

April 21, 2022

Adam R. Glassman, MS
Principal Investigator, DRCR Retina Network Coordinating Center

Re: Letter of Support for DRCR Retina Network Grant Renewal

Dear Mr. Glassman:

As President of the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), I am writing to provide my strong support for the renewal of the DRCR Retina Network grant. Since 2002, the Network's mission has been to develop and implement high quality multicenter clinical studies that lead to a better understanding of retinal diseases, advance their treatment, and improve the lives of individuals with retinal pathology. ARVO is the largest and most respected eye and vision research organization in the world with approximately 10,000 members. As ARVO's mission is to advance research worldwide into understanding the visual system and preventing, treating and curing its disorders, the Network's mission is consistent with that of ARVO.

The importance of the clinical problems addressed by the Network cannot be overstated. By 2050, the estimated number of Americans with diabetic retinopathy will nearly double from 7.7 million (in 2010) to 14.6 million and the estimated number of Americans with AMD will more than double from 2 million to 5.4 million. The Network's ability to rapidly develop and conduct high quality clinical trials to assess new treatments that may improve clinical management and visual outcomes in patients with retinal diseases is extremely valuable.

The record of productivity by the DRCR Retina Network has been remarkable, with studies spanning from pilot and feasibility studies to large-scale, randomized clinical trials. The results of Network trials have had a major impact on clinical practice and have laid the foundation for the Preferred Practice Patterns for several retinal disease. In addition, findings from other Network studies have provided important information on many other aspects of clinical practice including evaluation of new imaging technology and diagnostic tools to development of artificial intelligence approaches to diagnosis and treatment of retinal diseases. The breadth and depth of these studies is largely due to the ability of the Network to collect and develop many new protocol ideas from its diverse group of investigators, to quickly launch studies using its standing group of both academic and private practice retina specialists, to guide the execution of these studies with its experienced leadership and infrastructure, and its commitment to conducting trials that are most likely to have significant public visual health impact.



I strongly urge the NEI to favorably consider the grant renewal for the Network. Given the considerable impact its studies have already had on the treatment of retinal disease and the increased expansion in the scope of its studies, it is clear that the Network is uniquely poised to make many additional major contributions to preserving and improving vision in the United States and throughout the world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maureen G. Maguire". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maureen G. Maguire, PhD, FARVO
ARVO President

Professor Emeritus
University of Pennsylvania