

# News Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Partnership Helps Catch Diabetic Retinopathy**

### ***New Technology Puts Screening Tools in Crozer-Keystone Primary Care Offices***

**SPRINGFIELD, PA** — With the intent to catch diabetic retinopathy (DR) in its earliest stages, primary care practices in the Crozer-Keystone Health System have partnered with a regional ophthalmology practice and a national medical devices and software provider to screen patients quickly and easily. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 4 million adults have DR, it is the leading cause of new blindness in adults, and it costs an estimated \$500 million in direct medical costs annually.

Primary care doctors are challenged in getting their diabetic patients to visit eye doctors for DR screening, citing the usual suspects as barriers: time, money, and forgetfulness. However, now Crozer-Keystone's Brinton Lake Family Medicine and Internal Medicine at Brinton Lake, have partnered with Vantage EyeCare and Topcon Healthcare to give patients the opportunity to get screened in their offices during primary care visits.

Advances in photography have made the diabetic retinal screening process easier and more portable. Traditionally, it was accessible only in ophthalmology practices, but now primary care practices can offer it through collaborative partnerships with companies like Vantage and Topcon. The photos are sent electronically by Topcon to a Vantage ophthalmologist to read.

"That's the part that makes this new option so appealing," explained Dina Capalongo, D.O., Crozer-Keystone's medical director of primary care. "We have a long-standing relationship with the ophthalmologists at Vantage EyeCare, so this partnership provides quality, convenience and value for our patients." The Vantage EyeCare division that Dr. Capalongo works with is Ophthalmic Surgical Associates, operated by Christopher Williams, M.D., and John Witherell, M.D. The division has offices in Upland, Pa., Glen Mills, Pa., and Media, Pa.

"This is only the beginning," Dr. Capalongo concluded. "We're developing this program to expand to all of the Crozer-Keystone primary care offices across Delaware County. The results we've seen in only two practices to-date confirms that this is an effective front-line defense against diabetic retinopathy, and is a vital service to our community."

"We collectively take responsibility for screening results, especially the abnormal ones," said Nancy Rist, M.D., from Internal Medicine at Brinton Lake. "Patients with abnormal results are

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fast-tracked to Drs. Williams and Witherell.” The partnership has screened more than 80 patients since September 2019, and of these patients, 30 (nearly 37%) had abnormal studies, explained Dr. Rist.

Diabetic retinopathy is a disease caused by blood vessel damage in the eyes, often caused by poorly controlled blood sugar. Treatment includes diabetes management, ophthalmologic medications and potentially surgery for advanced cases. Early detection is key in successful treatment.

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**Crozer-Keystone Health System** was established in 1990 by the merger of Crozer-Chester Medical Center in Upland, Pa. and Delaware County Memorial Hospital in Drexel Hill, Pa. Today, the health system is home to two additional hospitals: Taylor Hospital in Ridley Park, Pa., and Springfield Hospital in Springfield, Pa. With more than 1,000 physicians and 6,000 employees, Crozer-Keystone is the largest employer and health care provider in Delaware County. In July 2016, Crozer-Keystone was acquired by Prospect Medical Holdings, Inc. For further information visit [www.crozerkeystone.org](http://www.crozerkeystone.org) or call 1-800-CK-HEALTH (1-800-254-3258).

**Topcon Healthcare** is a comprehensive diagnostic device and software manufacturer within the worldwide eye care community. It introduced the world’s first commercial back-of-the-eye Spectral Domain (SD) and multimodal Swept Source (SS) optical coherence tomography (OCT) systems, which have driven innovation in eye care. Topcon Healthcare’s diabetic retinopathy screening program, Topcon Screen, allows primary care physicians, endocrinologists, and internal medicine doctors to provide a reliable eye screening service for their diabetic patients. By offering the comprehensive eye screening service right where the diabetic patients are, with the family doctor, the screening compliance percentages are expected to improve. For further information visit [www.topconscreen.com](http://www.topconscreen.com).

**Vantage EyeCare** launched in January 2018 with the simple idea that physicians at the front lines of care are the best stewards of their patients’ health, treatment and healing. Combining the talents of more than 100 ophthalmologists and optometrists across 45 locations, Vantage brings collaboration, innovation, and care coordination to the many communities it serves. As an independent private practice that remains entirely physician owned and operated, Vantage is able to partner with quality health systems like Crozer-Keystone for the benefit of mutual patients. For further information visit [www.vantageeyecare.com](http://www.vantageeyecare.com).