Importance of Vision and Eye Health

- **7.1 million** people in the U.S. are visually impaired or legally blind.

- Vision impairment is one of the 10 most prevalent disabilities in U.S.

- Economic cost of vision loss was **$134 billion** in 2017 in the U.S.

- Early detection and treatment of eye diseases can prevent vision loss.

“In public health, we can’t do anything without surveillance. That’s where public health begins.”

— David Satcher, MD, PhD, U.S. Surgeon General, 1998–2002

Public Health Surveillance

Public Health Surveillance

- Magnitude of the problem (prevalence and trends)
- Identifies disparities
- Identifies risk factors and social determinants of health
- Informs resource allocation
- Aids in the development of interventions and policies
Vision and Eye Health Surveillance in the U.S.

- Surveillance of vision and eye health has been limited
  - Local population-based studies
  - Self-reported vision impairment from national surveys
  - Examination-based data from 2005–2008 NHANES

- Prior to 2018, there was no coordinated, comprehensive surveillance system for vision and eye health
“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention should develop a coordinated surveillance system for eye and vision health in the United States.”
Data Highlights

American Community Survey

- Prevalence of self-reported blindness and difficulty seeing

Medicare Claims

- Racial disparities in eye examination rates

IRIS® Registry

- Prevalence of diagnosed glaucoma
CDC’s Surveillance of Vision and Eye Health in the U.S.

- Assesses the epidemiology of vision loss and eye diseases at the national, state, and county level
- Monitors trends over time
- Provides data to inform public health priorities and resource allocation
- Evaluates the impact of public health programs
“At present at least 2.2 billion people around the world have a vision impairment, of whom at least 1 billion have a vision impairment that could have been prevented or is yet to be addressed.”

https://www.who.int/publications-detail-redirect/9789241516570
Vision Health for Everyone Resolution

“Calls upon Member States to ensure access to eye care services for their population and to mobilize the necessary resources and support in this regard, in order to contribute to global efforts to reach, by 2030, at least 1.1 billion people who have a vision impairment and currently do not have access to the eye care services that they need.”

https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/310