OPHTHALMOLOGY

Synopsis
Ophthalmology is often poorly understood by general practitioners, yet it forms an important component of the problems which patients present to doctors. The aim of this unit is not to make ophthalmologists out of general practitioners, rather, it aims to educate the GP as coordinator of health care, to know what needs to be referred and its urgency, and yet be able to manage with competence and confidence many of the common conditions which afflict the eye. As well, the unit also aims to enhance the linkage between the GP and allied health professionals like optometrists, and support groups for the visually disabled.

Objectives
On completion of this unit students should be able to:

1. Recognise the prevalence of ocular problems in their own practice and in the community at large, including the burden of illness and suffering they cause.
2. Recognise and diagnose a range of common ocular problems.
3. Apply skills in managing most ocular problems, including appropriate referral as a management strategy.
4. Recognise the importance of referral as a learning process.
5. Integrate ophthalmological assessment in the management of patients with a range of chronic conditions.
6. Explain the importance of optometrical problems like refractive errors in the day to day management of ocular problems, and understand the important role played by optometrists.
7. Recognise recent developments occurring in ophthalmology, such as in photo refractive keratectomy for refractive errors, new laser techniques, and improved surgical techniques in cataract surgery, leading to the development of day-case cataract surgery.
8. Incorporate optimal care to the visually impaired by evaluating the impact of visual loss and facilitating access to local services available for the visually impaired.

Assessment
Clinical Audit (30%)
Journal (70%)