



VA New England Health Care System, White River Junction, VT

Residency in Ocular Disease

Emphasis Areas: Glaucoma and Retina

PROGRAM COORDINATOR:	Richard Frick O.D., FAAO, ABCMO Richard.Frick@va.gov
PROGRAM FACULTY:	Joseph Gallagher, OD, FAAO Andrea Murphy, OD, FAAO, Chief of Optometry Jenna Koskey, OD, FAAO
SITE LOCATIONS:	White River Junction, Vermont
NUMBER OF POSITIONS:	Three
ESTABLISHED:	2003
ACCREDITATION STATUS:	ACOE accredited (contact accredit@theacoe.org)

This residency is funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs and affiliated with the New England College of Optometry. The White River Junction VAMC is fully accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE).

All of our optometrists are highly involved in the optometric profession and academia with many years in advanced clinical practice and teaching. Our doctors are passionate about patient care, optometric education, and life-long learning. Dr. Frick is a nationally recognized speaker and has been honored with multiple clinical teaching awards. He volunteers with SVOSH and has served on over one dozen optometric brigades to bring eye-care and optometric education to the developing world. He serves as a Senior Consultant for the Accreditation Council of Optometric Education, the body that accredits optometric degree and residency programs.

Residents of the White River Junction VAMC will develop advanced competency in the treatment and management of ocular and ocular/systemic disease while gaining the skills to function independently in a multi-disciplinary hospital-based eye clinic located in a picturesque, rural setting. This pastoral location, with limited access to health care, provides a substantial volume of advanced stage ocular disease patients to our hospital. Residents will learn to manage these patients *independently* in our optometry clinic. Each resident will diagnose and treat a substantial number of patients with glaucoma, macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and other retinal vascular diseases. Residents will also learn to co-manage surgical patients with our ophthalmology team.

White River Junction, VT is located in the Upper Connecticut River Valley 2 hours north of Boston, MA and 3 hours south of Montreal, Quebec. Bus, train, and interstate routes connect



White River Junction to Boston, Montreal, and New York City. Dartmouth College is located just across the river in NH. Numerous cultural and outdoor activities are available throughout the four seasons and in the forests, mountains, lakes and streams of NH and VT.

MISSION:

VA Mission Statement

To fulfill President Lincoln's promise "To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's Veterans.

VA Core Values

VA's five core values underscore the obligations inherent in VA's mission: Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence. Taking the first letter of each word creates a powerful acronym, "I CARE,"

RESIDENCY MISSION STATEMENT:

This program will provide optometry residents with a comprehensive, clinical experience by immersing them in the care and management of Veteran patients with multiple, complex ocular and ocular-systemic disease processes. The residents will learn to function effectively in a multi-disciplinary hospital setting. The program will cultivate the motivation for lifelong learning through didactic and scholarly activities. Ultimately, the program will provide the residents with the experience, knowledge and skills necessary to develop advanced competency in eye, vision, and health care.

This program shall be of such excellence as to merit accreditation by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE) of the American Optometric Association (AOA).

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. Goal: Provide supervised, clinical education emphasizing treatment and management of ocular and ocular-systemic disease.
 - a. Objectives
 - i. Provide the resident a minimum of 1200 supervised patient encounters. More than 50% of the encounters will involve ocular and/or systemic disease. At least 10 exams should include in-patient encounters.
 - ii. Provide the resident with exposure to various, clinical, ophthalmic disease process.
 1. At least 30% of encounters will involve diagnosis, management, and treatment of glaucoma and/or glaucoma suspects



2. At least 30% of encounters will involve diagnosis, management, and treatment of retina [posterior segment diseases].
- iii. Provide the resident with the opportunity to educate optometry students and medical residents in a clinic setting.

2. Goal: Promote and foster didactic and scholarly work to promote learning of ocular and ocular-systemic disease.

a. Objectives

- i. Encourage the resident to attend continuing education lectures.
- ii. Encourage the resident to present lectures, case reports, posters, journal club reviews and/or morbidity/mortality cases. Residents will present 6 ocular disease lectures during journal club.
 1. At least two cases will involve glaucoma
 2. At least two cases will involve retina [posterior segment diseases]
- iii. Stimulate life-long learning, critical review of the scientific literature, and application of new knowledge in the clinical setting in order to achieve expert competency in ocular disease and provide evidence-based care.
- iv. Write an ocular disease paper of publishable quality.

3. Goal: Teach multi-disciplinary care.

a. Objective

- i. Co-manage ocular disease surgical care with ophthalmology
- ii. Attend inter-disciplinary rotations
- iii. Participate in co-management of ocular-systemic disease with other health care providers through answering/ordering consults, referrals, pager and on call duty.

4. Goal: Kindle a commitment to optometric service.

a. Objective

- i. Encourage membership and participation in optometric organizations and meetings.
- ii. Residents will attend 2 professional optometric meetings.

LENGTH OF RESIDENCY AND DUTY HOURS:

This residency commences on July 1st every year and ends June 30th of the following year. The schedule will rotate every two weeks as follows:



Week A
Four 9 hour days
One 8 hour day

Week B
Four 9 hour days
One day OFF

The resident will cover pager duty in tandem with an attending doctor for a minimum of 6 weeks of On-call hours which will be in addition to regular duty hours. Specific call hours are determined by the clinic schedule and managed by the resident.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS:

The current annual salary is \$43,924.00.

<https://vaww.oaa.med.va.gov/DBReports/LocBasedStipends.aspx>

Annual leave (vacation) =13 days per year

Sick leave= 13 days per year

[Annual and sick leave are accrued at 4 hours every 2 weeks.]

Residents may be granted administrative leave to attend educational meetings or for licensing exams, as long as it is not excessive or in conflict with the clinic's ability to provide patient care.

Residents are appointed as VA employees therefore, they are covered by the Federal Tort Claims Act for all care provided as a resident at the VA. It should be noted that the policy does not cover residents in practice outside VHA beyond duty hours.

Health insurance benefits are available through VA.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

1. Applicants must have completed the Doctor of Optometry degree (O.D.) from an AOA/ACOE accredited school by the time residency starts.
2. Applicants must complete and pass Parts I, II, III and TMOD of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry *as soon as reasonably possible*. It is understood that the COVID 19 pandemic may delay testing.
3. Per [VHA Directive 1121\(2\)](#): optometric residents must "Obtain licensure in a State, territory, or Commonwealth of the United States, or in the District of Columbia before completion of the first year of VA residency". Residents are encouraged to obtain licensure as soon as possible.
4. Typically, a personal interview is strongly encouraged; however, due to the COVID 19 pandemic, virtual interviews will be available and possibly mandated pending the pandemic status at the time of interviews.
5. Applicants must apply via the OR MATCH National Matching Services, Inc. (Optometry Residency Matching Services). Follow the application guidelines at: <https://natmatch.com/ormatch/>



6. Deadline for applications is January 31, 2024.
7. The Department of Veterans Affairs does not discriminate based on gender, age, race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. United States citizenship is required to qualify for VHA appointment in a paid VA optometry resident position that is funded by the Office of Academic Affiliations.
8. All candidates must submit these items:
 - a. Letter of intent
 - b. Curriculum vitae
 - c. NBEO scores
 - d. Official optometry school transcript
 - e. 3 letters of recommendation from clinical preceptors

CRITERIA FOR COMPLETION OF RESIDENCY:

1. The resident must complete the goals and objectives of the program.
2. The resident must complete 12 months of clinical training and a minimum of 1200 patient encounters. Greater than 50% of the encounters will include ocular and/or systemic disease. At least 10 cases should be in-patient encounters. Clinical duties will include 6 weeks of on call duty for each resident.
3. Per [VHA Directive 1121\(2\)](#): optometric residents must "Obtain licensure in a State, territory, or Commonwealth of the United States, or in the District of Columbia before completion of the first year of VA residency". Residents are encouraged to obtain licensure as soon as possible.
4. The resident is required to deliver evidenced based patient care services at a level commensurate with the standard of care and satisfactory to those responsible for the supervision of the residency program.
5. The resident is expected to perform in a professional manner consistent with the Code of Ethics of the American Optometric Association.
6. The resident is required to write an ocular disease paper of publishable quality and to meet the associated deadlines.
7. The resident is required to present 6 ocular disease lectures during journal club. At least two lectures will cover glaucoma. At least two lectures will cover retina or poster segment disease.
8. The resident is required to complete accurate logs:
 - a. Resident Patient Log
 - b. Resident Activity Log
9. The resident is required to complete all evaluations:
 - a. Self-assessment: initial and final
 - b. Evaluations of Residency Program
 - c. Evaluations of Residency Supervisor
 - d. Evaluations of Clinical Supervisors



- e. Exit survey
- 10. The resident must attend 2 professional optometric meetings and log 20 hours of continuing education.
- 11. The resident must attend all four NECO conferences and complete all associated conference assignments in a timely fashion to include presentation of a lecture or poster on ocular disease at the final NECO conference.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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