



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Corning Tower The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza Albany, New York 12237

Richard F. Daines, M.D.
Commissioner

Wendy E. Saunders
Chief of Staff

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Dear Colleague:

This letter is to announce two additions to the list of qualified personnel authorized to deliver vision services under the Early Intervention Program (EIP). Approximately 1 in every 3,000 infants is born with severe vision impairment. Vision is the perceptual system that is most suited for gaining information about the environment, particularly information about shape and space, and is an integral part of a child's early learning process. Vision impairment can have a significant adverse effect on multiple aspects of a child's development. This expansion will recognize qualified personnel delivering services to children with vision impairment and also help assure adequate capacity for the provision of vision services to children enrolled in the EIP across New York State.

Effective immediately, the following professionals are added to the list of personnel recognized as qualified to deliver vision services under the EIP:

- Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (VRT)
- Persons who have been approved by the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped for the provision of vision services

NYCRR §69-4.1(a) defines "qualified personnel" as those individuals who are approved to deliver services to the extent authorized by their licensure, certification or registration. All qualified personnel in the EIP are subject to each profession's scope of practice restrictions and to changes in the relevant laws and regulations.

The following professionals continue to be recognized as qualified personnel authorized to deliver vision services under the EIP within the scope of their practice:

- Physicians, including Ophthalmologists
- Optometrists with a Fellow of the College of Optometrists in Vision Development (FCOVD) certificate
- Optometrists certified as low vision specialists by the New York Optometric Association
- Physician Assistants
- Nurse Practitioners
- Teachers of the Blind and Partially Sighted
- Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired

- Certified Low Vision Specialists (LVT)
- Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (O&M)

Attached is a resource list of agencies and associations that license, certify, or credential qualified professionals who are authorized to provide vision services to children enrolled in the NYS Early Intervention Program.

If you have any additional questions regarding providers of vision services, please contact Margaret Adeigbo of my staff at (518) 473-7016.

Sincerely,

Bradley Hutton, M.P.H.
Director
Bureau of Early Intervention

cc: Laurie Munro, CBVH
Joseph Nye, CBVH
Margaret Adeigbo

Additional Resources

Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals
at <http://www.acvrep.org/StandardSite.htm>

New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped at
<http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/cbvh>

College of Optometrists in Vision Development at <http://www.covd.org>

New York Optometric Association at <http://www.nysoa.org>

New York State Education Department Office of the Professions at
<http://www.op.nysed.gov>

New York State Education Department Office of Teaching Initiatives at
<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/faq.htm>

New York State Department of Health Bureau Early Intervention at
http://www.nyhealth.gov./community/infants_children/early_intervention/