

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the lack of accessible local care for patients who are experiencing styes. While I know that styes are often considered a minor issue, for many people, including myself, they are painful, recurrent, and disruptive to daily life. In my area, there are no local ophthalmologists who are able to treat this condition. Patients either have to manage it on their own or face long wait times to get into a specialist as well as long driving distances.

I have had to travel significant distances to finally get some relief and that is after being on a long wait list to be seen. I needed to first see my primary care provider to get a referral and all the while my symptoms and pain increased. The closest ophthalmologist who was able to treat styes was almost two hours from me and it took months to be able to get in and be seen. Another ophthalmologist who was about an hour and a half from me could not even schedule me to be seen as they had a long wait list already. Once I was able to finally be seen by a specialist, I did receive great care that I was thankful for.

At one point I had another styte and was able to get some eye drops from my local optometrist for some relief, however the styte needed to be drained. When I called to make an appointment at the ophthalmologist for my painful and life disrupting styte, it was a wait of four months before they could get me in for an appointment. I called eye specialist after eye specialist and ended up driving almost three hours to be seen by someone. If my local optometrist was able to assess and treat styes, this would have saved me so much time, discomfort, and frustration.

This lack of access leaves me feeling unsupported as my symptoms worsened. Basic evaluation, guidance, and treatment for styes should be reasonably available at the local level. I would love to see steps taken to bridge this gap in eye care to improve access and make a meaningful difference for people like me dealing with eye discomfort and pain.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and for your consideration. I hope in the future we can have improved access to care in our local community for eye conditions such as styes.

Kindly,
Jill Alderman
802-342-2335
Rutland, VT