

Check out [Education Enhanced Through Patient Care](#), the latest addition to ASCO's series of podcasts. This installment features Dr. Nathan Lighthizer, Assistant Dean of Clinical Care Services and Assistant Professor at Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry, and Dr. Elizabeth Steele, Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and Associate Professor of Optometry at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Optometry. They discuss the importance of having both didactic learning and patient care as part of Doctor of Optometry degree programs.

All of the schools and colleges of optometry incorporate patient care into their programs, which begins at different stages in different programs. Students first observe and then participate in patient care at their own institution's clinics and then rotate through outside clinics and other healthcare facilities near the end of training. The clinical programs at the schools and colleges of optometry are valuable resources for the communities they serve. Patients often include the underserved and underinsured. Optometry students also participate in community service programs, where they see firsthand how systemic disease affects the eye and learn to interact and with other health professionals. All of these patient care experiences solidify the knowledge students obtain from their basic science and clinical skills courses and provide invaluable, real-world experiences, "things you can't learn from a book," as Dr. Lighthizer notes.