



# Improving the training abilities of ophthalmic educators: the Ophthalmology Foundation's initiatives

Our goal as medical educators is for our students to learn what they need to know and competently perform ophthalmic procedures. In addition, the students need to have good communication skills and behave professionally and ethically (1,2). Most medical educators are not taught how to teach but rather learn by role-modeling their mentors. This can be good or bad depending on the mentor! In addition, the amount of knowledge and numbers of surgical procedures is ever increasing and yet, in most countries, the amount of time to train and become competent is not changing. Thus, our goal of creating competent ophthalmologists is ever more challenging.

The Ophthalmology Foundation (OF) was formed in 2020 with the mission to "...improve global eye care and advance scientific ophthalmology..." (3). To this end, the OF has two main initiatives. The first is to improve subspecialty care by providing subspecialty fellowship opportunities. In collaboration with the International Ophthalmological Fellowship Foundation (IOFF), the OF now offers nearly one hundred 3–12-month fellowships for ophthalmologists from under-resourced countries (4). The second initiative is to improve the training ability of ophthalmic educators. This is done through a variety of face-to-face and online activities.

Face-to-face activities include faculty development symposia and courses at national and supranational ophthalmology society meetings. Multiday "Leaders in Education" programs are specifically designed for countries or regions working to improve teaching skills of their ophthalmic educators (5). Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs are targeted at specific national projects. Online courses include more than 20 modules created by international ophthalmology educators aimed at improving all aspects of ophthalmology training. This special *AES* edition is based on a portion of these online teaching skill modules. In addition, an online mentorship program is available for ophthalmologists (6,7).

In this special series on improving teaching skills, a wide variety of topics are discussed. These include teaching in the clinic and operating room with techniques for giving effective feedback, ethics curriculum and how to teach professionalism, and how to appropriately assess competence. We thank all the authors for their contributions.

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Karl Golnik



Yip Chee Chew



Gabriela Palis



Meenakshi Swaminathan

**Karl Golnik<sup>1</sup>, MD, MEd**

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Ophthalmology at the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH, USA.*

*(Email: golnikkarl@gmail.com)*

**Yip Chee Chew<sup>2</sup>, MD**

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Singapore, Singapore.*

*(Email: yip.cheechew@ntu.edu.sg)*

**Gabriela Palis<sup>3</sup>, MD**

<sup>3</sup>*Ophthalmology Department, Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina.*

*(Email: gpalis@gmail.com)*

**Meenakshi Swaminathan<sup>4,5</sup>, MD**

<sup>4</sup>*Capstone Clinic, Chennai, India;* <sup>5</sup>*Sri Ramachandra Medical College, Chennai, India.*

*(Email: meenakshiswaminathan@gmail.com)*

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