

August 2020 Global Eye Health News

WHO Adopts New Eye Health Resolution

146th session

Agenda item 12



World Health
Organization

EB146.R8

6 February 2020

Integrated people-centred eye care, including preventable vision impairment and blindness

The Executive Board,

Having considered the report on integrated people-centred eye care, including preventable blindness and impaired vision,¹

RECOMMENDS to the Seventy-third World Health Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

The Seventy-third World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report by the Director-General on integrated people-centred eye care, including preventable blindness and impaired vision, which summarizes the findings of the *World report on vision*;²

73rd World Health Assembly Decisions

The Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO) have adopted a number of decisions to advance global public health that had been proposed to the 73rd World Health Assembly in May 2020, via a "Written Silence Procedure".

The proposals relate to: strengthening global immunization efforts; cervical cancer prevention and control; a global strategy for tuberculosis research and innovation; **eye care - including preventing vision impairment and blindness**; strengthening efforts on food safety, a global strategy and plan of action on public health, innovation and intellectual property; a decade of healthy ageing; and influenza preparedness.

The second is to strengthen eye care in primary health care so people can access services closer to their homes. The third is to improve coordination of eyecare services with other health services and with other sectors such as education and labour. The final recommendation is to integrate eye care into national health strategic plans and universal health coverage schemes. Member States recalled that preventing and addressing vision impairment not only improves quality of life for patients, it also enables them to remain economically productive.

Source of Information:

1. World Health Organization 7 August 2020 Feature story - WHO
<https://www.who.int/news-room/detail/07-08-2020-73rd-world-health-assembly-decisions>

2. International Agency for the \prevention of Blindness
<https://www.iapb.org/news/wha73-our-challenge-for-a-new-decade/>

Intergrated People Centred Eye Care

A new World Health Assembly resolution focuses on the need to integrate people-centred eye care services into health systems. The first ever WHO report on vision (published in 2019) predicts a substantial increase in the number of people with eye conditions and vision impairment in the coming years. The resolution highlights 4 key strategies for Member States to improve access to services and reduce inequities. The first is to better engage people and communities by raising awareness of the importance of early identification of eye conditions and simplifying access to care for underserved populations.