



## **BENEFITS OF ACCESS to Primary Eye Care Professionals (Doctors of Optometry)**

Excerpted from *Eye Health & Accountable Care*, a white paper from SCIO Health Analytics based on research commissioned by the American Optometric Association.

### **A Patient's Right – Getting the RIGHT CARE in the RIGHT PLACE at the RIGHT TIME**

By including eye care services delivered by optometrists as a primary benefit in health plans, and by encouraging members/patients to visit their optometrist for medical eye care as a compelling alternative to an Emergency Room, health plans could realize significant savings in total spending for eye care. Integration of eye care services into health plans, whether for ocular wellness, preventive care, medical/emergency eye care, or chronic care provides a practical solution for payers, purchasers and patients and delivers value on three primary levels:

- 1. Improved access to eye care services;**
- 2. Appropriate initial intervention and continuity of care;**
- 3. Accurate diagnosis and treatment.**

The inclusion of primary eye care professionals in an integrated system that delivers quality care at the first point of contact can mitigate extraneous costs for the health system and for patients. Inappropriate patient visits to Emergency Rooms and Primary Care Physicians and duplicative follow-up visits to eye care professionals for obtaining correct diagnoses and correcting inappropriate prescriptive medications accounted for a total of **18.1 cents PMPM** in extraneous costs that could have been avoided with proper education and the full integration of optometric care into the healthcare system.

*To receive a copy of the published white paper and for more information about the benefits of integrating professional optometric services, please contact the **American Optometric Association's Third Party Center at [TPC@AOA.org](mailto:TPC@AOA.org)**.*