New Report From Prevent Blindness America Reveals Significant Increase in Costs of Vision-Related Diseases

Annual Cost of Eye and Vision Disorders in Texas Estimated to be $4.9 Billion

Houston, TX (June 18, 2013) – Vision-related diseases are costing patients, insurance companies and the U.S. government more than ever before. And according to the new report commissioned by Prevent Blindness America (PBA) from researchers at the University of Chicago, “Cost of Vision Problems: The Economic Burden of Vision Loss and Eye Disorders in the United States,” the financial burden will continue to grow due to increasing healthcare costs and an aging population. The direct impact on the state of Texas is 4.9 billion.

Vision-related diseases are among the costliest health problems to the U.S. economy, far greater than indicated in earlier reports and, at $139 billion per year (based on the 2011 US population and in 2013 dollars), are more costly than three of the top seven major chronic diseases in the United States today.

Data from the 2013 Economic Burden of Vision Loss and Eye Disorders Report also includes:

- A national breakdown of estimated costs of eye disorders and vision loss from the perspective of three payers: government ($47.4 billion), private insurance ($20.8 billion in direct medical costs and $1.3 billion for long term care) and patients and their families ($71.6 billion)
- An economic burden breakdown of vision-related disease by state and age
- Estimates of costs associated with vision loss on disability and quality of life

The data provided in the new report serves as an update to the landmark 2007 PBA report and provides a much more comprehensive view of the economic challenges associated with vision problems. In addition to a revised methodology, the new report includes cost data across the age spectrum (including children for the first time), and considers all disorders related to the eye.

An overview of the new report will be presented today at the second annual Prevent Blindness America “Focus on Eye Health National Summit” taking place at the Washington Marriott at Metro Center in Washington D.C. from 8 am to 3 pm. The Summit will also feature a range of presentations focusing on topics including vision benefits for children, access to care for those with low vision, and systems of care for vision for children and adults.
“We feel that we now have a true estimate of the current and growing costs of eye disease in this country and our state. Armed with that information, we can address the need for increased prevention, research and healthcare options,” said Debbie Goss, President and CEO of Prevent Blindness Texas. “It is important that people understand that eye disease is among the most expensive conditions in our country, with over half the cost currently being assumed by aging patients and their families.”

For more information about the Prevent Blindness America Cost of Vision report or other vision-related topics, please visit www.preventblindnesstexas.org or call 1-888-98-SIGHT.

About Prevent Blindness Texas
Founded in 1956, Prevent Blindness is the state’s leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness Texas touches the lives of thousands of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the Texas public. Through a network of regional offices and volunteers, we are committed to eliminating preventable blindness in Texas. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-888-98-SIGHT or visit us on our website, Facebook, Twitter, or blog.

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