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Prevent Blindness to Host the 2024 ASPECT Patient Engagement and Advocacy Summit in Washington, D.C.

- Three-day event brings together patients, care partners, and public health champions to advance the goals of the Prevent Blindness ASPECT (Advocacy, Support, Perspective, Empowerment, Communication, and Training) Patient Engagement Program -

CHICAGO (May 7, 2024) – [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s leading nonprofit eye health and safety organization, will be hosting the ASPECT Patient Engagement and Advocacy Summit, May 14-16, 2024, at the Madison Hotel in Washington, D.C. The Summit will bring together [ASPECT \(Advocacy, Support, Perspective, Empowerment, Communication, and Training\) Patient Engagement Program](#) graduates (eye health patients and their allies), and program sponsors.

As part of the event, Prevent Blindness will also hold its 19th Annual [Eyes on Capitol Hill](#) legislative day, providing participants with the opportunity to meet elected officials and their staff to discuss a variety of vision and eye health issues and the need for legislative and funding support.

Founded in 2020, the ASPECT Patient Engagement Program at Prevent Blindness aims to equip participants with knowledge, skills, and confidence to become advocates for vision and eye health at the individual, peer-to-peer, community, state, and/or national levels.

The ASPECT Patient Engagement and Advocacy Summit is generously supported by Sustaining Level Partners Amgen, Genentech, and Novartis. Apellis, Astellas, Johnson & Johnson, Kyowa Kirin, Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals, and Regeneron are Premier Level Partners. Supporting Level Partners include Alexion, Alkeus Pharmaceuticals, the AR and JR Peacock Trusts, BioCryst, Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO), Glaukos, Spark Therapeutics, and Viridian.

The ASPECT Patient Engagement and Advocacy Summit will include a variety of educational sessions and group exercises on topics such as:

- Use of storytelling as a therapeutic tool.

- Identity and self-stigma.
- How we can use personal stories to address the mental health impacts of vision loss
- How to address gaps in healthcare delivery and patient provider communication for those with vision loss
- The role of health and wellness in independence for the visually impaired and blind community
- How to advocate for inclusive research for individuals with visual impairment and blindness

Additionally, Eyes on Capitol Hill advocates will specifically ask elected officials to:

- Support a funding level of \$10 million to vision and eye health, at the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC\) Vision Health Initiative](#). The CDC's Vision Health Initiative (VHI) conducts national-level surveillance, engages in partnerships that promote early detection and connect people at high risk for eye diseases to eye care, and shares best practices with states and communities about incorporating vision and eye health into community-level interventions.
- Join the bipartisan, bicameral [Congressional Vision Caucus \(CVC\)](#), dedicated to strengthening and stimulating a national dialogue and policy on vision-related problems and disabilities. The mission of the CVC is to raise awareness about the increasing number of Americans at risk for age-related eye diseases and those who face vision loss due to chronic disease.

“Building on the success of our first ASPECT Patient Engagement and Advocacy Summit in 2022, we are thrilled to expand the program this year to offer new opportunities for advocates to learn more about how they can use their unique voice for vision,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. “We thank all of our program sponsors and individual donors who make these important events possible.”

For more information on the ASPECT program, please visit [PreventBlindness.org/aspect](#), or contact Julie Grutzmacher, MSW, MPH, Director of Patient Advocacy and Population Health Initiatives, at JGrutzmacher@PreventBlindness.org. For Information on Prevent Blindness advocacy efforts, please visit [Advocacy.PreventBlindness.org](#), or contact Sara Brown, Director of Government Affairs, at SBrown@PreventBlindness.org.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to

eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, visit us at [PreventBlindness.org](https://www.preventblindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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