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The Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye Launches to Transform Disease Detection and Coordinated Care Delivery with Oculomics and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

SALT LAKE CITY, UT, May 13, 2025 — A pioneering coalition of healthcare leaders announced the launch of the **Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye** (AHE) at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) meeting in Salt Lake City. AHE is an ambitious cross-sector initiative to harness the eye as a gateway to both ocular and systemic health through artificial intelligence (AI) – a field known as oculomics. This consortium of health systems, clinicians, industry innovators, life science companies, non-profits and policymakers, and payors aims to drive a shift from reactive to proactive healthcare by leveraging ocular data.

According to Robert N. Weinreb, MD, a world-renowned ophthalmologist and Distinguished Professor and Chair, Ophthalmology at the University of California, San Diego, and a founding member of the Alliance, “The eye offers a non-invasive, high-resolution window into the body’s vascular, neurologic, and metabolic systems. With advanced ophthalmic diagnostics, AI can help identify early indicators of heart disease, kidney dysfunction, neurodegeneration and other systemic diseases—before symptoms arise.”

The AHE leverages Healthcare from the Eye, which integrates AI-powered analysis of ocular data—such as retinal images and visual function tests—into coordinated care networks of eyecare, primary care, and specialty providers. By embedding this approach into existing workflows, AHE members aim to identify high-risk individuals early, enhance access to care, enable risk stratification and triage to reduce late-stage disease burden, and shift cost structures toward preventive services. Patient data will be secured and managed to ensure transparency and patient privacy.

A foundational manuscript co-authored by several AHE members and published in JAMA Ophthalmology on May 8, 2025, outlines the vision and foundational principles of Healthcare from the Eye. The paper highlights how AI-powered ocular pre-screening can support earlier detection, expand access, and reduce healthcare costs, enabling a more efficient and accessible model of care through cross-sector collaboration and existing clinical infrastructure.

“To effectively implement Healthcare from the Eye, a connected platform is needed to improve population health,” said Ali Tafreshi, CEO & President of Topcon Healthcare, Inc. and a founding member of the Alliance.

The Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye focuses on access to affordable healthcare, data access and responsible AI, patient care coordination and program sustainability. Moreover, it seeks to ensure that this transformative approach is easy to deploy and ethical.

“This is not just about eye care—it’s about unlocking new frontiers in whole-body health,” said David C. Rhew, MD, Global Chief Medical Officer at Microsoft and a founding member of the Alliance. “The Alliance is a model for responsible, scalable innovation that starts with increasing access to care for the patient and ends with better health outcomes.”

Quotes from participants in the **Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye** include:

- Michael Pencina, PhD (Director of Duke AI Health, **Duke Health**): “Duke AI Health is excited to partner with the Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye and its thought leaders in using AI to harness the power of oculomics to advance the goal of making healthcare more personalized, cutting-edge, and accessible.”

- Ann Ostrovsky, MD (Chief of Ophthalmology Services, **ECU Health**, Professor of Ophthalmology, Brody School of Medicine **East Carolina University**): “Healthcare from the Eye is shaping a new paradigm for the future of ocular and systemic disease screening, driven by the integration of ophthalmic imaging with artificial intelligence. Especially for rural and underserved regions, like eastern North Carolina, this initiative will translate into expanded access to eye care, enhance screening for both ocular and systemic diseases, and help eye care providers serve more patients.”

- Michael Chaglasian, OD, FAAO (Associate Professor, **Illinois College of Optometry**): “The Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye has aligned top level expertise with academic and industry resources to help lead a transformational change in eyecare and medicine. The Illinois College of Optometry is honored to partner with all members as we work together to bring multimodal imaging, AI, and data driven analytics to the rapidly growing field of oculomics.”

- Tadashi Funahashi, MD (Chief Innovation & Transformation Officer, **Kaiser Permanente**): “Improving the health of our communities and eliminating disparities by providing convenient and effective health screening and care is a mission we all serve. Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye is a strategic opportunity to contribute towards achieving that mission.”solutions that will ultimately drive better patient outcomes.”

- S. Robert Levine, MD (Founder and CEO, **Mary Tyler Moore Vision Initiative**): “At the Mary Tyler Moore Vision Initiative, our bold goal is to eliminate vision loss from diabetes. The Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye offers a unique opportunity to share data and harness the eye’s ‘window’ into systemic health. By building an advanced knowledge base, we can create AI tools that enhance screening, diagnosis, and precision treatment for diabetic eye diseases and broader chronic conditions like heart, kidney, and Alzheimer’s disease.”

- Matt Rosenberg, MD (Founding & Managing Partner, **Mid Michigan Health Centers**): “As a primary care physician for 30 years, I know how difficult it is to meet every patient’s needs. We began using AI-powered diabetic retinal screening as part of the Healthcare from the Eye initiative over a year ago. Since then, screening rates have doubled, and we’re on track to reach 90% compliance. It’s fast, accurate, and doesn’t require a clinician. What started with diabetic eye disease is now opening the door to more proactive, whole-person care.”

- Michael Bota, MD (Endocrinologist and Medical Director of Population Health, **MultiCare Health System**) and Christopher J. Kelly, MD (Ophthalmologist and Associate Chief Medical Information Officer for Data and Analytics, **MultiCare Health System**): “Few things are harder for us as doctors than discussing vision loss with our patients—especially when blindness could have been avoided. Diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of preventable blindness in adults, yet fewer than half of U.S. patients with type 2 diabetes receive timely, guideline-recommended screenings. With artificial intelligence, we can reimagine healthcare to deliver the right interventions at the right time. Our hope is that AI-powered oculomics for early disease detection can help better allocate limited resources in primary care, optometry, and ophthalmology. The real challenge is building sustainable, scalable models to deliver affordable life-changing outcomes.”

- Kyu Rhee, MD, MPP (President and CEO, **National Association of Community Health Clinics [NACHC]**): “The National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) represents the nation’s Community Health Centers, which deliver affordable, high quality, comprehensive primary care to over 32.5 million people—1 in 10 Americans including 1 in 5 across Rural America. Vision services are a critical part of this care, especially in high-need communities. NACHC is proud to support the Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye in advancing access, improving outcomes, and reducing costs through this innovative approach, which holds promise across rural, urban, island, and frontier settings nationwide.”

- Howard Purcell, OD, FAAO (President, **New England College of Optometry**): “NECO is proud to collaborate with the Alliance for Health Care from the Eye to explore AI-powered innovation in oculomics. Together, we aim to support efforts toward earlier disease detection and more equitable healthcare delivery.”

- Nicholas J. Volpe, MD (Chairman, Department of Ophthalmology, **Northwestern University**): “The Northwestern Medicine Department of Ophthalmology is committed to advancing the science of oculomics and helping to develop pathways and access to this important diagnostic and screening tool. We recognize that readily available multimodal retinal imaging and interpretation along with health information will aid in the earlier detection and diagnosis of both eye and systemic disease. We are excited to partner with the Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye to enhance diagnostic services that leverage ocular imaging to facilitate access to care allowing us to preserve vision and ensure the best health outcomes for all.”

- Jonathan Nussdorf, MD (Chair of Ophthalmology, **Ochsner Health**): “This Alliance marks an exciting step forward in medicine, offering a powerful platform to unlock the vast transformative potential of medical AI while promoting its ethical development and the equitable delivery of healthcare to diverse communities.”

- Jeffrey Goldberg, MD, PhD (Professor and Chair of Ophthalmology, Byers Eye Institute at **Stanford University**): “Speaking on behalf of our many participating faculty, the opportunity to work together to advance connectivity and health, from discovery to patients everywhere, is very much aligned with our goals.”

- Ted Leng, MD, MS (Professor of Ophthalmology, **Stanford University School of Medicine**): “This is an exciting time in medicine, where AI, access to care, and preventative health intersect. I’m very optimistic about the Alliance’s potential to impact total body health.”

- David Troilo, PhD (President, **SUNY College of Optometry**): “The SUNY College of Optometry is honored to be a part of the Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye. Our mission, which revolves around research, education, and patient care, aligns well with the Alliance’s main domains of accessible healthcare, responsible AI, patient care coordination, and program sustainability. We are fully committed to innovation in diagnosis and treatment of eye disease and the development of AI solutions to enhance eye and vision care and ultimately improving overall health and well-being.”

- Pearse Keane, MD, FRCOphth (Professor of Artificial Medical Intelligence, **University College London**): “We’ve known for more than 100 years that it is possible to use the eye as a window to the rest of the body. This capability has been supercharged in recent years due to the combination of big data, advanced retinal imaging, and artificial intelligence. The Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye will play a leading role in this emerging field of oculomics.”

- Anthony Khawaja, PhD, FRCOphth (Professor of Ophthalmology, **University College London**): “The science driving AI-powered retinal scans for ocular and systemic diseases is exploding, offering transformative potential for preventive healthcare. Stakeholders across previously siloed systems need to unite and ensure we implement this effectively, responsibly, and sustainably. The Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye is leading this charge, and I strongly believe we will see near-term benefits to the visual and systemic health of the population.”

- Garry Choy, MD, MBA (Chief Clinical Transformation Officer, **UnitedHealth Group**, Medical Advisor/Co-Founder, **Q Bio**): “There’s immense potential in the eye as a window into whole person health—from diabetic retinopathy to other chronic conditions where regulated and clinically validated diagnostic technologies are emerging. The Alliance will further accelerate and catalyze clinical transformation: to align innovations that drive better patient outcomes by ensuring tools are clinically effective, evidence-based, safe, affordable, accessible, and scalable. Across the healthcare ecosystem, the Alliance will serve as a steward and advocate of solutions that will ultimately drive better patient outcomes.”

- Azizi Seixas, PhD (Associate Professor, **University of Miami**): “The University of Miami Miller School of Medicine Department of Informatics and Health Data Science is proud to participate in the Alliance for Healthcare from the Eye as a research affiliate, where we seek to assess the clinical and economic benefits this program provides to individuals and populations.”

- Aaron Lee, MD, MSCI (C. Dan and Irene Hunter Endowed Professor of Ophthalmology, **University of Washington**): “The human eye is a true microcosm of the human body and has the potential to disrupt healthcare delivery through a deep phenotyping of the brain, heart, and kidneys with quick, low-cost, non-invasive imaging. New innovative platforms for data sharing with accelerated computers, combined with linkage across large systemic datasets, will lead to a rapid acceleration of AI models that will uncover patterns and associations.”

- Cecilia Lee, MD (Professor of Ophthalmology, **University of Washington**): “With multimodal data and AI applied on retinal images, we have the potential to uncover novel disease associations and hidden biomarkers for multiple medical conditions including neurovascular disease, which could redefine the future of research and treatment.”

- Peter Embí, MD, MS (Co-Director of the ADVANCE AI Center and Professor of Biomedical Informatics and Medicine at **Vanderbilt University Medical Center**): “The opportunities to leverage AI and multi-modal healthcare data for accelerating diagnoses, slowing disease progression, and saving lives are enormous. The data, technologies and expertise this alliance brings together offer great promise to improve health and healthcare for many people.”

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