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Holistic approach towards Albinism in eye care

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Albinism is a genetic condition where people are born without the usual pigment (colour) in their bodies. Their bodies aren't able to make a normal amount of melanin, the chemical that is responsible for eye, skin, and hair colour. So most people with albinism have very pale skin, hair, and eyes.Apart from the clinical problems, the main two being macular hypoplasia with poor vision and fragile skin that burns easily in the sun, there are social problems. Albinos are sometimes not even accepted in their own families, they have difficulty finding work, and they are killed on a daily basis. The other aspect of being an albino is that they are unable to attend school because albinism is considered a handicap. Many leave school for the street because of poor vision, they sometimes have such weak eyesight that they cannot see the blackboard so they abandon school and end up on the streets becoming either prostitutes or beggars.

Who is responsible? People with albinism need to be accepted and protected by culture. Time is needed, dialogue is needed, and a vast amount of awareness is needed. Concrete actions are needed from the states to consider albinos like any other citizen and to give them tools to succeed. In Public hospitals, there are no medications for albinism, nothing is given to them. In fact doctors know what they can do but they think its ok because someone will take that responsibility. Eye doctors and teachers spend a lot of time with people with albinism especially children but none is fully responsible for an albino person.

What we can do: If we do something, if we start to sensitize people of all kind, we can celebrate together with people with albinism. Public hospitals, Eye Departments should have a holistic approach when handling people with albinism.Until mid-June, 2015, no potential effective treatment or cure exists for albinism, but the following may be helpful and a new medication may offer some potential hope:

- Low-vision aids: No one device can serve the needs of all patients in all situations. Young children may simply need glasses, while older children may require bifocals. Occasionally, telescopic lenses mounted on glasses (bioptics) are prescribed for close-up work and distance vision. The use of Braille is not necessary as children with albinism read the dots visually.
- Tinted glasses may be used to reduce photophobia.
- Wearing a cap or visor and long sleeve shirts when outdoor may help prevent the development of cancer on skins of people with albinism.
- For the treatment of strabismus, it is preferred to start eye-patching infants at age 6 months (prior to completion of eye development). Some cases of strabismus may improve with glasses correction.
- Nitisinone, which is approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for treating hereditary tyrosinemia type 1, elevates plasma tyrosine levels and increases eye and hair pigmentation.
- Sunscreen should be distributed by the public health system through eye departments as needed to people with albinism

Conclusion: Governments and Non-Governmental organisations through the public health system Eye Departments should be seen providing necessary tools to albinos at all times being supported by teachers and all doctors and the community

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