

## Enabling Functional Ability

Post-Conference Education Webinar Series

# 20/20 Ageing: A Life Course Approach to Vision Health

*Translating Evidence for the Decade of Healthy Ageing*



**05** June  
2019



**12:00 - 1:00**  
Eastern Daylight Time

**Register Now**



**Ms Louise Gillis**  
President  
Canadian Council of the Blind



**Mr Thomas Simpson**  
Head, Public Affairs and  
Central Lead, Advocacy,  
Canadian National  
Institute for the Blind



**Moderated by:**  
**Mr Greg Shaw**  
Director of International and  
Corporate Relations  
International Federation on Ageing

Canadian Council of the Blind



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CANADIAN COUNCIL  
OF THE BLIND



LE CONSEIL CANADIEN  
DES AVEUGLES

## **Healthy Vision and Ageism Globally: The role of the Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB)**

Presentation by Louise Gillis, RN, BScN  
President of CCB



# Canadian Council of the Blind

## *Is the Voice of the Blind in Canada™*

- Based on belief in **ABILITY, not disability** Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB) is a vibrant network of active members across Canada. Each chapter is unique to its geographic area and engages in a variety of social and recreational activities based on the particular interests of their local members.

### LACK OF SIGHT IS NOT A LACK OF VISION

- The Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB) is the largest membership based organization in Canada. Our mission is: To work together as a community of peers that acts to improve the individual and community quality of life of people who are blind, deaf-blind, or living with low vision.
- The Global Coalition on Aging, in December 2018, held a “Life Course on Healthy Vision” roundtable which resulted in a report working toward solutions to ensure aging is a path to health, productivity, and economic growth.



# Ageing and Vision Health

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- The ageing of the global population is one of the mega-trends defining the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched ambitious new initiatives, the upcoming “Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030



# The Global Impact of Visual Impairment

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- Severe visual impairment and vision loss are widespread, largely avoidable, and poised to skyrocket if we fail to motivate action on eye health for older adults.
- It is expected that the number of the population in Europe, Asia, North America, and Australia will triple by 2050.



# Myths Surrounding Vision Loss



- In a recent survey conducted by CCB vision loss was the biggest fear among Canadians over hearing and other senses. This was also noted in a USA study
- This acute fear has not made a significant impact on an increase in health care dollars



# Leading Causes of Vision Loss

**A full 80% of visual impairment and vision loss is considered avoidable (1)**

- AMD as we know is a serious disease which is treatable with early diagnosis and continuous care and therefore is a major contributor to the global burden of avoidable vision loss.
- Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness. Those most at risk of developing glaucoma are also the least likely to continue treatment, lending additional complexity and urgency to the need for solutions. **(2)**.
- It is evident that lack of early investment in eye health leads to higher costs later for health systems, elder care systems, and for society. It is now that we need to take action to make vision loss a high priority on the public health and economic policy agendas.
- The CCB has been promoting eye care through our Mobile Eye Clinic (MEC), public education such as sessions in schools, community groups and various displays.



# Vision Loss and Functional Ability

- Vision and fall prevention go hand in hand
- The cost of vision loss will continue to increase drastically if we do not change the way it is currently dealt with by health care dollars



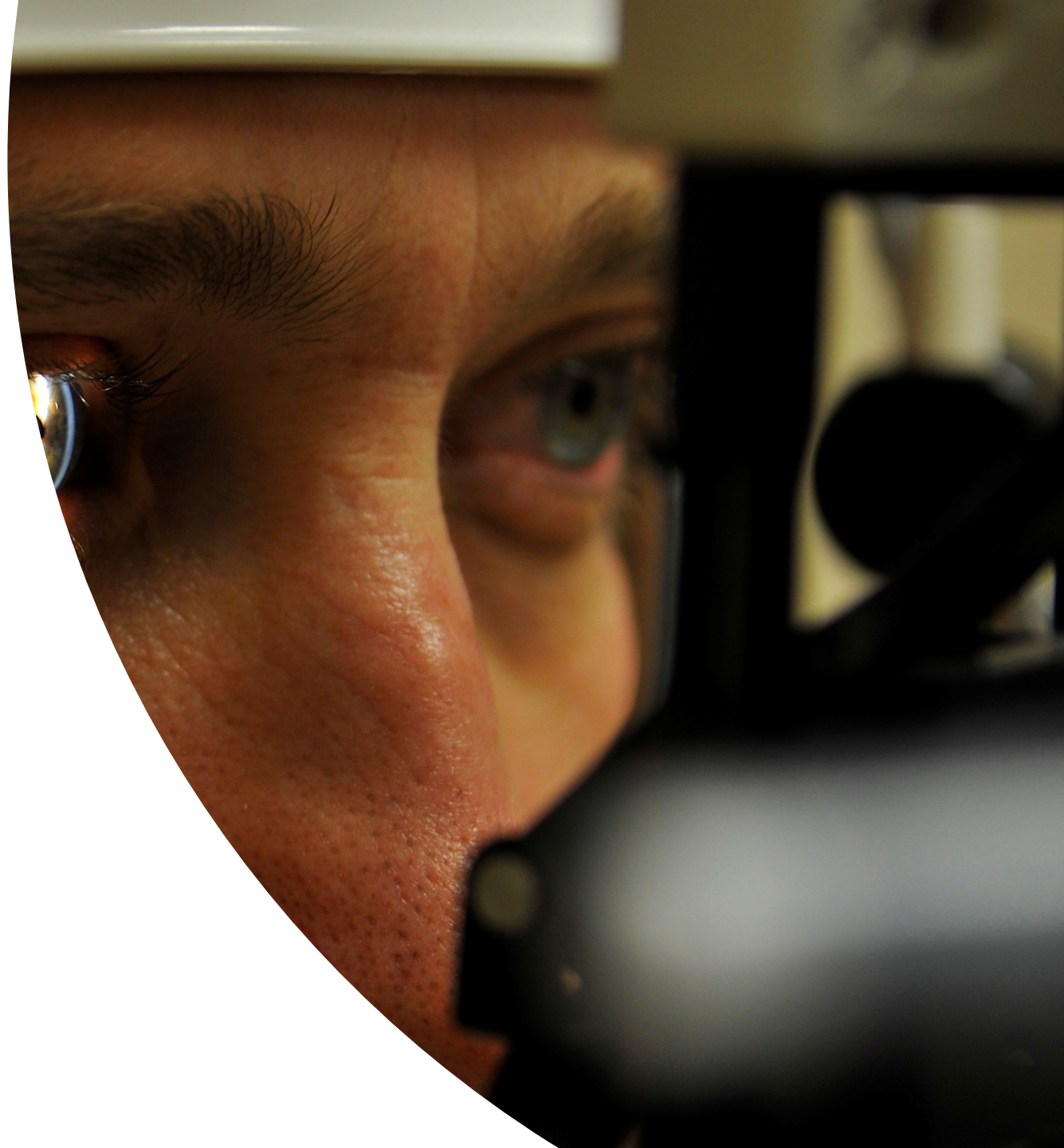
# Vision Health Initiatives led by the CCB

- Throughout August 2015, the Canadian Council of the Blind's Mobile Eye Clinic (MEC) brought comprehensive OHIP-covered eye exams to Aging in Place buildings in Ottawa, Ontario. This program continues today.
- When we talk about the burden on caregivers it is often the time away from work, lost wages, or inability to cope due to raising a young family.
- This is where CCB does provide education. One of the major campaigns is **Eye See You** in conjunction with the International Federation on Ageing (IFA).

# Barriers to Prioritizing Vision Health

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- Attitude
- Structure
- Treatment Burdens
- Strained Capacity
- Policies





# Challenges to Vision Health

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- The challenges to meaningful action on eye health are surmountable, but overcoming them will require coordinated and sustained efforts across sectors and stakeholders.

**We have an opportunity for action!**

- The World Health Organization (WHO) is preparing to release its first World Report on Vision in 2019 and to launch the Decade of Healthy Ageing in 2020



# Five Pillars for Success

- Access & Capacity
- Financing
- Research
- Education
- Workplace







# Conclusion

- A life course of healthy vision is possible and within reach. Momentum is growing across the public, non-governmental, and private sectors and within WHO member states to prioritize eye health.
- The **Canadian Council of the Blind** works to improve the quality of life for persons with vision loss through awareness, peer mentoring, socializing, sports, advocacy, health promotion and illness prevention.



# Basic Facts About the CCB

- **Founded:** in 1944 by blind Canadian war veterans and schools of the blind
- **Incorporated:** May 10, 1950 by Letters Patent
- **Charitable Registration #:** 11921 8899 RR0001
- **CCB National Office:** 20 James Street, Suite 100, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 0T6
- **Phone:** (613) 567-0311

# References

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# Canadian Patient Charter for Vision Care

(Rights and Responsibilities)

## Preamble

With an estimated 5.5 million Canadians living with a vision-threatening eye condition, of whom nearly 500,000 already are blind or partially sighted, vision care is an essential component of Canada's health care system.

Patients have a right to be active and informed partners in their own vision care. The Canadian Charter of Vision Care Rights and Responsibilities outlines the rights and responsibilities of patients and professionals in ensuring the highest standard of vision care is met across the country.

## Prevention of vision loss

### Patients have a right to:

- Receive timely access to the right eye health or vision care professional (ophthalmologist, optometrist or optician) at the right time;
- Be provided with credible information about how to maintain good vision health and recognize the signs of eye disease or vision loss and the importance of eye safety.

### Patients have a responsibility to:

- Take steps to prevent vision loss wherever possible by making healthy lifestyle choices and receiving regular eye examinations per evidence-based guidelines;
- Monitor their vision and report any changes to their ophthalmologist, optometrist or optician as soon as they are noticed.

## Inclusive, accessible and coordinated care

### Patients have a right to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect in every interaction relating to their eye health;
- Be an active partner in decision-making at every stage of their vision care experience;
- Expect a collaborative approach to care that brings together ophthalmologists, optometrists and opticians and all other relevant disciplines to create a tailored, holistic plan;
- An open and inclusive care environment that takes into account the accessibility needs of people with vision loss including the formats in which information is made available;

- Have complete access to their medical records on request, with assurance their personal information will be protected from unauthorized disclosure.

### Patients have a responsibility to:

- Communicate openly and honestly with their ophthalmologist, optometrist, optician, or family physician if they do not understand their vision care plan;
- Apprise their ophthalmologist, optometrist, optician or family physician of accessibility needs.

## Diagnosis and treatment

### Patients have a right to:

- Receive an optimum standard of care and a timely and accurate diagnosis of their eye condition by the most appropriate professional; as well as all relevant information about the eye condition, its potential impact on their vision and resources that can assist with the adjustment to vision loss, including rehabilitation therapy and mental health support;
- Make an informed consent to treatment, which includes being provided with the necessary information about potential benefits, side-effects and approved alternatives;
- Receive appropriate follow-up care and support.

### Patients have a responsibility to:

- Communicate honestly with their ophthalmologist, optometrist, optician or family physician about their vision health, including visual challenges, so that the best and most appropriate care can be provided;
- To follow the prescribed treatment and self-care instructions or express concerns if they are unable to comply.

## Comprehensive vision rehabilitation

### Patients have a right to:

- Receive a timely referral and access to the full spectrum of care in their journey through vision loss, from an ophthalmologist's or optometrist's initial assessment to the rehabilitation professional's delivery of intensive therapy, including any required specialized training to allow them to live safely, independently and with dignity;

- Collaborate with rehabilitation professionals in the development of personalized post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy.

### Patients have a responsibility to:

- Participate fully in therapeutic sessions and reinforce learned skills through ongoing practice;
- Provide a safe working environment for vision rehabilitation therapists providing training in the home.

## Professional rights and responsibilities

### Professionals involved in the clinical and/or rehabilitative care of a patient have the right to:

- Safe working conditions whether providing care in clinical or community-based settings;
- Resist any influence /interference that could undermine their professional integrity;
- Contribute to the advancement of the eye care and/or vision rehabilitation professions.

### Professionals have the responsibility to:

- Treat patients with dignity, respect and a supportive approach;
- Provide information and care in a manner that is accessible to people with vision loss, making adaptations where needed;
- Improve models of integrated vision care to create a more seamless patient experience;
- Actively engage patients and one another to provide high-quality, personalized and coordinated approaches to care;
- Learn and apply evidence-based best practices in the provision of optimal care and/or therapy;
- Provide timely referrals for treatments and therapies, including comprehensive vision rehabilitation therapy where the patient has vision loss that places at risk their safety, mobility and/or independence.



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# Life After Sight Loss

Thomas Simpson

# Sight Loss in Canada

- According to the 2017 Canada Survey on Disability, 37.8% of Canadians aged 65 and older have at least one disability.
- The prevalence of disability increases with age.
- Seniors are almost twice as likely to have a disability as those of working age.
- The number of Canadians with sight loss is now 1.5 million.
- 9.7% of the Canadian population is 65 or older and lives with some form of sight loss.
- This number will continue to grow.



# About CNIB

- Celebrating 100 years in 2018, the CNIB Foundation is a non-profit organization driven to change what it is to be blind today.
- We deliver innovative programs and powerful advocacy that empower people impacted by blindness to live their dreams and tear down barriers to inclusion.
- What is CNIB doing?
- When we asked more than 4,000 Canadians impacted by blindness what they want from life and how CNIB can help, they told us, quite simply: “We want it all.”

# Boost Participation in the World of Work

- We'll fuel individual's ambition and champion their equal participation in the world of work.
- How we'll do it
  - Enhancing our rehabilitation services to focus on the skills needed for job readiness and retention
  - Cultivating a new generation of savvy, successful blind entrepreneurs
  - Campaigning for more inclusive workplaces – and leading the way as Canada's most accessible employer

# Unleash the Power of Technology

- We'll fight to connect people of all ages with the cutting-edge technology they need and want, and help them build the skills to capitalize on its potential.
- What are we doing?
  - Eliminating financial barriers to technology with new financing and grant programs
  - Advocating to expand and modernize government funding programs for assistive devices
  - Developing innovative apps, tools and training that put the latest tech knowledge at people's fingertips



# Driving Achievement and Equality

- We'll embolden people who are blind or partially sighted to lead independent, active lives and chase their dreams – and we'll smash the stigma and barriers that stand in their way.
- How we'll do it
  - Transforming our communities into beacons of accessibility and inclusion, where people can live, work and play without barriers
  - Raising our voices relentlessly to challenge stigma and support equal rights
  - Advocate!

# Other Programs

- We offer many programs to help Canadians with sight loss gain the independence and support they need:
- Vision Mate
- Peer Support
- CNIB Guide Dogs
- Braille and Literacy
- CNIB Book Club
- And many more ...

Thank You!





**Vision loss is **not**  
an inevitable part  
of ageing.**

Join the conversation on innovations in long-term care, maximizing senses like vision and hearing, and ensuring brain and cognitive health at the 15th Global Conference on Ageing, because...

**Rights  
Matter**

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