

Resolution No. 2006-A-1

Vision Benefit Plan Position Statement

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Optometric Association (POA) is concerned about the negative impact that the policies of certain vision benefit plans have on the quality, access, and continuity of eye care to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and

WHEREAS, some vision benefit plans have a policy of creating different levels of provider participation, and

WHEREAS, this creates competitive disparity by forcing some independent providers to use the vision benefit plan laboratories and products while some providers and large groups are permitted to use their own laboratories and products which results in limited patient choice of products and impacts timeliness of service, and

WHEREAS, some vision benefit plan's ophthalmic material contracts mandate that participating providers order ophthalmic materials from suppliers owned or contracted by the vision benefit plan limiting choice, quality and competition, and

WHEREAS, this results in an adverse economic impact on other ophthalmic materials suppliers including those who previously provided products and services to the above mentioned vision benefit plan providers, and

WHEREAS, some vision benefit plans have a policy of entering into contracts with differing levels of reimbursement to providers for the same services and products creating a reimbursement disparity, and

WHEREAS, some vision benefit plans deny participation in medical plans to those providers who do not participate in their respective vision plans, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that it is the intent of the POA to impress on vision care plans identified above that their policies affect quality, access and continuity of eye care in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania thereby potentially compromising the visual welfare of the public, and be it further

RESOLVED that all vision benefit plans in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania should provide the following:

- A. freedom of choice for patients to select a provider;
- B. provider's freedom of choice to choose materials, fabrication and source of products to best serve their patients;
- C. a uniform provider contract to provide fair and equitable reimbursement;
- D. provider's freedom of choice to choose medical and/or vision plans without covenants requiring or denying participation in other plans;

and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the POA urges enactment of legislation requiring vision benefit plans to comply with the above requirements.

Adopted by
POA House of Delegates
June 10, 2006
Hershey Lodge
Hershey, PA