

**Population:** 123.1 million (2016)

**Percentage of older people:** 11% over the age of 65 years old, which is expected to rise to 30% by 2050

**Diabetes:** 11.5 million people living with the condition with an estimated 3.9 million undiagnosed cases

The DR Barometer, a ground-breaking global study, has highlighted the urgent need to prevent unnecessary vision loss caused by diabetic retinopathy. To help facilitate regional and country-level actions on this issue, the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) hosted the Diabetic Retinopathy (DR) Barometer Latin American Advocacy Workshop on 6-7 April, 2018 in Mexico City, Mexico in partnership with the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB), the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and Bayer AG.

The workshop brought together 46 delegates from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico across many disciplines (patients, ophthalmologists, diabetes specialists, primary care providers, diabetes educators, governments, and industry) to work together to determine solutions for improving care pathways that lead to improved vision health outcomes for adult with diabetes in the region.

This “Viewpoint” outlines the country-specific strategies from the Mexico working group to improve patient outcomes at a local level.

**Goal:**

To achieve better results for diabetic retinopathy (DR) through better screening and optimizing access to treatments.

**Barriers that need to be addressed:**

1. Gaps in education among patients and health care providers, including clinical guidelines.
2. Lack of integration between health programs related to obesity, diabetes and DR.
3. Limited access to treatments due to availability and affordability.
4. Lack of epidemiological evidence to base public health action upon.

**Key stakeholders of the working group:**

Collaboration through a common strategic direction of all interdisciplinary stakeholders (patients, ophthalmologists, diabetes specialists, primary care providers, diabetes educators, governments, and industry) is essential to address barriers toward effective management of DR. These include organisations such as:

- Patient and civil society organizations: Asociación Mexicana de Retinopatía Diabética (AMRD) and Federación Mexicana de Diabetes (FMD)
- Primary health care providers: nurses, health promoters, general practitioners, geriatricians, nutritionists
- Vision Health Specialists: Asociación Mexicana de Retina (AMR) and optometrists
- Government officials and legislators (Seguro Popular) and the Ministry of Health including the Secretary of Health, El Centro Nacional de Programas Preventivos y Control de Enfermedades (CENAPRECE), and La Comisión Federal para la Protección contra Riesgos Sanitarios (Cofepris)

**Objectives and future actions of the working group:**

**National Coalition:** Establish a national coalition comprising diverse, multidisciplinary stakeholders to develop an integrated care model to improve attention to diabetes patients.

**Alliance with Secretaría de Salud:** Establish support from government agencies including the National Council of Visual Health, Consejo de Salubridad General for Seguro Popular, CENAPRECE, and Cofepris to enhance the sustainability of the National Coalition's initiatives.

**Patient Education:** In collaboration with Cofepris empower and build capacity among patient groups with synergy across the states.

**Clinical Guidelines:** Promote and increase the availability of existing available clinical guidelines.

**Access to Treatments:** Develop an algorithm to facilitate coverage of treatments by Seguro Popular.

**Next steps:**

1. Map stakeholders to be involved in the national coalition.
2. AMRD, FMD, and AMR to draft a workplan by July 2018.
3. Establish alliances with the stakeholders identified.
4. Define the patient care pathway through the national health system.

**Resources**

The national coalition can utilize their existing networks to advocate for system changes. Future efforts will require maintained interest in volunteer or paid work.

***To learn more or join the DR Barometer Mexico Working Group, contact:***

Mariana de la Peña  
Health Policy and Advocacy Manager  
Bayer Mexico  
mariana.delapena@bayer.com

Go to [www.drbarometer.com](http://www.drbarometer.com) to join the DR Barometer Community today.