

# Special Olympics Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes EYE - CONNECT

## WHAT IS TELE-EYE CARE?

*The delivery of eyecare through remote technology allows us to connect a Special Olympic athlete with a licensed eyecare provider. (CD) A consideration to deliver an eyecare connection during and after the pandemic. This is important and feasible for athletes who want to check in with an eyecare provider, but do not need clinical eye exams.*

### What does OE EYE - CONNECT bring to Special Olympics athletes?

OE Eye-Connect is a way to offer a modified Opening Eyes Program to Athletes by utilizing virtual technology. Our goal is to monitor/improve the visual health of the Special Olympic Athlete virtually through preventive eye health education, early detection if vision problems arise and referrals for timely treatment and rehabilitation.

The program includes:

1. **Triaging** of impending eye problems
2. **Follow up** with athletes that have been seen at an Opening Eyes event in the past 24 months.
3. **Eye health promotion** and prevention education on vision and eye health to reduce the risk of eye disease

### What are the goals of integrating OE EYE - CONNECT into our Opening Eyes services?

The OE virtual healthy athletes program includes following benefits for the athletes:

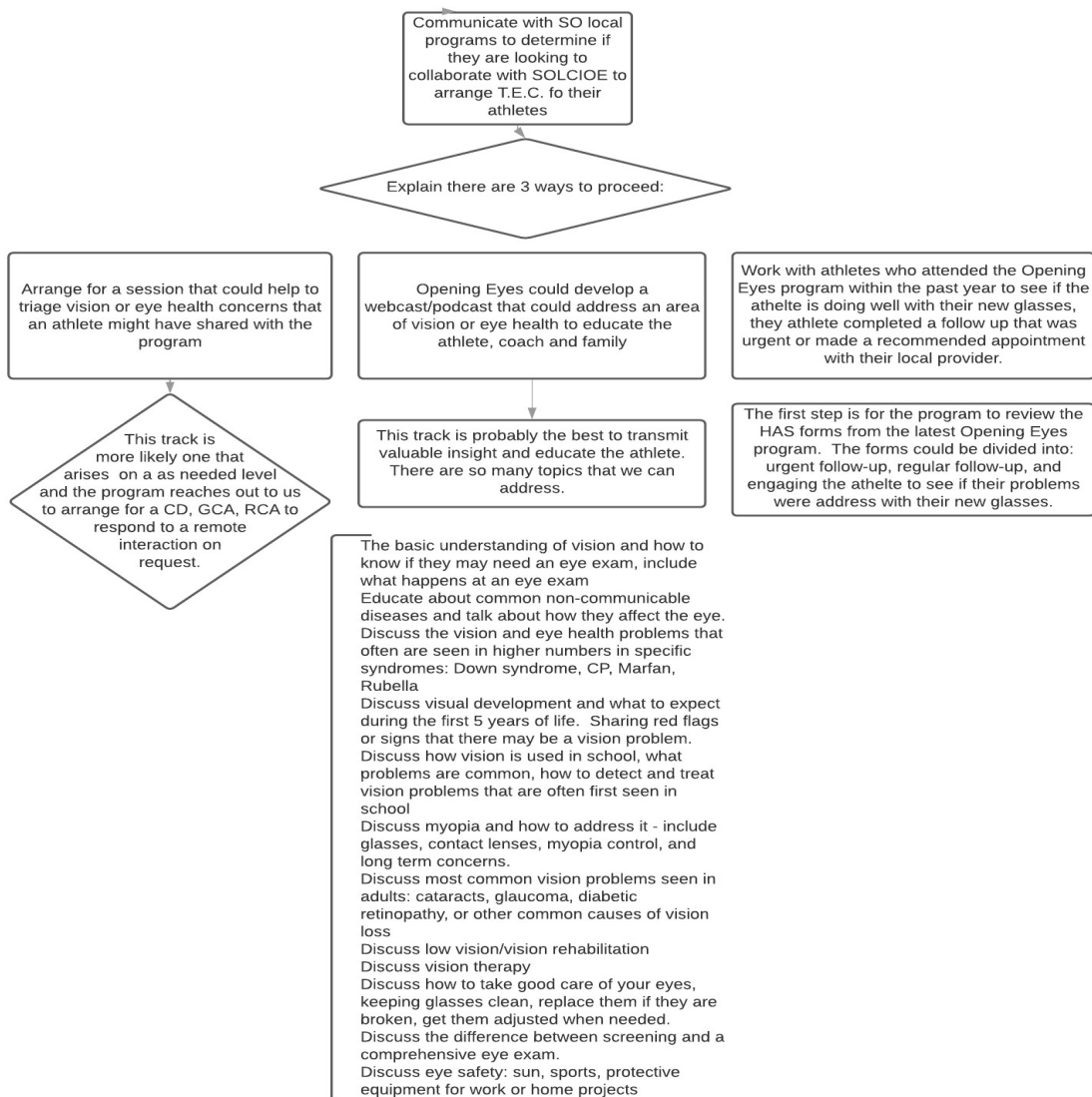
- **Triage to identify/address** impending eye problems that would require direct service.
- **Follow-up** with athletes who were seen at an Opening Eyes event in the past 24 months.
- Delivery of **primary preventive health education** to reduce risks of eye disease.
- Opportunities to answer athlete's vision and eye health questions including **referrals where appropriate**.
- A forum to **provide anticipatory guidance** on ways to prevent vision problems and **information on emerging eye health topics**.
- **Follow-up with athletes who received referrals** in the past and assist those who did not follow through the recommended referral.

The best means to address athlete’s visual concerns is one on one between an athlete and an eyecare practitioner. Ideally, parents, caregivers or guardians will participate in the virtual consultation to facilitate the appointment, answer questions if needed and support recommended actions including follow up.

*Opening Eyes EYE-CONNECT* will provide an important opportunity for OE CD’s and clinical volunteers to interact with the athletes to provide individualized or group education on:

- *Non-urgent eye related interest and education to help athletes maintain eye health*
- *Issues and concerns that might require immediate care that need to be referred for an in-person exam*

### **Proposed flow chart for Opening Eyes EYE - CONNECT**



### **Process to introduce Opening Eyes EYE-CONNECT on program level**

In order to facilitate this process, begin with identifying a willing local SO program who can arrange for the communication directly with the athletes and coordinate a time to interact with a volunteer CD. The benefit of this first step is to support the concept of the communication remaining in the Special Olympic family. The complete process would follow these seven steps:

1. **The SO Program** sends out communication including topics/issues that athletes can discuss with the Clinical Director (CD)
2. **The SO Program** ensures that there is appropriate consent and data privacy information signed off
3. **The SO Program** identifies which athletes are interested in participating in the telehealth program and obtains demographics from the athletes including name, age, local SO program, phone number or email/zoom address, etc.
4. **The SO Program** identifies if the athlete has been seen recently (last two years) in an opening eyes event and provides copies of the HAS information to the CD prior to any communication as historical line health record.
5. **The SO Program and CD** schedule communication based on availability of the CD (3-4 athletes at a specific day at a specific time – 20min. for each), program sets up the online communication platform for the athlete and CD (zoom, etc.) potential costs can be covered through grant application.
6. **The CD** asks the athletes to discuss the issues that lead to the interaction, the CD conducts an appropriate case history (depending on the athletes abilities) including the appropriate follow up of the past visit to the Opening Eyes program and determines what next steps are needed to address the athletes concerns or simply educates the athlete and answers their questions.
7. **The Program and CD** develop a follow up plan, if needed, and program facilitates the appropriate referral and monitors whether the athlete did follow up with the recommended care determined appropriate by the telehealth interaction.
8. **For the Eye Health Promotion** track, SO programs are encouraged to organize group zoom calls. The program sends out a call in link (zoom etc.) to athlete homes or group home settings to have the athletes connect. The CD provides eye health promotion ppt. decks provided by the OE team (links in the resource section here under)

### **Resources (to be found on the SOI resource page Health/Opening Eyes:**

1. HAS form Triage
2. HAS form Follow Up
3. PowerPoint decks for eye health promotion:
  - Vision and diabetes (education to be provided to athletes)
  - How to take care of my glasses (education to be provided to athletes)
  - Vision and learning (education for parents, coaches, care givers)
4. Eye Connect CD and Program Training webinar PowerPoint slides

**Topics/issues that athletes can discuss with the CD about (this list needs to go out in advance as guidance to set expectations):**

**Red eyes, itchy eyes, irritated eyes** - basic triage, Identify potential emergencies – refer as needed (routine vs. urgent), **calm athlete, provide education (if condition is contagious, hygiene etc.) – referral. Note: conjunctivitis can be a presenting sign for COVID-19 and should include appropriate referral (use guide for decision making as reference)**

- 1. Follow up on glasses athletes received at an OE event** – ask if the glasses addressed their visual concerns, comfort or difficulties on a case by case basis. Refer to local eyecare providers for potential replacement and/or service if appropriate. Athletes that have received a prior referral discuss whether follow up occurred, and evaluate barriers, challenges, etc.
- 2. General questions about vision/eye care** – This is an opportunity to educate the athletes on what good vision is and what to look for to recognize that a problem may exist, considering different stage of life.

Young athlete – talk about what vision problems are commonly associated with different syndromes, pregnancy, birth history or early experiences of trauma and/or infections. Discuss the types of visual conditions that may suggest the presence of amblyogenic risk factors, strabismus indicating that a child has a vision problem, developmental disorders.

School-aged child – talk about how important vision is in a classroom, the ability to see the board, then copy on paper, to not lose their place when reading, blurry letters, seeing double, inability to gauge or focus on depth of field (bumping into walls or objects), recommend eye protection if applicable, discuss good hygiene and be conscious of myopia control in young children.

Adult -Discuss eye protection, ask the athlete about their visual clarity or impaired vision when driving. How do they see objects in their jobs/vocational programs, glaucoma suspect (silent disease), complications or diabetes (diabetic retinopathy), hygiene, cataracts (what they are and how are they treated).

Senior – important to see well to maintain independence, low vision/vision rehabilitation.

**Things that can likely be addressed via online consultation (please use the guide as a reference)**

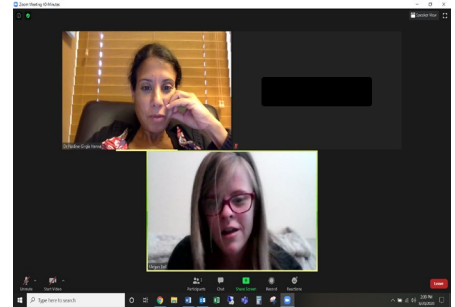
- Conjunctivitis (educate on different types and that some are contagious, what to do if symptoms occur and measures to protect others)
- Allergic conjunctivitis (chemosis)
- Blepharitis: CD can discuss the importance of good hygiene and talk about problems that can occur if one does not take good care when washing their face
- Stye (without discharge)
- Follow up on glasses athletes received at an OE event: refer to the program for assistance or refer to an eye care practitioner if needed
- Discuss referral of last OE event – conduct evaluation about follow up situation (barriers, challenges, gaps, successes)

Most times the CDs will recommend a local eye care provider who can see them in person to provide care including providing guidance to the athlete on how quickly the problem should be seen (very urgent within a 1 day, somewhat urgent 1 week, soon 1 month etc.). Program should guide to investigate questions such as insurance, transportation, someone accompanying them etc.

## Examples and best practices

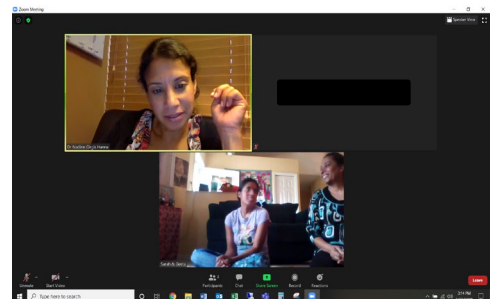
### Eye - Connect session with Athlete Megan Bell:

Dr. Nadine Girgis Hanna (OE CD SOFL) asked her how she was doing in the pandemic, if she was working etc. Megan said she is getting married next year and showed off her ring. Megan's mom was also on the call. Her mom mentioned that she has a tumor that pushes against her optic nerve. Nadine asked when the last time she went to her doctor and her mom said before the pandemic. She had a question about the frequency of seeing her ophthalmologist during the pandemic. Nadine said not to put off her appointments for more than 6 months and to make her next appointment soon. Nadine asked if her eyes every got crusty and she said every now and then. Nadine suggested she take baby shampoo and use that to wash her eye lashes so the soap will not hurt her eyes. She said she could make it part of her shower routine every day. Nadine also asked about how her glasses are working and if they fit. Megan said they came in the mail so they didn't fit perfectly and would sometimes fall down on her nose. Nadine said to go to a place to get them fitted properly.



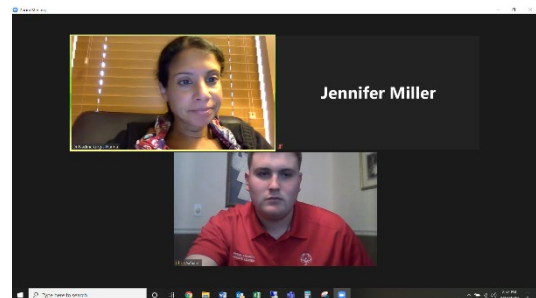
### Eye – Connect Session with SOFL Athlete Sarah Laloo:

Sarah was very quiet and nervous to talk so her mom was there to help. Dr. Nadine Girgis Hanna (OE CD SOFL) noticed she had a princess on her shirt so she asked her about who her favorite it. Nadine was asking Sarah questions about her eyes and if she ever has problems, including itchy watery eyes. Her mom mentioned she has allergies and is on medication. Nadine suggested some drops, then the mother asked if she could show her the drops she bought and if they are good. When her mom left to go get the drops, Nadine asked more about the princesses and other movies Sarah likes. When the mother returned, she had two sets of drop sand Nadine pointed out the one they should use. Sarah mentioned that she sometimes gets headaches when she uses her phone or watches TV for long periods of time. Nadine suggested she takes breaks from the screen and to only be in front of a screen for 20 minutes at a time.



### Eye Connect sessions with SOFL Athlete Fletcher Schaire:

Dr. Nadine Girgis Hanna (OE CD SOFL) continued to be friendly with Fletcher and asked about how he is doing during the pandemic. She asked about what sports he plays and if he would be returning with golf or tennis, which will begin in September. She also asked if he was in school, Fletcher said he was going to culinary school. Nadine asked about his favorite foods. Fletcher's mom had some questions about family history of glaucoma and immaculate degenerative eye disease. She is worried about fletcher when he gets older. Nadine said that you cannot really prevent those things other than eating leafy greens. Also having a well-balanced diet. Nadine joked about the foods he mentioned as his favorite before and said to now include leafy greens.







**Decision making guide to help the CD with the triage:**

