

AUSTRALIAN OPTOMETRICAL ASSOCIATION

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DS/lr
Ref P92 00

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Mr Eric Miller
RMB 101A
Old Narrandera Road
NORTH WAGGA NSW 2650

Dear Mr Miller

The New South Wales Division passed on to me your letter regarding your research in glaucoma. Testing for glaucoma is standard and routine in optometric practice. The clinical indications for examining a patient are relatively clear cut and taught to students during their undergraduate training. All optometrists would be thoroughly versed in these indications. Put briefly:

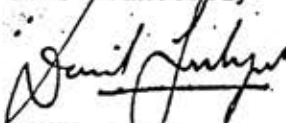
- (a) Tests done routinely on all patients aged 40 and over
 - (i) tonometry
 - (ii) ophthalmoscopic inspection of optic discs
 - (iii) assessment of anterior chamber angles using the Van Herrick slit-lamp technique
 - (iv) case history check for family history of glaucoma.
- (b) Tests done on indication
 - (i) tonometry on patients aged under 40
 - (ii) visual field assessment (central)
 - (iii) gonioscopy - possibly by referral to an ophthalmologist.

An optometrist called David Cockburn has also presented a number of excellent decision-making schema for the detection and/or management of patients with glaucoma or high intra-ocular pressures. His papers can be found in the American Journal of Optometry and Physiological Optics and the Australian Journal of Optometry. I believe his papers would also be an excellent starting point if you were looking for information on the prevalence of glaucoma in Australia.

Optometrists have well-established moral and legal obligations to detect glaucoma (and other ocular disease) and are acutely aware of the value of early detection. It is far more difficult to assess the need to increase community awareness of glaucoma as we do not know what current levels are. A larger proportion of the population is seeking eye care each year so at least the awareness of the need for regular examinations must be rising.

For information I have also enclosed the AOA's brochure on glaucoma. Please telephone me if you require any further assistance.

Yours sincerely



DAVID SOUTHGATE
DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

cc Amanda Wilson (AOA NSW)

