Expansion of Vision Services Within the Illinois Eye Institute at Princeton Vision Clinic Beyond Primary Eyecare

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BACKGROUND
The IEI at Princeton Clinic is a large school-based vision clinic serving children from the Chicago Public Schools. The clinic opened in January 2011 and has provided primary eye care for more than 14,000 children in the first 30 months. The clinic is open year round. Third and fourth year students rotate through the clinic for one quarter providing comprehensive primary eye care.

During this period, many patients have required secondary services including referrals for eye health, contact lenses, vision therapy, strabismus, and visual information processing testing.

METHODS
In the first 18 months, all patients who needed VT, fundus photography, visual information processing and oculomotor testing were referred over to the Illinois Eye Institute main campus. The follow through was minimal. In response to the needs of our patients, we attempted to identify solutions that would increase compliance of the recommended follow up.

THE APPROACH HAD THREE PRONGS:

1. Introduction of a staff optometrist to provide vision therapy, visual information processing and oculomotor testing:
   From July 2012 through June 2013, Dr. Kathleen O’Leary provided direct care Tuesday through Thursday afternoon. This included comprehensive eye care as well as vision therapy and visual processing assessment.
   From July 2013, Dr. Adrianna Hempelmann has expanded service to Monday through Thursday afternoons.

2. A ChicagoHealth Corp member (AmeriCorp) was added to our staff to improve the communication between the clinic and families. The term of the member is 9 months and they works closely with us, as well as the vision team within the Chicago Public Schools. The ChicagoHealth Corp members is expected to:
   - Work alongside the Illinois College of Optometry students, faculty and staff providing entrance testing and monitoring floor each morning.
   - Identify those patients requiring follow up care and contacting the families to work with them to schedule the needed care. If the care can be provided within the IEI at Princeton clinic, the member works to get the appointment scheduled. If the referral is for care on the main campus, the member conference the staff on campus with the parents to schedule the appointment. The then monitor whether the appointment is kept and does appropriate follow-up.

3. Addition of a current vision therapy technology, a visagraph, an OCT, and a fundus camera.
   - Electronic health records was implemented which allows us to take OCTs and photos on site and share them with staff at the IEI for assistance in diagnosis.
   - Through the generosity of a funder we were able to purchase several video based programs that have been instrumental in engaging our patients during vision therapy.
   - The funder also made it possible to obtain a Visagraph for testing at our clinic.
   - From July 2012 through June 2013, Dr. Kathleen O’Leary provided direct care Tuesday through Thursday afternoon. This included comprehensive eye care as well as vision therapy and visual processing assessment.
   - From July 2013, Dr. Adrianna Hempelmann has expanded service to Monday through Thursday afternoons.

RESULTS
Vision therapy was conducted three afternoons a week with 110 visits recorded in the 2012-2013 fiscal year. We have expanded this to four afternoons due to the demand and wait list. Visual information processing assessments have been completed on 25 children.

CONCLUSION
School-based clinics serve children who often do not access appropriate vision care services outside of the school setting. IEI at Princeton began with primary care services but quickly realized the need to expand services to include vision therapy, oculomotor assessments, visual information processing testing, and baseline fundus photos. We will continue to expand services to address the needs of our patients.

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