

***The EHB Workgroup received comments from more than 50 optometrists. The comments generally expressed the following:***

Members of the Colorado Health Benefit Exchange Board:

When a benchmark plan is chosen for Colorado, the essential benefit for “Pediatric Vision Care” must be defined as a Comprehensive Pediatric Eye Examination.

All too often, parents rely on the results of vision screenings to determine how their children’s eyes are performing, when 80% of what a child learns is through the visual system.

- As many as 1 out of 4 children have a vision or eye issue that may impact learning. (IDPH, 2004; Zaba, 2001)
- It has been reported that 11% of children who pass a vision screening actually have an eye problem that needs treatment. (Ophth Physio Opt, 2004)

Yesterday, I saw a 10 year old girl for a comprehensive eye examination, who had been receiving annual vision screenings through her pediatrician. Her vision in the right eye without glasses was 20/20, but vision in her left eye was 20/400. No glasses prescription was necessary for her right eye, but her left eye’s prescription was +6.50, which is significantly far-sighted. Her brain has learned to see only through her right eye, and has been ignoring the blurry left eye. If this condition, amblyopia, or "lazy eye," is not treated by age 6 (per most studies), the brain will never learn to see properly.

Lack of diagnosis and treatment will forever affect this young girl's potential for depth perception and 3-D vision, which affects driving, sports, and academics.

In December 2011—with these facts in mind—HHS Secretary Sebelius acknowledged that pediatric vision care within the essential benefits is centered on a comprehensive eye examination. Additionally, the FEDVIP (Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program) has seen the importance of comprehensive pediatric eye examinations and covers them annually.

I encourage you to select a benchmark plan that is consistent with the intent of HHS and provides annual comprehensive pediatric eye examinations. The benchmark plans that meet this criterion are listed by letter below.

- A. Kaiser Ded/CO HMO 1200D
- D. Kaiser Plan A230
- E. Kaiser State Employee Plan

Thank you for your consideration.

The following individuals provided comments:

Deeanna Alexander	Michael Kalich	Brad Vogel
John Alfson	David Kleim	Amanda Wilson
Ted Archdalke	Kelley Knoche	
Chris Bakouris	Michael Koditek	
Jordan Ballantyne	Lindsey Look	
Premilla Banwait	Steve Loomis	
Sam Baron	Zoey Loomis	
Marsha Beach	Debra Meese	
Sarah Bell	Elizabeth Orleans	
Clark Blackwood	Jason Ortman	
Jacque Brown	Tara Peterson	
Buck Buchanan	Leilani Phillips	
Carrie Burleson	Glenn Pierre	
Jean Demoss	Michelle Sancho Marlatt	
Daniel Dietrichs	John Schachet	
Nick Doyle	Jeri Schneebeck	
Dennis Dupuis	Al Schubert	
Craig Eckroth	Blake Simmons	
Marla Feinstein	Matthew Skrdla	
BJ Fiske	Shannon Sullivan	
Jared Hadlock	Beth Sumi Sweidman	
Mory Hsu	Larry Sumner	
Mark D. Jackson	Perry Umlauf	
Kelley Jackson Condon	Kelly Visentine	