Bedford VAMC, Edith Nourse Rogers Memorial VA

Residency in Ocular Disease
Emphasis Area: Primary Care Optometry

PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Paul Colburn, O.D.
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PROGRAM SITE: 200 Springs Rd., Bedford, MA 01730
NUMBER OF POSITIONS: Two

SPONSOR: Department of Veterans Affairs
AFFILIATION: New England College of Optometry

MISSION :

To provide unique advanced training as a primary eye care optometry provider to our veteran population, in a multidisciplinary health care setting, through interaction with experienced optometric and medical providers. Considerable emphasis will be placed on ocular disease and primary eye care in a VA population. Comprehensive training will be provided to the residents who will develop into a highly skilled clinician, able to diagnose, treat, and manage ocular disease and ocular manifestations of systemic disease, markedly surpassing the level of a one-year post-graduate optometrist.

RESIDENCY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Goal 1: To develop and expand the residents' capacity to recognize, diagnose, treat and manage ocular disease and ocular manifestations of systemic disease.

Objective 1: The residents will be exposed to a wide variety of both ocular disease and ocular manifestations of systemic diseases found in our VA patient population. Each resident will examine a minimum of 1000 patients, 50% of which will be diagnosed with some form of ocular disease and/or ocular manifestations of systemic disease.

Objective 2: The residents will develop skills in diagnosis, treatment, and management of ocular disease under close supervision. As they demonstrate competence and confidence through ongoing evaluations of their histories, observations, assessments, and management plans, they will progressively assume greater clinical responsibility.

Objective 3: The residents will demonstrate proficiency in the diagnosis, treatment and management of patients within specific disease categories that they encounter routinely within the VA population.
The resident should have the minimum amount of patient encounters for the following conditions:

A) Ocular Manifestations of Systemic Disease (300)
B) Glaucoma and Optic Nerve Disease (200)
C) Retinal Disease (200)
D) Macular Disease (200)

Goal 2: To develop the residents' capability to function as an integral primary care provider in a multidisciplinary health care setting.

Objective 1: The residents will function as a member of a multidisciplinary health care team by interacting with various health care providers. This can occur in person, by telephone, by e-mail, by EMR, or by a referred consultation.

Objective 2: The residents will communicate, as required, with physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, social workers, laboratory or x-ray personnel, or ward secretaries when managing patients. This will be done in person, by telephone, and/or by email.

Goal 3: To provide sufficient teaching experience to permit the resident to enhance their clinical training experience.

Objective 1: Each resident will eventually take on the responsibility of precepting the optometry externs from the New England College of Optometry

Objective 2: The residents have an additional opportunity to enhance their teaching skills by serving as a clinical instructor/monitor in the pre-clinic at The New England College of Optometry, and/or tutor optometry students. Tutoring can be done remotely if they are not able to get to the school in Boston.

Goal 4: To encourage and supervise the residents in the completion of a clinical case report, clinical review or research project of publishable quality.

Objective 1: The residents will be responsible for submitting a manuscript of publishable quality.

Objective 2: Residents are responsible for preparing and presenting one lecture on any topic pertaining to eye care during Geriatric Medical Grand Rounds.

RESIDENCY ACTIVITES:

The residents will provide full scope primary eye care/ocular disease services to both inpatient and outpatient veterans. While the majority of patients are outpatients and do not live at the VA, the residents will have the opportunity to participate in the care of in-house nursing home patients, in-house psychiatric patients, and patients from urgent care being sent to the eye clinic as walk-ins.

The optometry residents will have the opportunity to be involved in, but not limited to, the following activities:

- Medical and Geriatric Grand Rounds
- Administrating, coordinating, and participating in weekly Optometry Rounds
- Attending Residency conferences at the New England College of Optometry; 4 total

- Presentation at The New England College of Optometry with corresponding paper of publishable quality
- Participation in being a lab monitor or clinical tutor at New England College of Optometry
- At least one presentation at the Geriatric Grand Rounds
- Collaboration with other hospital staff including but not limited to primary care, neurology, rheumatology, urgent care, ward staff, etc.
- Quarterly Optometry Journal Club
- Attending a National Optometric Meeting
- Precepting fourth-year optometry students in the clinical setting

LENGTH OF RESIDENCY:

This is a one year residency program that begins July 1 each year and ends June 30 of the following year. The standard tour of duty for each resident is from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. Residents will not be required to be on-call during non-clinic hours.

Benefits:

- Stipend: The current annual salary is $52,150, paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs
- Vacation Days (AL): 13 days, accrued at a rate of 4 hours per pay period (every 2 weeks)
- Sick Days (SL): 13 days, accrued at a rate of 4 hours every pay period (every 2 weeks)
- Professional Days (AA): Academic Leave can be requested to attend professional meetings or to take a state or national licensing exam
- Health Insurance: Health insurance is available through the VA
- Life Insurance: Life insurance is available through the VA
- Malpractice Insurance: VA will provide the necessary liability coverage while you are in training within the VA facility only through the Federal Tort Claims Act.

CRITERIA FOR COMPLETION OF RESIDENCY:

To successfully complete the residency program, each resident must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- All the goals and the objectives of the program must be met
- Must fulfill all the clinical and administrative responsibilities within the clinic as outlined in the orientation package
- Demonstrate sound clinical skills in all areas of optometry: observation, diagnosis, treatment, and management. The performance of each resident will be evaluated periodically
- The residents will participate as lab monitors and/or tutors through The New England College of Optometry.
- The residents will eventually take on the responsibility of precepting optometry externs
- Attend all conferences and/ or educational meetings affiliated with the program and/or when requested by the supervisor
- Maintain a log of all patient encounters and monthly monitors
- Maintain a log of all scholarly activities
- Present a lecture during grand rounds to the medical staff
- Presentation at The New England College of Optometry with corresponding paper of publishable quality

- The resident must obtain a license in any state, territory or Commonwealth of the United States, or in the District of Columbia before the completion of the VA Residency.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Application Packet must include the following:
  - Letter of Intent
  - Resume
  - Official copy of NBEO scores
  - Official copy of optometry school transcript
  - 3 letters of recommendation: from faculty in a clinical setting
- Applicants must have earned a Doctor of Optometry degree from a school or college of optometry with an ACOE accreditation status prior to the onset of the program year
- The candidate must be a U.S. Citizen
- A personal interview is strongly recommended, but not mandatory
- Applicants must have taken and passed Part I (Applied Basic Science), II (Patient Assessment and Management), III (Patient Encounters and Performance Skills – PEPS), and TMOD (Treatment and Management of Ocular Disease) of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry (NBEO) exams. Official copies of the results for all parts must be furnished prior to completing the residency.
- All residents must complete the match thru Optometric Residency Matching Service (ORMatch) https://natmatch.com/ormatch/. The application deadline to the ORMatch site is **January 29th, 2027.**
- Official transcripts from the school or college of optometry are required.
- All Department of Veterans affairs policies with regard to discrimination are followed in the selection process. No preference or exclusion will be given to any candidate based on gender, race, color, creed, age, or national origin.

ACCREDITATION STATUS:

The Accreditation Council on Optometric Education (ACOE) has granted VA Bedford/Edith Nourse Rogers VA Residency in Ocular Disease the accreditation status of "Accredited." Accredited is a classification granted to an educational program indicating that the program generally meets the Standards for accreditation. For more information, see the ACOE's website at www.theACOE.org or contact the ACOE at accredit@theacoe.org.

For further information, please contact:

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