

## **Establishing a regional baseline for vision health from state blind registry data**

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**TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE:** Vision health, registry data

**ABSTRACT:** Context: Data from the Oregon Commission for the Blind (OCB) were analyzed to determine incidence of blindness for 31 eye diseases from 1961 to 2015. Blindness was defined as best corrected visual acuity in the better seeing eye of equal to or worse than 20/200 or a visual field of no greater than 20 degrees. The cause of blindness and determination of blindness were derived from clinical chart reviews.

Approach: Data for 8,781 blind persons registered with the OCB were analyzed. From 1961 to 2015, blindness was most frequently caused by age related macular degeneration (AMD) 3,308 (38%), followed by diabetic retinopathy (DR) 729 (8%), congenital conditions 697 (8%), optic nerve atrophy 611 (7%), and glaucoma 549 (6%). The mean age of onset of blindness was younger for Blacks (31 years) and Hispanics (33 years) than for Whites (44 years). AMD steadily increased as a cause of blindness accounting for 58.4% of blindness in 2000, then reversed this trend and accounted for 31.0% of blindness in 2015.

Conclusions: Analysis of state blind commission data offers an expeditious mechanism to investigate vision health, identifying both at-risk populations and diseases of concern. The responsiveness of these data could better inform public health programs.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Discuss the incidence and causes of blindness in Oregon.

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