

Prime Opticals Walk for Sight: A Public Health Initiative

Ideh Valentina Constance, and Momoh Nanaaishat

*Prime Opticals and Eye Clinic, Benin City, Nigeria
Corresponding author: IDEH VC, Email address:
tinaideh2004@yahoo.com*

Introduction: Prime Opticals and Eye Clinic was established 27 years ago by an Ophthalmologist (Dr Valentina Ideh). She intended that it should be a clinic that would compete favorably with other tertiary Eye Care Centre in the State. Today the Clinic still is the foremost private Ophthalmology practices in Edo State. The following events were organized to celebrate Prime Opticals at 25years: a program on TV-Prime Opticals half hour which ran for 3 months; Prime Opticals walk for sight; Charity eye camp; Guest lecture and banquet; and a Thanksgiving service. It is pertinent to note that this celebration was sponsored by Prime Opticals and Eye Clinic solely. The interest of the proprietress of Prime Opticals in Advocacy in Ophthalmology was stimulated after she attended the Community Ophthalmology lectures at the Ophthalmological Society of Nigeria (OSN) Conference in Ibadan a few years ago. The VISION 2020 program consists of three elements: Disease control, human resource development and infrastructure development. The guiding principles for VISION 2020 program are an integrated, sustainable, equitable and excellent eye care services. Run for Sight days have also been carried out sponsored by banks etc some are just to raise awareness of various sight threatening visual diseases other to raise funds to cater for the visually impaired. Walk for Sight has always been the title used for awareness walk to mark World sight day World Glaucoma day by Ophthalmologists, Lions Clubs, Project ORBIS e.t.c. It has also been advocated by OSN. Objectives of the Walk: The objectives of the walk were as follows:

1. To inform the general public about the relation between healthy living and healthy eyes.
2. To discuss the place of exercise in preventing sight threatening complications of systemic diseases.
3. To emphasize the need for regular eye checks to assist in early diagnosis of sight threatening problems
4. To inform the public about our next Charity Eye camp.

Methodology/Participants: Women are the caregivers in the home and invitations were sent to Church women groups, Non-Governmental Organizations, Friends and members of the Public for the Walk for Sight. Members of Medical Women Association of Nigeria (MWAN) and OSN Edo State chapter were also in attendance. Participants were informed to come in exercise wear and that T-shirts would be provided. They were to be in fasting state and breakfast would be provided. Registration started with Blood pressure and Blood sugar check Those whose blood pressure was high were only included in the warm up exercise and were referred to Physicians. Similarly with those with Sugar levels outside normal limits were referred to Physicians. Members of the Charity Walk Team were as follows:

1. Nurses were available with first aid kits and water/they did the pre exercise screening
2. Federal Road Safety Corps to assist with traffic
3. Dietician
4. Physiotherapist
5. Doctors
6. Brigade Band boys
7. Caterers

The walk for Sight:

Pre walk Health screening: Seventy-five people took part of which fifteen were men. Six people had elevated blood pressure above 130/90, three of them were on blood pressure medication though some of them had skipped medication. Other individuals who had severe arthritis or

medical reasons not to participate in the walk were excluded. There was a group photo before setting out. Upon return from the walk, there were cool-down exercises and question & answer session during which relevant questions were asked by participants about the various diseases the frequency of eye checks; the myths about various foods calories and losing weight where dispelled. Many participants were amazed about the aetiology of Age-related macular degeneration and the relationship with hyperlipaemia. Information about the forthcoming eye Camp was disseminated as well. Breakfast was then provided. The menu included pack of fresh fruits, Bean cake (Moyin moyin), Pap with skimmed milk, Quaker oats, Brown bread toasted with fish, Tea and coffee were provided with honey and skimmed milk as well as bottled water.

Conclusion: The need for information to the general public cannot be over emphasized. The question & answer session made us realize that even the educated had a gap in their knowledge of the relationship between ageing diseases and complications in the Eye.

