regarding myopia true?" (<https://tinyurl.com/y9brmmnp>)
- 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 2nd edition of an AAP publication, *Neonatology for Primary Care*, a consumer book put out by the AAP, *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child: Birth to Age 5*, a Clinical Report from the Council on Sports Medicine and Fitness, "Soccer Injuries in Children And Adolescents," and a Myopia Fact Sheet for Parents drafted by the National Center for Children's Vision and Eye Health.
- 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.
- The SOOp/AAPOS Subcommittee on Concussion is currently developing a joint organizational policy statement on Visual Symptoms in Concussion. The intent for a new policy statement was formally approved by the AAP Board of Directors in August 2018, and the authorship team submitted its first draft for consideration/feedback in January 2019.
- A revised AAP/AAPOS/AAO/AACO policy statement on the "Screening Examination of Premature Infants for Retinopathy of Prematurity" was published in *Pediatrics* in December 2018.
- The revised joint AAP/AAO/AAPOS/AACO clinical report on "The Eye Examination in the Evaluation of Child Abuse" was published in *Pediatrics* in July 2018.

- Reaffirmation paperwork for the AAP/AAO/AAPOS/AACO joint policy statement and technical report on “Learning Disabilities, Dyslexia, and Vision” is currently being considered by AAP leadership.
- A revision of the 2006 Clinical Report, “Ophthalmologic Examination in Children with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis” is currently underway. The title of the report will be revised to: “Screening for Early Detection of Ocular Disorders in Two Populations: Children with Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis and Children Being Treated with Hydroxychloroquine.”
- A revision of the 2005 Clinical Report, “Screening for Retinopathy in the Pediatric Patient with Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus” is currently underway.
- In February 2019, the Council on Child Abuse and Neglect along with the Section on Ophthalmology submitted an intent for a new technical report on “Abusive Head Trauma in Infants and Children.” The report will be co-authored by AAPOS, AAO, and AACO; the SOOp authors involved with the project are Gilbert Binenbaum, MD, FAAP and Alejandra De Alba Campomanes, MD, MPH, FAAP.
- In February 2019, the AAP/SOOp appointed a pediatric ophthalmologist, Dr. Sylvia Yoo, to work with the CDC on a review and update of the ophthalmia neonatorum sections of their 2020 STD Treatment Guidelines.
- Dr. Gregg Lueder has been appointed as the AAP Section on Ophthalmology representative to the SAP’s Subcommittee on Healthcare Transitions.
- The AAP Section on International Child Health has recently established a Subcommittee on Surgery; in November 2018 Dr. John Roarty was named the SOOp liaison to that group.
- In December 2017, the AAP moved into a new headquarters building in Itasca, Illinois (near Chicago O’Hare airport). The building is a beautiful new professional home for all 66,000 members and staff; the new headquarters contains 183,000 square feet of workplaces, meeting rooms and other spaces designed to foster connectivity and innovation among members, staff and partners across the AAP’s programs and initiatives. For more details about the new headquarters, visit the AAP’s [For Our Future Campaign site](#). The SOOp Executive Committee had the opportunity to tour the new AAP headquarters building in October 2018 when the AAO met in Chicago.
- The Section is pleased to report that its nominee for the 2019 AAO Leadership Development Program (LDP), Dr. Eniolami Dosunmu, was accepted and is currently participating in the program.
- In March 2019, Section Executive Committee members, Dr. Donny Suh and Dr. John Roarty, will attend the AAP’s Annual Leadership Forum as the representatives of the Section on Ophthalmology.

7. Major Initiatives for the Year

Our major initiative for this year will be to work with the AAP Department of Federal Affairs to assure that the new administration does not overlook vision benefits coverage for children as they draft a healthcare reform bill.

8. New: Recommended Issues for Discussion at the Upcoming Fall Council Meeting

Health Care Transitions; CAR has been submitted for consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Councilor, Section on Ophthalmology of the American Academy of Pediatrics