

Eye Health Education

GMEIPO organizes public and professional education through short courses, seminars and conferences, dedicated to the prevention of blindness.

- Seminar on Blindness Prevention in Armenia. Annual Meeting of the Ophthalmic Society of Armenia (Clinical Seminar, September, 2000).
- Contemporary Issues in Ophthalmology in Armenia (Clinical Seminar, July 14, 2001).
- Blindness Prevention in Armenia. Setting Priorities (Clinical Conference, October 7, 2002).
- Introduction to Public Health Ophthalmology 2-week course for eye care professionals (14-28 March, 2005)

Meghrigian Public Health Ophthalmology Fellowship Program

GMEIPO has announced the Meghrigian Fellowship in Public Health Ophthalmology. Meghrigian fellows will complete the two-year MPH Program at the American University of Armenia and will be engaged in practical training and research at GMEIPO.

In the first year of study, Meghrigian Fellows will receive a scholarship covering their MPH tuition in exchange for committing to 20 hours per week of work in the GMEIPO/CHSR and maintaining good academic standing.

The first Meghrigian fellow will start the training with the 2006/2008 MPH cohort.

About 80 % of eye diseases in the world is treatable or preventable.

WHO "Vision 2020"

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA
CENTER FOR HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Garo Meghrigian
Eye Institute For
Preventive Ophthalmology
(GMEIPO)

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You can also visit us at:
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<http://www.aua.am/chsr/gmeipo/>



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA
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Garo Meghrigian
Eye Institute
For Preventive
Ophthalmology

Our mission is to
prevent,
reduce,
possibly
eliminate
avoidable
blindness
in Armenia



Garo Meghriqian's donation

In 1999, Mr. Garo Meghriqian of Los Angeles funded a Blindness Prevention Program in Armenia in memory of his daughter, Christine Hripsime. The Garo Meghriqian Eye Institute for Preventive Ophthalmology (GMEIPO) was established within the Center For Health Services Research and Development (CHSR) of the College of Health Sciences of the American University of Armenia (AUA) to implement its vision.

GMEIPO is a preventive center. It combines the blindness prevention programs with educational and research activities in eye care.

Objectives of GMEIPO

- Conduct scientific investigations of ophthalmic epidemiology to increase the understanding of eye diseases in the community;
- Educate eye care providers and the population in general;
- Train the future professionals for blindness prevention activities in Armenia;
- Establish a wide network in Caucasus, which will focus on providing high level and affordable ophthalmic services to all vulnerable groups of the population.
- Develop partnership with international organizations, interested in blindness prevention.

Situation analysis

In 1999, GMEIPO conducted a **situational analysis** based on statistics from the Ministry of Health of Armenia and a **survey of regional ophthalmic services** to identify the major problems in eye care in the country, and to

prioritize eye diseases prevention effort in Armenia. In 2000-2004, based on the qualitative results of these projects, several other projects were developed and implemented by the GMEIPO staff.

Implemented and ongoing projects

Summer Camps Project /2000-2001, supported by the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

The project covered 11 summer camps with about 6,000 school age children. All children were screened by ophthalmologists. Some of them received glasses and the others were referred for further treatment to Yerevan.

The prevalence of eye diseases among school age children was estimated from this data.

World Vision Gyumri Area Development Project - 2002, supported by World Vision/Armenia (WV/A). The project provided 2,000 children in Gyumri (North Armenia) with high quality eye services.

Armavir Health Fair Project - 2002, supported by the USAID funded American International Health Alliance (AIHA)/University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) partnership. The project accomplished a mass screening of population in Armavir marz of Armenia.

The goals of the project were to provide vulnerable groups of the population with high level ophthalmic services, identify the barriers in eye care in the country and assess the impact of eye diseases on quality of life.

Boarding School Visual Impairment Project - 2002, supported by UNICEF/Armenia and the Jinishian Memorial Fund.

The project assessed eye disorders and other major health problems, such as malnutrition, physical development abnormalities, mental disorders and neurological pathologies among approximately 600 children living in or attending four institutions in Armenia.

Strengthening Regional Ophthalmic Service: in Gegharkunik Marz Project/ 2003-2007, supported by Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF).

The Ararat Lions Club, in partnership with GMEIPO and MOH was awarded a LCIF SightFirst grant for improving eye care in Gegharkunik. In the scope of the project Lion: Regional Ophthalmic Unit (ROU) was established in Sevan to provide a high quality secondary eye care to the people of Gegharkunik marz and neighboring regions. The ROU was renovated and equipped to WHO standards. The core staff (2 nurses and ophthalmologist) was trained on new methods of diagnostics and treatment at Aravind Eye Hospital/India.

In support of the ROU, 10 village examination centers were established to provide a primary eye care and screening services.

Within 2 years 20,000 people will receive free ophthalmic examinations. An estimated 1,000-1,500 cataract surgeries per year will be conducted by the ROU.

In 2004-2005 GMEIPO, supported by Jinishian Memorial Fund, conducted a 2-day training course in Primary eye care for 20 village nurses and 2-week training in Public Health ophthalmology for eye care specialists from Gegharkunik and Tavush marzes.