



STUDY CONFIRMS CERTIFICATION, PRODUCTIVITY LINK

St. Paul, MN (March 13, 2008) - A study by The Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel® (JCAHPO) has confirmed that certified ophthalmic medical personnel (OMP) contribute positively to increased overall performance in ophthalmic practice. Published in the Contact Lens Association of Ophthalmologists® (CLAO) sponsored journal, *Eye and Contact Lens: Science and Clinical Practice*, the comparative study found nearly four out of five physicians agreed that certified OMP rendered their practices more productive than non-certified OMP.

The article titled, *A Comparative Study of the Impact of Certified and Noncertified Ophthalmic Medical Personnel on Practice Quality and Productivity* and co-authored by Kenneth E. Woodworth Jr., C.O.M.T., C.O.E., Peter C. Donshik, M.D., William H. Ehlers, M.D., David J. Pucel, Ph.D., Lynn D. Anderson, Ph.D., and Nathan A. Thompson, Ph.D., C.C.O.A., measures the importance of performance attributes and practice productivity in both certified and non-certified OMP.

The study was conducted using a random sample of 385 ophthalmologists located in both Canada and the United States. The respondents practiced in small and large clinics alike and employed both certified and non-certified staff.

One of the primary objectives of the study was to gain a better understanding of how, why, and in what ways OMP enhance overall practice performance. To achieve this, the study evaluated practice quality and productivity, utilizing 14 desirable professional attributes (e.g., quality assurance, broader knowledge base) and 10 practice productivity measures (e.g., patient flow, trouble-shooting rapport, patients seen per hour).

The data revealed noteworthy consistencies across every category of measurement. Certified OMP scored higher than non-certified OMP in nearly every assessment polling. "Ophthalmologists shared a strong belief that certified OMP at all levels possessed more of all 14 professional attributes measured," stated co-author Dr. William H. Ehlers.

The study validates the importance of having certified, competent staff working with physicians to improve quality throughout ophthalmologic practice. Certified ophthalmic professionals enhance their own careers, in addition to helping "train other practice personnel, and in doing so indirectly increase practice productivity."

The study also provides the first comprehensive and substantial statistical look at the ways in which employment of certified staff positively influences an ophthalmologic practice.

A copy of the article can be found in the Contact Lens Association of Ophthalmologists (CLAO) *Eye and Contact Lens: Science and Clinical Practice* or online at www.claojournal.org.

JCAHPO is a non-profit organization that has been providing certification and training for eye care excellence since 1969. More than 15,000 ophthalmic assistants, technicians and technologists across the globe are JCAHPO-certified.