

In general, the following factors need attention for human resource development for eye care in most developing countries. Each of these 10 listed factors require further expansion and explanation – beyond the scope of this short article.

1. Development of a uniform 'basic minimum' curriculum for residency training of ophthalmologists.
2. A largenumberoftrainingprogrammes to enhance the skills of already qualified professionals. This will go a long way towards improving the quality of care. India is an example.
3. Design of an appropriate matrix of human resource requirement for the different systems of eye care delivery.
4. Pilot projects should be carried out to find a solution to the complicated issue of under-utilisation and unequal distribution of ophthalmologists.
5. Improve or develop an infrastructure of acceptable standards. Develop guidelines to ensure basic minimum standards.
6. Increase the availability and accessibility of educational materials. Many excellent resources are available such

as those of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, which should be adapted globally with appropriate modifications. The International Resource Centre at the International Centre for Eye Health, London, provides teaching and educational materials, including this Journal. Six other resource centres are being developed over the next 3 years in India (LVPEI), Pakistan, Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria and Colombia.

7. Development of a global network of training centres with exchange of knowledge through electronic conferences, discussions, consultations and educational materials.
8. Development of a large number of training programmes for all categories of eye care professionals.
9. Career advancement mechanisms should be explored and created for all categories of health care workers that will help stabilisation of the eye care workforce.
10. Institution of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms followed by implementation of recommendations.

The funding for these various programmes is a major issue which will need to be addressed by local and national health care authorities.

The aim ultimately should be to train an ophthalmic technician to provide a comprehensive eye care service through a (small) vision centre for each 50,000 population. This certainly demands a major effort to develop training programmes throughout the world.

VISION 2020: The Right to Sight is a plan to intensify global efforts to eliminate needless blindness. Human resource development is vital to the successful execution of this plan. The resources are available but the mechanisms to exploit them should be put in place.

Reference

- 1 Dandona L, Dandona R, Shamanna BR, Naduvilath T J, Rao GN. Developing a Model to Reduce Blindness in India: The International Centre for Advancement of Rural Eye Care. *Indian J Ophthalmol* 1998; **46**: 263–68.

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