

Subject Line: MD Alert: Beware of InfantSee

Dear Colleagues:

We have concerns about the InfantSEE™ Program, introduced nationally by the American Optometric Association and sponsored by Vistakon/Johnson & Johnson, which offers free initial eye exams to 6-12 month old infants.

### **First Concern: Effectiveness**

The high success rate of screening for ophthalmic pathology in children and infants through Primary Care MDs is well documented. The sensitivity and specificity of exams through InfantSEE™ are not known. Independent research at Vanderbilt University found 35% of children seen by Tennessee optometrists were prescribed glasses in spite of having no amblyogenic factors. The authors extrapolated data to the US population. A single mandatory eye exam could cost over \$135 million a year in unnecessary spectacles<sup>1</sup>.

### **Second Concern: Minimal Training and Experience with Infants**

Most optometrists recruited for this program do not routinely examine infants. Instead, they are being offered a one day course to teach skills that ophthalmologists (Eye MDs) learn in residency. This training deficiency may explain a growing national trend: anecdotal cases suggesting incorrect diagnoses and mismanagement of patients in the InfantSEE™ program.

### **Primary MDs Can Best Detect Abnormalities During Serial Well-Child Care Exams**

As Eye MDs, we are committed to improving the ease with which children's eye problems are detected. As Primary MDs, you are in the best position to detect abnormalities during serial well-child care exams. Attached is the current vision screening guidelines for your reference<sup>2</sup>. This cost-effective approach is recommended by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the American Association of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), and the American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (AAPOS).

### **If Your Patient Has A Problem Detected Through InfantSEE™**

Problems detected through InfantSEE™, should be discussed with the parents of your patients. An Eye-MD is prepared to offer a second opinion and provide the full-range of eye treatment for your patients. Please feel free to contact your local ophthalmologist or the Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology if you have concerns or questions regarding this issue at 651-645-2452.

Sincerely,

Board of the Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology

<sup>1</sup>How often are spectacles prescribed to "normal" preschool children? Donahue S JAPOS 2004;8:224-9  
<http://www.journals.elsevierhealth.com/periodicals/ympa/article/PIIS1091853104000965/fulltext>

<sup>2</sup> Eye Examinations in Infants, Children and Young Adults by Pediatricians Pediatrics2003;111(4):902-907  
<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;111/4/902>