



## **Introduction to the Program**

On June 7, 2008, Pennsylvania optometry, through its House of Delegates, made a commitment to provide expedient, comprehensive eye care to diabetic patients. The resolution called for the association to “develop and implement a statewide program to ensure the provision of timely optometric care to diabetic patients and to communicate findings to the other members of the diabetic patient’s health care team.” A task force was immediately assembled, and the “Pennsylvania Diabetic Eye Health Alliance” began to take shape.

We are pleased to announce that on February 22, 2009, the Pennsylvania Diabetic Eye Health Alliance was launched in conjunction with POA’s one-day “Inter-professional Management of Your Diabetic Patient” seminar in Hershey.

Attendees to the seminar received The Pennsylvania Diabetic Eye Health Alliance welcome kit, which includes an overview of the program, objectives, POA’s new Diabetic Primer, inter-professional communications tools, and PQRI forms and documentation.

The Pennsylvania Diabetes Eye Health Alliance is a voluntary program in which Pennsylvania optometrists are asked to formalize their commitment to our mission and objectives by signing a letter of agreement. Knowing that Pennsylvania optometrists are already providing excellent care to diabetic patients, it is our hope that all members will embrace the additional components of this program that solidify optometry’s role as primary eye care providers.

While this program is not currently designed to generate direct referrals, it will result in a list of optometrists who have committed to a certain standard of care that includes dilated fundus exams, seeing diabetic patients expediently, and communicating exam results to the patient’s primary care provider and other members of the health care team as appropriate. This list will be provided to third party payers to document optometry’s commitment to providing the highest level of care to diabetic patients, and will help optometry continue to build bridges and partnerships with third party payers and others in the health care delivery system.

If you have any questions about the Pennsylvania Diabetic Eye Health Alliance or how to become a part of this exciting initiative, please contact the POA office at (717) 233-6455.

*- POA Diabetes Task Force*