



VA Boston Healthcare System

Residency in Ocular Disease

Emphasis Areas: Ocular Disease/Primary Care

PROGRAM SUPERVISORS:

Jamaica Plain:	Tak Chau, OD (Tak.Chau@va.gov)
West Roxbury:	Rachel Druckenbrod, OD (Rachel.Druckenbrod@va.gov)
Brockton:	Kevin Toolin, OD (Kevin.Toolin@va.gov)

NUMBER OF POSITIONS: Nine (9)

RESIDENTS WILL BE BASED AT ONE CAMPUS AS OUTLINED BELOW:

- 3 at Jamaica Plain VA
- 2 at West Roxbury VA
- 4 at Brockton VA

Please note that each Boston campus (Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury, and Brockton) is a separate match entry in ORmatch. We strongly recommend that all candidates interested in the Boston program apply to all 3 campuses (Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury, and Brockton) in ORmatch.

This program is jointly sponsored by the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) and New England College of Optometry (NECO) and is accredited by the Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (contact accredit@theacoe.org).

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE OPTOMETRY SECTION:

The mission of the Optometry Residency Program at the VA Boston Healthcare System is to foster the residents' development of advanced diagnostic and patient management skills in the care of patients with visual problems, ocular disease, and ocular manifestations of systemic disease in a multidisciplinary hospital-based setting. This is accomplished by mentored clinical training and facilitation of resident involvement in an interdisciplinary approach to patient care and is supported by a strong didactic curriculum.

RESIDENCY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- Train optometrists in advanced competency in primary and secondary eye care services.
- Develop the residents' diagnostic and patient management skills in the care of patients with visual problems, ocular disease, and ocular manifestations of systemic disease in a hospital-based setting.
- Develop the residents' ability to function as a member of a health care team through participation in an interdisciplinary health delivery system.
- Promote critical thinking and facility with clinical research methods and tools by requiring the residents to present case reports, formal lectures, and a poster at a regional or national optometric conference and to prepare a publication quality manuscript.
- Prepare interested candidates for a career in clinical teaching.



RESIDENT ACTIVITIES:

- Provide primary and secondary eyecare to both outpatients and inpatients.
- Provide support to the **emergency room/urgent care** and respond to **emergent inpatient consultation requests**.
- Provide **after-hours on-call coverage** to the hospital for all eye care needs presenting after normal business hours.
- **Advanced Skills:** Residents are trained in anterior and posterior segment OCT, OCT angiography, ophthalmic ultrasonography, slit lamp and fundus photography, interpretation of fluorescein angiography, scleral depression, automated perimetry interpretation, gonioscopy, and fundus contact lens exam. In addition, residents will also be trained to incorporate laboratory tests and other diagnostic imaging modalities (CT, MRI, MRA, Carotid Duplex, etc.) into patient care.
- **Glaucoma:** Residents rotate to the **VA Boston Glaucoma Service** where they examine patients in conjunction with glaucoma specialists. This rotation offers experience in the medical management of all forms and stages of glaucoma as well as post-operative care of patients who have undergone various surgical interventions for their disease.
- **Retina:** Residents rotate through the **VA Boston Retina Service** where they work side-by-side with retina fellows and ophthalmology residents. Exposure to fundus angiography (FA/ICG) and OCT enhances their understanding of disease processes.
- **Cornea / Oculoplastic:** Residents rotate through **VA Boston Cornea and Oculoplastic Services** where they are guided by cornea and oculoplastic specialists in the care of patients with advanced surface disease and other corneal/oculoplastic pathologies. Post-operative care of patients is conducted in a collaborative fashion.
- **Boston Foundation for Sight:** Residents rotate through Boston Foundation for Sight where they are exposed to an international patient base contending with advanced and uncommon surface pathologies (e.g. graft versus host disease, Stevens Johnson syndrome) and acquire an appreciation of the utility of the scleral contact lens.
- **Uveitis:** Residents rotate through **VA Boston Uveitis Clinic** where they are supervised by a Fellowship-trained Ocular Immunologist
- **Specialty Contact Lens:** Residents rotate through the **VA Specialty Contact Lens** department where they work with our contact lens provider to evaluate patients in need of medical contact lenses and assess specialty lens fits. They will also be exposed to a variety of anterior surface pathologies.
- **Opportunity to collaborate with various medical and surgical subspecialties** including neurology, neurosurgery, vascular, geriatrics, and dermatology. A close working relationship with primary care physicians, sub-specialists, and other health care providers produces an environment fostering growth of knowledge in the area of systemic diseases and associated ocular manifestations and facilitates an appreciation for the complete package of care required to manage complex issues.
- **Clinical Teaching:**
 - Residents may supervise optometry students in the second half of the year.
 - Residents participate in the education of nurse practitioners, physician assistants, medical residents, and other sub-specialists rotating through the eye clinic and/or collaborating on individual cases.



- Paid clinical and didactic tutoring opportunities have been available through New England College of Optometry.
- **Didactic Activities:**
 - In-House Optometry Grand Rounds most Friday afternoons
 - Thrice yearly Literature Review
 - In-House Medical and Surgical Rounds/Panel Case Discussions
 - NECO-sponsored educational sessions
- **Academic Challenges:**
 - Case reports
 - Formal lectures
 - Poster presentation at a regional or national meeting
 - Publication quality manuscript

TIME COMMITMENT:

This residency is one calendar year in length, commencing on July 1, 2024 and running through June 30, 2025. Clinic hours are M-F 8:00AM to 5:00PM, excepting emergencies. Each resident is on-call every 9th week.

STIPEND

The current salary is \$50,032.

HEALTH BENEFITS:

Health insurance benefits are offered through the VA.

LEAVE:

Annual leave (vacation): 13 days

Sick leave: 13 days

Administrative leave: Official business, such as taking a state licensing exam or attending an educational meeting, can be requested as administrative leave (not charged against vacation time) and is usually granted if not excessive or in conflict with our ability to provide patient care.

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE:

Liability insurance is not needed while working for the VA in your capacity as a United States government employee, therefore, the VA does not provide liability insurance. While at NECO affiliated clinics, coverage is provided under the College's umbrella policy.

CRITERIA FOR COMPLETION OF THE RESIDENCY:

1. Per VHA Directive 1121(2), 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."
2. Applicants ideally have passed parts I, II, and III of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry prior to the July 1st start date. Any National Board of



Examiners in Optometry exam that has not been passed prior to July 1st must be taken and passed prior to completion.

3. The resident is required to deliver patient care services at a level satisfactory to those responsible for the supervision of the residency program.
4. The resident is expected to perform in a professional manner in the delivery of patient care services and to observe those proprieties of conduct and courtesies that are consistent with the rules and regulations governing the Department of Veterans Affairs and the College.
5. The resident is required to keep a log of all patient care encounters, specifying if referral for subspecialty care was needed.
6. The resident is required to participate in the didactic activities enumerated above and to complete all required academic work in a satisfactory manner.

Periodic evaluations will take place to ensure that appropriate progress is being made and that all deficiencies are addressed in a timely manner.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Please note that each Boston campus (Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury, and Brockton) is a separate match entry in ORMatch. We strongly recommend that all candidates interested in the Boston program apply to all 3 campuses (Jamaica Plain, West Roxbury, and Brockton) in ORMatch.

- United States citizenship is required to qualify for VHA appointment in a paid VA optometry resident position funded by the Office of Academic Affiliations. Reference: VA Handbook 5005/57, Part II, Chapter 3, Paragraph 3.g.(1) & (5)(c), dated June 14, 2012.
- Applicants must have earned an OD degree from an ACOE accredited school or college of optometry by the time of entry into residency.
- All resident candidates must apply through the National Matching Services application at www.natmatch.com/ormatch. The deadline for submission will be January 31, 2024.
- Applications must include the following:
 - a) Cover letter
 - b) Curriculum vitae
 - c) NBEO scores (when available)
 - d) Official optometry school transcript
 - e) 3 letters of recommendation
- Interviews will be arranged for qualified candidates either face to face or remotely based on candidate preference and at the discretion of the program supervisors.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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