



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF VISION CARE PLANS



NEWS RELEASE

New eye-opening evidence links vision benefits to healthier vision behavior

“Any remaining questions about whether vision benefits are a good consumer value or a smart investment for employers have been answered.”

– National Association of Vision Care Plans

Media Contact: Chris McNamara

P: (703) 660-9536 M: (202) 256-9825

Mcnamara1124@gmail.com

Louisville, Kentucky, Sept. 27, 2016 – As millions of Americans prepare for annual benefit open enrollment, vision care plans are calling attention to the correlation between vision benefits and healthy eye care habits. Results of the most extensive, independent review of existing data show vision benefits are a good consumer value and encourage meaningful health habits.

“The correlation between having a vision benefit and good eye health habits has never been clearer,” said Julian Roberts, National Association of Vision Care Plans (NAVCP) Executive Director. “More than 87 percent of Americans with a vision benefit intend to get an eye exam within the next 12 months compared to only 67 percent of those without a vision benefit. Once they have the exam, 67 percent of those with a benefit will get new eyewear compared to only 34 percent of those without a benefit.”

The independent analysis was conducted by focalCenter in June 2016. Data in the report was derived from a continuous 16-year consumer study with a sample size that includes 110,000 U.S. residents, 18 years and older. Respondents are surveyed regarding their eyewear purchasing and wearing habits including: eye exams, prescription (Rx) lenses, frames, contact lenses, exam/purchasing frequency, managed vision care, and refractive surgery.

Why are vision benefits the driver of healthy eye care habits? According to Roberts, it comes down to cost.

more



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF VISION CARE PLANS



“The top reason Americans without vision benefits do not get an eye exam or purchase prescription eyewear is cost,” said Roberts. “Vision premiums, especially for employer-sponsored plans, are very reasonable and help members to afford the quality care they want for themselves and their families. Any questions about whether vision benefits are a good consumer value or a smart investment for employers have been answered.”

The NAVCP report comes after enrollment in vision benefits during the past five years increased nearly 20 percent, bringing the number of Americans who have vision benefits to more than 50% of the population. Moreover, utilization reports collected by the NAVCP from the nation’s largest vision plans show that more than 8 out of 10 employers now offer a vision benefit as part of a standard benefit package. The Vision Council reports that 75 percent of all patients who receive an eye exam are enrolled in a vision plan, indicating the strong influence vision benefits play in motivating Americans to seek regular vision care.

“The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that depending on the size of the employer’s payroll, health insurance can represent between 6.4 and 8.9 percent of the average worker’s total compensation,” said Roberts. “Employers and everyday Americans intuitively know vision benefits are a good idea, but I think it’s important for people who invest in vision benefits to know that their decision is making quality vision care affordable and leading to better, more routine eye care.”

Optometric health experts agree that regular eye exams ensure changes in vision are detected and the patient has an accurate prescription. Even small changes in vision can impact productivity, especially in an economy where the use of digital screens and other vision-dependent tasks are commonplace. Optometrists are also in the unique position to catch the early signs of eye disease and serious medical conditions like diabetes, hypertension and cholesterol. Since Americans are four times more likely to get an eye exam than a physical, optometrists can alert patients sooner to health risks beyond their vision.

###

The National Association of Vision Care Plans (NAVCP) is the voice for the nation’s leading managed vision care plans and benefit companies. In addition, the organization focuses on following and reporting on managed vision care issues and trends to its member organizations.