The Vision Academy is an international group of retinal physicians who work together to share existing skills and knowledge and provide collective recommendations on clinical challenges in areas where there is a lack of conclusive evidence in the literature. The Vision Academy is sponsored by Bayer and the views represented in this document do not necessarily reflect those of Bayer.

Dear members,

We hope that this letter finds you well and that you are in good health. We want to express our collective appreciation for the work you continue to do during these difficult times.

We have concluded, following discussions with many of our colleagues around the world, that there is a significant gap in the communication guidance we must send to our patients as preventive measures.

In the current circumstances, patients with age-related macular degeneration and their families feel anxious and worried about attending eye clinics for future appointments. Patients face tough times that require them to balance the need to attend scheduled appointments to maintain their vision with the fear of exposure to the virus.

There is no doubt that the health and safety of our patients is our top priority, but we must balance this with the risk of sudden loss of vision when left untreated due to age-related macular degeneration. Among the important aspects to be considered are discontinuing periodic treatment during this pandemic, strict medical services, and social distancing measures.

As a first step, it may help to alleviate these concerns by providing an explanation and clarification of the infection prevention protocols and preventive measures adopted by each clinic, including the expected actions before and during and after the visit.

A rapid assessment of eye care practices globally revealed a lack of consistent guidance or easily available information for doctors to share with their patients in the context of the new coronavirus.

In Vision Academy, with support from Bayer, we have prepared a model letter “Dear patient and family” in the context of the new coronavirus. It can be customized; it can be adapted to your local context and used as a proactive tool to be sent by email or text message to your patients before your appointment.

You can add to or remove some parts as you see fit, and change it to fit your local regulations and standards. This model is intended to provide a simple starting point for your specific letter.

Please consider adding the information you believe is most appropriate according to your local regulations and guidelines.

For visually impaired patients, you may also consider increasing font size as appropriate.

We hope that this model will be helpful and we wish you all the best during this period.

Kind regards,

Prof. Jean-François Korobelnik
Co-chair, Vision Academy Steering Committee
Chair, Real World Evidence Steering Committee

Prof. Anat Loewenstein
Co-chair, Vision Academy Steering Committee
Chair, nAMD Barometer Leadership Coalition
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Prof. Tariq Aslam
Consultant Ophthalmologist
Manchester Royal Eye Hospital
United Kingdom

Dr. Jane Barratt
Secretary General
International Federation on Ageing
Canada

Prof. Bora Eldem
Professor of Ophthalmology
Hacettepe University
Turkey

Prof. Robert Finger
Professor of Ophthalmic Epidemiology and Retina
Consultant
University of Bonn
Germany

Prof. Richard Gale
Consultant Medical Ophthalmologist and Clinical Director in Ophthalmology
Honorary Visiting Professor
University of York
United Kingdom

Prof. Jean-François Korobelnik
Professor of Ophthalmology in Vitreoretinal Surgery
Head of the Ophthalmology Department University Hospital of Bordeaux
France

Dr. Monica Lövestam-Adrian
Head of the Medical Retina Department
Lund University Hospital
Associate Professor in Ophthalmology
Lund University
Sweden

Prof. Anat Loewenstein
Chair of the Department of Ophthalmology
Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center
Full Professor of Ophthalmology
Vice Dean of the Faculty of Medicine
Tel Aviv University
Israel

Dr. Mali Okada
Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital
Australia

Mr. Nick Parker
International Agency for Prevention of Blindness
United Kingdom

Dr. Francisco Rodriguez
Scientific Director
Fundación Oftalmológica Nacional
Chair of the Department of Ophthalmology
Universidad del Rosario School of Medicine
Colombia

Ms. Michelle Sylvanowicz
Director of Global Advocacy
Bayer
Switzerland

James Talks
Consultant Ophthalmologist
Royal Victoria Infirmary
United Kingdom

Prof. Tien Yin Wong
Medical Director
Singapore National Eye Centre
Provost’s Chair Professor of Ophthalmology
Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School
Chair of the Singapore Eye Research Institute
Singapore

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