

## 2021 AOA HOUSE OF DELEGATES

### PROPOSED RESOLUTION

LETTER ASSIGNED: D TITLE: Biomedical Therapy and the Role of Vision Rehabilitation

SOURCE: AOA Board of Trustees

STATUS: Referred to the House of Delegates

DATE: June 23, 2021 TIME: 9:45 a.m. MT

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- 1 WHEREAS, the American Optometric Association (AOA) supports scientific discovery in  
2 eye care, and
- 3 WHEREAS, recent research continues to show promise in biomedical therapies such as  
4 epigenetics, gene therapy, and cell therapy to address eye disease and  
5 blindness; and
- 6 WHEREAS, doctors of optometry play a key role in the provision of biomedical therapies;  
7 and
- 8 WHEREAS, the AOA recognizes that individuals with visual impairment who improve in  
9 measurable vision from multiple treatment regimens may continue to have  
10 functional vision disorders which affect visual processing, and may have  
11 problems performing activities of daily living; and
- 12 WHEREAS, vision rehabilitation is a process of care for individuals with vision  
13 impairment(s) managed by doctors of optometry as part of the eye and vision  
14 care continuum; and
- 15 WHEREAS, vision rehabilitation care and services managed by doctors of optometry  
16 include multiple treatment options including the integration of treatment with  
17 clinical therapy and the use of treatment to optimize visual functioning; and
- 18 WHEREAS, vision rehabilitation care and services managed by doctors of optometry  
19 include counseling and assisting patients in performing activities of daily living

20 such as reading, learning, coping, ambulating safely, and pursuing activities  
21 associated with improved and protected individual health; and  
22 WHEREAS, continued optometric care of the eyes, visual system, and diseases/conditions  
23 related to visual impairment must always continue parallel to the process of  
24 biomedical therapy assessment and administration; now therefore be it  
25 RESOLVED, that the AOA inform the public and other stakeholders about the need for  
26 vision rehabilitation, as a part of continued eye care, when biomedical therapy  
27 is considered, recommended, or provided; and be it further  
28 RESOLVED, that the AOA urge organizations, agencies, and providers of biomedical  
29 therapy to partner with doctors of optometry in order to best address evolving  
30 patient needs as patients are assessed, and as visual systems change when  
31 biomedical therapy is considered or administered.

**THE FOLLOWING IS PROVIDED AS SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AS YOU  
CONSIDER THE ADOPTION OF THIS RESOLUTION.**

**POSSIBLE FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:** After consultation with the AOA Secretary/Treasurer,  
the potential cost to the AOA of this resolution, if adopted, would be approximately:  
Unknown.