



Making 2020 the ‘Year of Vision’

The origin of VISION 2020

VISION 2020: The Right to Sight¹ is a global initiative with the aim of eliminating avoidable blindness by the year 2020. It was launched on 18 February 1999 by the World Health Organization (WHO) together with the 20-plus international non-governmental organisations involved in eye care and the prevention and management of blindness that make up the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB). VISION 2020 UK was established in the UK in 2002 as an organisation to promote and facilitate collaboration and co-working in the sight loss and eye health sectors. VISION 2020 UK became Vision UK in 2017.

The evolution of VISION 2020

The VISION 2020 Global Initiative was subsequently complemented and built upon by a series of additional plans. The most recent being “Universal Eye Health: A global action plan 2014 – 2019” (GAP)². The GAP set a new Global Target. It aimed to reduce “prevalence of avoidable visual impairment by 25% by 2019” (compared to the baseline prevalence of 2010). This was seen as a more realistic global target as to what can be achieved by the end of 2020 rather than the original target of global elimination by 2020. Some individual countries may achieve, or be close to, elimination by 2020. In 2019 the WHO launched the World Report on Vision³ and we are hoping for a country launch in the UK in 2020.

¹ <https://www.who.int/blindness/partnerships/vision2020/en/>

² <https://www.iapb.org/global-initiatives/vision-2020/what-is-vision-2020/>

³ <https://www.iapb.org/news/who-launches-the-world-report-on-vision/>

A golden opportunity

The year 2020 presents an opportunity in the UK not only to remind everyone about the impact of sight loss, but also to celebrate work undertaken both to eradicate avoidable sight loss and to support those living with vision impairment. We wish to celebrate 2020 and make it the 'Year of Vision'.

It also affords us the chance to build on the spirit of collaboration that has already been achieved in the UK across the eye health and sight loss sectors. We are asking members and associates to use '**2020: The Year of Vision**' as a working strapline in association with your campaigns, events etc. This will help to create a cohesive and year-long, message to policy makers, professionals, service users and the public that eye health and sight loss are important issues to both consider and act upon in 2020 (and beyond).

We are not asking for you to campaign on this individually but to simply add it to literature and promotions as a sub line to indicate support. This is not aimed to compromise or dilute any individual member's messaging or campaigning but to add weight to that message or campaign.

We have put together five objectives for members and associates to sign up to:

- 1) Together we will raise awareness of the need for medical research to encourage investment in eye health.
- 2) Together we will promote better eye health to prevent sight loss.
- 3) Together we will advocate for improved eye care and the best possible support for children and adults living with vision impairment.
- 4) Together we will celebrate those having a positive impact on people's vision and daily lives.
- 5) Together we will work towards equality for people who are blind or partially sighted.

We look forward to your support on this and to working closely with you in 2020 and beyond.