



The Healthy Athlete Clinical Director Role: Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes Program

Special Olympics is a global movement of people creating a new world of inclusion and community, where every single person is accepted and welcomed, regardless of ability or disability. We are helping to make the world a better, healthier and more joyful place -- one athlete, one volunteer, one family member at a time.

The Healthy Athletes program is dedicated to providing health services and education to Special Olympics athletes, and changing the way health systems interact with people with intellectual disabilities (ID). Through at no cost health screenings, evaluation of the health status of people with intellectual disability and training for healthcare professionals, Healthy Athletes has become the largest health initiative for people with ID worldwide.

A Clinical Director (CD) is an individual involved in eye care who volunteers to lead a Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes (SOLCIOE) program in a particular region or country. S/he is preferably an optometrist or ophthalmologist that is licensed or otherwise approved by the regulatory system to provide eye care in their region. A clinical director may be identified by a range of methods and needs to be approved by the local Special Olympics program and subsequently the leadership of SOLCIOE. **The Opening Eyes program is a 12 station vision evaluation*. It includes far and near visual acuity, far and near cover test, Lensometry, autorefraction, Tonometry, color vision, stereopsis, external and internal eye health tests (undilated pupils). After the screening a decision is made if refraction is needed. If it is, the athlete is then taken to the refraction area where refractions are conducted by a licensed professional who also provides prescription for glasses.** Current glasses in bad condition will be replaced as well. Through the generosity of our corporate sponsors Essilor (lenses) and Safilo (frames) attractive eye wear is selected**. Athletes who do not need prescription receive sunglasses provided by Safilo.

*NOTE: the Opening Eyes program does not replace a complete eye exam which includes dilation. Athletes and guardians/coaches must be notified of this when present at the screening.

** NOTE: Essilor and Safilo are exclusive sponsors of the Opening Eyes Program. No other brands can be used at Opening Eyes unless otherwise approved by SOI.

The role of an Opening Eyes CD includes, but is not limited to:

1. Training

Attend an official Special Olympics Healthy Athletes "Train the Trainer" seminar consisting of one day didactic program and two day on site SOLCIOE screening program. Minimum of a three year commitment to serve as a volunteer Clinical Director is mandatory before confirmation of training opportunity. A preliminary interview may be conducted with various individuals within Special Olympics program (phone or in person).

2. Logistics

Clinical Directors will work with their local Special Olympics Program to assure that supplies and equipment needed for Opening Eyes events are in place in time as well as working with the program creating a budget that covers supplies/equipment, volunteer credentials and travel, educational material, signage, facilities and other costs needed to conduct an impactful Opening Eyes program. It also covers most of the accommodation, travel costs and other costs in relation to the event. The local Special Olympics program can apply funding at SOI through Healthy Athletes capacity grants.

3. Recruitment of volunteers

Clinical Directors recruit clinical and non clinical volunteers to staff the screening with a sufficient number of licensed eye care professionals. The CD also works together with the SOLCIOE manager, the local SO program and Lions to recruit Lions volunteers to support the screening. Before the event the CD trains the professional and general (usually Lions) on how to conduct screenings and other elements of the event. The CD supervises the screening to assure tests are conducted and recorded according to the SOLCIOE protocols.

4. Obtaining Equipment, Supplies and Athlete Giveaways

Needed supplies, equipment and athlete giveaways may be available to Clinical Directors through donations or loans obtained by networking with local sponsors and health services. Special Olympics also receives donations of goods and equipment that can be made available for events, if local sources are not available. Please contact the SOLCIOE manager or your local program coordinator for the access information for the SOLCIOE online data and supplies management tool.

5. Setting Up and Supervising the Opening Eyes Venue

On the day of the event, the Clinical Director is responsible for supervising the set up and delivery of the tools to deliver the OE program incl. set up of sponsor recognition (banners and roll ups with respective logos) and appropriate training and orientation of the professional and other volunteers. The CD is also the contact person representing the program for any media and interview requests to provide information and background of OE and to advocate for the need of quality eye care for people with special needs.

6. Collecting and Reporting screening data

Screening data collected at each screening station is used to determine the need for referrals and to assess the vision status and needs of individual Special Olympics athletes. This data provides Special Olympics programs and its stakeholders worldwide with factual information to increase awareness and provide more services. Clinical Directors are supervising quality data entry through the Healthy Athletes Software (HAS) during the event to document screening data collected.

7. Program Evaluation

Post event evaluation information is critical information needed by Special Olympics to ensure reporting and constant improvement of the Program. The CD is responsible to collect these information incl. screening numbers, number of prescription and products given out, number of professional and student volunteers as well as number of Lions and non clinical volunteers.

SOLCIOE Clinical Director Background:

- Certificate and current licensure as an eye care professional such as Optometrist or Ophthalmologist.
- A minimum three-year commitment to ensure quality and continuity of the Health Promotion program.
- Refractive error assessment skills including retinoscopy and refraction.
- Ability to dedicate some time to deliver quality care to people who often are unable to advocate for themselves.
- Ideally experience with persons with ID or DD or a pediatric population.
- Attendance at a SOI sponsored Train-the-Trainer session where information and training about Special Olympics, Healthy Athletes, Opening Eyes specific management and clinical requirements are provided. During training Clinical Directors participate in an Opening Eyes screening event.