

TITLE: Barriers to eye care among participants of a mobile eye clinic

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STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Eye care access Screening Prevention Outreach Mobile Clinic

ABSTRACT: Problem statement: Barriers to health care access present critical challenges to improving eye health that are dynamic and complex, yet few studies have been able to quantitatively measure the impact of these barriers. Aim: This study aims to determine the association between initial barriers to seeking care and time since last eye exam (TLEE) utilizing a mobile screening clinic that provides comprehensive eye exams in Oregon. Approach: Participants (N=1699) from screenings conducted between 2014 and 2016 completed a demographic and subjective visual acuity questionnaire, and received a comprehensive dilated eye exam. Data regarding demographic information, subjective visual acuity, and measured visual acuity were analyzed with respect to TLEE and compared to the American Academy of Ophthalmology recommendations for preventive eye health exams. Results: A large percentage of Hispanic (34.9%,) and uninsured (28.6%) participants had no previous eye exam. Although 96.4% of Caucasians had a previous eye exam, 40.2% have not had an eye exam in 4 or more years. Diabetic participants had eye exams less frequently than the annual screenings recommended by the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Conclusions: Our results indicate that barriers to eye care must be assessed to gain an accurate understanding of the challenges that specific subpopulations face in accessing preventive care. Public Health Implications: Furthermore, it is especially important to improve eye care access for diabetic individuals to detect and treat diabetic retinopathy in a timely manner.

OBJECTIVE(S): Discuss preventive eye exam recommendations and access to eye care.