



KEYNOTE

WHO standards for low vision rehabilitation

– a new perspective

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Keynote outline

The International Standards for Vision Rehabilitation are the outcome of an international consultative process over 1,5 years that has involved international vision rehabilitation experts from all the 6 WHO Regions of the world. This process terminated with the International Consensus Conference on Vision Rehabilitation, Rome 9-12 December 2015, (ICC-Rome 2015), attended by experts from all of the six WHO Regions, each led by a Regional Chair. The ICC-Rome 2015 was organized by the WHO and supported by the Italian National Reference Centre for Services and Research for the Prevention of Blindness and Rehabilitation of the Visually Impaired, the WHO Collaborating Centre for Vision Rehabilitation.

The standards for vision rehabilitation define which services are agreed as required at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of the health care system, how those services should be provided, by whom and where. At the primary and secondary levels, two sets of standards were drawn up: essential services and additional / optional services to broaden and strengthen vision rehabilitation at each level. Moreover, the intervention in the childhood (habilitation) was differentiated from that for the adults (rehabilitation).

During the work an agreement was reached on a number of points, including:

- the approach to the person who has a vision impairment and undertakes a rehabilitation program should be multidisciplinary and person-centred;
- is necessary to have collaboration and communication between all professionals involved in the process of vision rehabilitation and between workers at different levels of the vision rehabilitation process;
- the overlapping of competencies across the health system cadres makes it appropriate to speak of skills and not of professional roles; therefore, it is necessary to develop curricula for operators of vision rehabilitation;
- it is recommended to use the WHO-TARSS as the tool to provide the information needed to assess the current rehabilitation needs and gaps in service provision and to monitor access to the same following the recommended process of the Universal Health Coverage

The aim of the Conference was to finalize the standards, ensuring their global relevance and applicability, as a tool for achieving universal access to low vision rehabilitation and to design a set of indicators, to use in assessing the impact of the applying the standards.

* Filippo Amore is also speaking on behalf of:

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is an Ophthalmologist and a PhD in “Vision Science”. Obtained her academic education at the Catholic University of Sacred Heart in Rome. For many years her activity has focused mainly on the study of inflammatory and infectious eye diseases. From 2010 she works at the Italian National Reference Centre for Services and Research for the Prevention of Blindness and Rehabilitation of the Visually Impaired, a WHO Collaborating Centre. Her activity is directed to clinical care and especially to research in neuroscience. From 2014 she is involved in the process to elaborate the International Standards on Vision Rehabilitation. She is co-author of scientific publications and book chapters, has been speaker at national and international conferences and instructor in training courses. She revises the scientific and dissemination publications produced by the IAPB Italia Onlus.



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Honors: Lions: International President's Award (2011), Rotary: Paul Harris Distinction (2009), IOAT Gold Medal for trachoma global services (2003), Italian Society of Ophthalmology: G.B. Bietti Award (2000).

