

Primary Care/Brain Injury & Low Vision Rehabilitation Residency

This Residency's goal is instilling advanced competency in Primary Care, Vision Rehabilitation and Brain Injury through education, scholarship, and patient care.

- **Program Sites:** Minneapolis Veteran Affairs Health Care System
- **Residency Coordinator:** Grace Brown, OD, FAAO – Grace.BrownBissonnette@va.gov
- **Residency Director:** Janice Jurkus, OD, MBA
- **Number of Positions:** 2
- **Program Dates:** The residency is a 52-week program beginning July 1 and ending June 30.
- **ORMatch:** 19933

Mission Statement

The mission of this residency program is to provide comprehensive educational and clinical training in the delivery of highest quality and compassionate Primary Eye Care, Brain Injury and Vision Rehabilitation services in a hospital based environment. This program helps motivated residents improve and develop into doctors who are confident, independent, and continually involved in their self-improvement and expansion of their knowledge base. The residents develop their clinical decision making skills through the understanding and application of evidence based medicine and relay this information to their patients.

Program Description

The Minneapolis VA optometry residency program aims to provide the resident doctor with comprehensive education and clinical training in primary care optometry. Expanding your knowledge of ocular disease at the Minneapolis VA is a mix of didactic education including direct clinical care, grand rounds presentations and self-study. This residency helps you organize the material you learned in optometry school so that it is readily available to assist you in providing quality and efficient patient care. Residents diagnose and manage ocular and systemic conditions. These include but are not limited to: glaucoma, retina pathology, macular disease, cataracts, and diabetic eye disease.

The Minneapolis VA also offers a unique education in low vision and brain injury. There is a wide range of etiologies for vision loss, and the VA has many resources to help with the challenges that these patients encounter on a daily basis. These resources include a VA staff low vision therapist, living skills therapist, and orientation and mobility therapist. Residents also have the opportunity to visit the Hines Blind Rehabilitation Center in Chicago, Illinois when they travel to Illinois College of Optometry in Chicago for their grand rounds presentations.

As a resident at the Minneapolis VA, you encounter veterans with mild to profound vision loss. This helps you overcome any apprehensions you have about working with disabled veterans.

The residents are introduced to many solutions to help the veterans with their needs including referrals to other health care professionals. The residents also benefit from studying low vision because it enhances their knowledge about the eye disease causing the patient to be partially sighted. This allows the resident to educate the patient and make an appropriate referral whether or not the resident decides to incorporate low vision into their practice after residency. The staff at the Minneapolis VA understands that everyone’s low vision experiences may differ and are readily available to assist in your clinical decision making and patient care.

The polytrauma portion of the residency program involves direct care with patients who have sustained injury to more than two organ systems. For example, this may be from a traumatic brain injury or a cerebrovascular accident. This often results in cognitive, psychological, physical, and functional deficits. The polytrauma team at the Minneapolis VA often consists of neurology, speech language pathology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, vision therapy, and optometry/ophthalmology. The residents work closely with the vision therapist to develop a care plan for these patients.

Majority of your education is influenced by the questions you ask and the patients you examine. You will gain the experience needed to be an independent doctor through acquiring the necessary information and managing these patients appropriately. The optometry staff at the Minneapolis VA strives to support you in your goal to provide the best care for the patients through the use of evidence based medicine.

Program Design

The residency provides advanced clinical training and has opportunities for educational activities and didactic learning to cultivate understanding and proficiency in providing full-scope primary eye care and tertiary vision rehabilitative care.

The resident rotates weekly between the primary care, low vision, and traumatic brain injury clinics. He/she is required to examine a minimum of 900 primary care patients, 90 low vision patients, and 80 poly-trauma patients in clinic during the course of the residency year although the number of primary care encounters historically has been double of what is listed above. The resident participates in the following activities (times are weekly averages and subject to change):

Week 1	Week 2
Primary Care: 28 hours	Primary Care: 23 hours
Low Vision: 8 hours	Brain Injury/Vision Rehabilitation: 8 hours
Educational rounds: 4 hours	Low Vision: 5 hours
Hospital clinic (observation/interaction): occasional	Educational rounds: 4 hours
Additional Self-Study	Hospital clinic (observation/interaction): occasional
	Additional Self-Study

Educational Conferences

The resident is required to present a case at grand rounds to Illinois College of Optometry faculty and students. It is encouraged that the resident presents a clinical poster at a local, national, or regional optometric meeting during residency. The resident participates in weekly optometric grand rounds and presents at various times throughout the year to critically review current ophthalmic literature and topics. He/she also attends monthly conferences with staff ophthalmologists and weekly medicine grand rounds when applicable to the optometric field.

About Minneapolis VA Health Care System

Minneapolis VA Health Care System (VAHCS) is a teaching hospital providing a full range of patient care services with state-of-the-art technology, as well as education and research. Comprehensive health care is provided through primary care, tertiary care and long-term care in areas of medicine, surgery, psychiatry, physical medicine and rehabilitation, neurology, oncology, dentistry, geriatrics and extended care.

Salary

Determined by central offices in Washington, D.C. based on locality, currently \$33,964 per year

Benefits

- **Health:** Health insurance is available.
- **Holidays:** All federal holidays are observed. (Martin Luther King, Jr's birthday, Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day)
- **Educational Travel:** "Authorized absence" is granted for attendance at the American Academy of Optometry meeting or an equivalent national professional meeting.
- **Vacation/Sick Leave:** Residents accrue four hours of "annual leave" (vacation) and sick leave per pay period which is every other week. Annual leave must be taken at times that would not interfere with patient care or educational activities. No vacation leave is granted during the last month of the program in June.
- **Professional Liability Insurance:** Liability coverage is provided for care of veterans and nonveteran employees referred by Administrative Medicine for eye care. Liability coverage does not include care provided through "moonlighting."
- **Information Resources:** The VA has numerous ophthalmic, primary care, and healthcare specialty online journal and textbook subscriptions as well as a medical library that can obtain print copies of articles by request. Full ICO library access is also granted to residents.

Criteria for Completion

The Resident is required to successfully complete all clinical assignments and to write an original thesis paper of publishable quality over the course of the year.

Completion of Acknowledgment

A certificate is presented upon successful completion of the program.

For more information

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