



**For immediate release**

**Alcon and Prevent Blindness America Partner at AARP Annual Meeting to Help Baby Boomers Better Manage Eye Health**

**HUENENBERG, Switzerland – October 10, 2007** – At the 2007 American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Annual Meeting in Boston last month, Alcon, Inc. (NYSE:ACL), the world's largest eye care company, joined with the nation's leading volunteer eye health organization, Prevent Blindness America, to educate Baby Boomers about practical approaches to maintaining healthy eyes and good vision. As part of their commitment to promoting quality vision health, Alcon and Prevent Blindness America facilitated more than 400 complimentary eye screenings testing visual acuity and visual field. Alcon also sponsored several informational presentations about glaucoma, cataracts and dry eye featuring leading ophthalmologists. In addition, the partnering groups encouraged meeting attendees to speak with onsite physicians about specific eye health concerns and offered educational literature and product samples.

According to a 2002 study conducted by Prevent Blindness America, it is estimated that more than 3.4 million older Americans are legally blind, with the prevalence of blindness or visual impairment increasing rapidly after the age of 75. Many of these cases could have been prevented if aging Americans took a more proactive approach to their overall eye health.

"Alcon and Prevent Blindness America's support of free screenings and eye health educational programs at the AARP Annual Meeting was an important public service. This was a valuable step towards increasing awareness about vision health in the older population," said Paul Schacknow, M.D., Ph.D., chief of Glaucoma Services, Visual Health and Surgical Center, and clinical associate professor, Department of Surgery, Division of Ophthalmology, Nova Southeastern University. "As this generation continues to age, it is imperative that they get examined regularly and learn when they might be at risk. It was a great opportunity to participate in the glaucoma screening and to meet and interact with the people who were screened and answer their questions."

In addition to Dr. Schacknow, several other doctors attended the AARP Annual Meeting on behalf of Alcon, including:

- Jane Bachman, O.D., F.A.A.O., adjunct clinical faculty, Medical College of Wisconsin.
- Elyse Chaglasaian, O.D., F.A.A.O., associate professor of optometry, Illinois College of Optometry, and Midwest Refractive Surgery & Cornea Consulting, Hoffman Estates, IL.
- Robert Kupsc, O.D., Nielsen Eye Center.
- Kenneth Lebow, O.D., F.A.A.O.

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- Steven A. Nielsen, M.D., president of the Nielsen Eye Center, assistant professor of clinical ophthalmology, Tufts University School of Medicine.
- James Pasternack, M.D., assistant professor, University of Connecticut, clinical instructor, Yale University.
- Clark Springs, M.D., assistant professor of clinical ophthalmology, Indiana University School of Medicine.

During the course of the meeting, Alcon surveyed people being screened and other visitors to its booth to find out what their greatest concerns were with respect to their eyes and vision. Among the most frequently noted concerns were:

- Contact lens solutions and dryness.
- Dry eyes and therapies to soothe or cure ocular dryness.
- Latest technologies in intraocular lenses, specifically for presbyopia and astigmatism.
- New treatments for macular degeneration.
- Ocular vitamins and specific brands.
- Therapies for eye diseases common in the Baby Boomer audience, such as glaucoma, cataracts and dry eye.
- Vision loss from glaucoma and the latest surgical techniques.

"By partnering with Prevent Blindness America and eye care professionals from around the country, we were able to outreach to thousands of Boomers about vision at the AARP's meeting," said Cary Rayment, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Alcon, Inc. "Together we raised vision awareness and promoted proactive eye health management among older Americans, and we look forward to building upon this important message in the future."

Prevent Blindness America's most recent study, *The Economic Impact of Vision Problems: The Toll of Major Adult Eye Disorders, Visual Impairment, and Blindness on the U.S. Economy*, which came out in April 2007, estimated that vision problems in the United States costs the economy roughly \$51.4 billion.

"We were honored to participate in the AARP meeting alongside Alcon and eye care professionals to help promote vision health as people age," said Daniel D. Garrett, senior vice president of Prevent Blindness America. "This meeting provided us the opportunity to spread the word about practicing better eye health to identify diseases and conditions at an early stage and prevent permanent vision loss."

The AARP Annual Meeting provides Americans over 50 a venue to learn about the products and services that matter the most to them and their lifestyle. This year, more than 25,000 individuals and AARP members attended the Annual Meeting.

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## **About Alcon**

Alcon is the world's leading eye care company and has been improving eye health and vision for more than 60 years. Alcon has the broadest offering of pharmaceutical, surgical and consumer products for the eye including leading products such as the AcrySof® Natural IQ, AcrySof® ReStor® and AcrySof® Toric intraocular lenses for cataract surgery, Travatan® ophthalmic solution for glaucoma, Patanol® and Pataday® ophthalmic solutions for eye allergies, Vigamox® ophthalmic solution and TobraDex® ophthalmic suspension for eye infections and OptiFree® Replenish® multipurpose disinfecting solution for contact lenses. With the largest corporate research and development commitment of any eye care company worldwide, Alcon develops pharmaceutical products to treat glaucoma, retinal diseases, dry eye, infection, inflammation and allergy; surgical products for cataract, vitreoretinal and refractive procedures, and consumer products in the areas of contact lens care, dry eye and ocular health. In 2006, Alcon invested \$512 million to research and develop new products and plans to invest more than \$3 billion over the next five years to discover and develop new treatments for conditions and diseases of the eye. For more information about Alcon, please visit [www.alcon.com](http://www.alcon.com).

## **About Prevent Blindness America**

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, divisions and chapters, it's committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020.

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