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

- Annual Cost of Eye and Vision Disorders Estimated to be \$139 Billion, Double Previous Data -

CHICAGO (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.

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 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 a.m. - 3 p.m. 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. Armed with that information, we can address the need for increased prevention, research and healthcare options,” said Hugh R. Parry, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness America. “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, Focus on Eye Health: A National Summit, or other vision-related topics, please visit preventblindness.org or call (800) 331-2020.

About Prevent Blindness America

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation'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 America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates and regional offices, Prevent Blindness America is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020. Or, visit us on the Web at preventblindness.org or facebook.com/preventblindness.

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