INTERSECTION IN BLINDNESS

Intersections of blindness and low vision and the current healthcare environment. Two perspectives.
SPEAKING TODAY

- Millad Bokhouri, MHA
  - Living with blindness

- Rob Harris, Parent
  - President, Colorado Parents of Blind Children, division of NFBCO
    - Growing with blindness
OUR STORY

- Millad went blind in 2 months
- Rob and his wife received no diagnosis, just “your child is blind”.

CROSS SECTIONAL SIMILARITIES
CROSSWALK
ONE EXPERIENCE

Millad’s experience and perseverance and Rob’s quest to find independence.
BLIND NEW WORLD

- Change the Way You See – Perkins School for Blind handout

- 35% don’t believe their community is inclusive for the blind population, while an additional 38% do not even know. Advances in education and technology have greatly outpaced the lagging perceptions the sighted population holds regarding people who are blind. These misperceptions create four barriers to inclusion: discomfort, pity, fear and stigma. It’s time to change the way we see.

- 53% of sighted people say they are not comfortable around people who are blind. That’s because the blind population has been so marginalized we rarely see them.
FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Top 3 causes of blindness
1 Diabetic Retinopathy
2 Glaucoma
3 Macular Degeneration, blue light, being studied?

Impact of unemployment, SSI over lifetime of 60 years vs blind person tax contribution when gainfully employed.

Financial gains which can be realized within the healthcare environment when it comes to appropriate rehabilitation for the blind
If you consider data from CDC, Colorado reports “Percentage of people who are blind or have serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses” as 1.98% or 114,022 all ages in Colorado.

Vision & Eye Health Surveillance System (VEHSS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Vision Health Initiative, [online] [accessed Feb 3, 2020]. URL: https://www.cdc.gov/visionhealth/vehss/project/index.html
ESTABLISHING A SET STANDARD FOR REHAB

- Parental engagement
- Early Intervention
- Healthcare coordination
- IDEA

- Informed Choice
- Active Planning
- Appropriate allocation of resources
- ADA, 504, Title IX, etc.
SOLUTIONS

1. Comprehensive planning
2. Individualized and goal centered structure
3. Measurable outcomes and results driven
4. Experience, ask the consumer
5. Data driven verification and realization
3D DATA

- Rehab
- Consumer
- Employment
DATA

“The specific purpose of the annual Federal Quota Census is to register students in the United States and Outlying Areas who meet the definition of blindness and are therefore eligible for adapted educational materials from APH through the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind.”

Total number of students: 63,357

By reporting agency:

- Reported by state departments of education: 53,155 (83.9%)
- Reported by residential schools for the blind: 4,940 (7.8%)
- Reported by rehabilitation programs: 3,800 (6.0%)
- Reported by multiple disability programs: 1,462 (2.3%)

By primary reading medium:

- Braille readers: 4,963 (7.8%)
- Print readers: 20,460 (32.3%)
- Auditory readers: 6,833 (10.8%)
- Non-readers/Symbolic Readers: 20,718 (32.7%)
- Pre-readers: 10,383 (16.4%)

Prevalence of Visual Disability (2016)

The number of non-institutionalized, male or female, ages sixteen through seventy-five+, all races, regardless of ethnicity, with all education levels in the United States reported to have a visual disability in 2016.

Total (all ages): 7,675,600 (2.4%)

- Total (16 to 75+): 7,208,700 (2.83%)
  - Women: 3,946,300 (3.01%)
  - Men: 3,262,300 (2.65%)
- Age 16 to 64: 4,037,600 (2.0%)
- Age 65 and older: 3,171,100 (6.6%)
Supplemental Security Income (2016)
The number of non-institutionalized persons aged twenty-one to sixty-four years with a visual disability in the United States who received SSI benefits in 2016 was 649,900 (17.1%).

Income and Poverty Status (2016)
The annual earnings and poverty status of non-institutionalized persons aged twenty-one to sixty-four years with a visual disability in the United States in 2016.
Median Annual Earnings: $38,500
Median Annual Household Income: $41,300
Number living below the poverty line: 1,048,600 (27.7%)

Health Insurance Status (2016)
The number of non-institutionalized persons aged twenty-one to sixty-four years with a visual disability in the United States in 2016.
Uninsured: 471,900 (12.4%)
Insured: 3,326,300 (87.6%)
  Employer/Union: 1,351,100 (35.6%)
  Purchased: 449,500 (11.8%)
  Medicare: 801,400 (21.1%)
  Medicaid: 1,486,200 (39.1%)
  Military/VA: 208,800 (5.5%)
  Indian Health Service: 38,700 (1.0%)

Data collected from https://www.nfb.org/resources/blindness-statistics
Questions?

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