

# Boosting Dry Eye Patient Satisfaction Through Excellent Patient Care

## Case Study: Eye Health Northwest

**Executive Summary:** Eye Health Northwest has implemented a new dry eye service based upon the TearScience® system for assessing and treating evaporative dry eye. Dr. Kerry Hagen believes that LipiFlow®, a new dry eye treatment, will become the standard of care for moderate to severe Meibomian Gland Dysfunction. Proper diagnosis, patient education, and staff training are the cornerstones for their success in implementing a dry eye service.



Eye Health Northwest is a longstanding eye care organization with 11 offices in the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area. Their comprehensive and subspecialty trained ophthalmologists and optometrists provide total eye care including LASIK, advanced cataract surgery, premium lens implants, and family vision services.

With more than 200 employees, this established practice strives to consistently provide the best ophthalmology care with respect and concern for its patients. Eye Health Northwest physicians enjoy integrating the latest technology into their practice. Skills, hard work, and accountability are the key ingredients for providing excellent care and optimal patient outcomes.

Kerry B. Hagen, MD, is one of 22 surgeons at Eye Health Northwest. Recently, he became increasingly frustrated with his inability to help a large subset of patients, evaporative dry eye sufferers.

Dr. Hagen frequently encounters Meibomian Gland Dysfunction and evaporative dry eye with his patients. Consequently, he routinely performs Meibomian gland evaluations on all his patients, paying particular attention to the quantity and quality of Meibomian gland secretions. Both he and his patients felt discouraged when traditional dry eye treatments, such as warm compresses, delivered only marginal results at best. Dr. Hagen believed there had to be a better solution.

With positive outcomes and patient satisfaction as his primary objectives, Dr. Hagen began researching new treatments for Meibomian Gland Dysfunction and evaporative dry eye. He learned about TearScience's system for assessing and treating evaporative dry eye.

"The TearScience® system was intriguing to me because it combines a great educational tool to help dry eye patients understand their disease state with a new treatment that focuses on the root cause of dry eye, the blocked Meibomian glands," said Dr. Hagen. "With nearly 80% of patients showing some improvement after a single treatment, the clinical results were very impressive."

After several presentations from the TearScience® team, Dr. Hagen decided to purchase the TearScience® system for his practice.

### Eye Health Northwest's Leaders



**Kerry B. Hagen, MD**  
Cornea and External Disease Specialist

Dr. Hagen is a board certified comprehensive ophthalmologist specializing in cornea, external diseases and refractive surgery. Since joining Eye Health Northwest in 1993, he seeks ways to integrate the latest technology, including LipiView® and LipiFlow®, to achieve excellent patient outcomes and high patient satisfaction.



**Kellie Christenson-Akagi**  
Patient Service Coordinator

As Patient Service Coordinator at Eye Health Northwest, Kellie is responsible for counseling patients on LASIK, cataract surgery, premium intraocular lenses and dry eye treatments. She also develops the practice's patient education materials.

Kellie plays an important role in the success of the dry eye service offered at Eye Health Northwest. Her skills in educating patients on dry eye disease, treatment options, and expected outcomes have been instrumental in providing exceptional patient care.

The TearScience® system consists of the LipiView® Ocular Surface Interferometer and the LipiFlow® Thermal Pulsation System. LipiView® measures the absolute thickness of the tear film's lipid layer, helping physicians assess for lipid deficiencies. LipiView® also captures detailed digital images of patients' blinking patterns to help identify patients that are partial blinkers. Partial blinking may contribute to an uneven spread of lipids across the ocular surface. Physicians use LipiView® in conjunction with a Standard Patient Evaluation of Eye Dryness (SPEED) questionnaire and a Meibomian gland evaluation when performing a full assessment for evaporative dry eye.

LipiFlow® treats evaporative dry eye using heat and pulsatile pressure to liquefy and express the content of obstructed Meibomian glands. The goal of unblocking the Meibomian glands is to allow them to resume their natural production of lipids required for a healthy tear film.

*"I feel confident in recommending LipiFlow® because it works and is good for patients' ocular surface health."*

- Kerry Hagen, MD

"LipiFlow® has delivered excellent results for Eye Health Northwest patients," commented Dr. Hagen. "The vast majority of evaporative dry eye patients have improved after receiving a single LipiFlow® treatment. Patient improvement is measured by a dry eye questionnaire and gland evaluation, examining the number of glands yielding clear lipids."

"LipiFlow® is good medicine," added Dr. Hagen. "There is nothing equal to what LipiFlow® can do. I feel confident in recommending LipiFlow® because it works and is good for patients' ocular surface health. I expect LipiFlow® will become the new standard of care for evaporative dry eye."

"TearScience's support has been very helpful in making our dry eye service a huge success," commented Kellie Christenson, Patient Service Coordinator at Eye Health Northwest. "Their training has been excellent. They have also helped us solve problems related to practice integration and patient flow. Other eye care practices can be assured that TearScience® will support them in all that they need."

With Eye Health Northwest's new dry eye service, patients know they are in a safe environment to describe and discuss their dry eye condition. The Eye Health Northwest staff expresses genuine concern and knowledge of this chronic condition.

## Eye Health Northwest's Formula for Success:

### Proper Diagnosis via Gland Evaluation

Meibomian Gland Dysfunction and evaporative dry eye are prevalent conditions that are largely underdiagnosed. Eye Health Northwest physicians are continually on the lookout for these pathologies. Gland expression and meiboscopy are essential in properly diagnosing dry eye.

### Patient Education

Eye Health Northwest invests a great deal of time and effort in educating dry eye patients on their condition. The practice's Patient Service Coordinator plays a critical role using LipiView® to explain Meibomian Gland Dysfunction and why patients feel symptomatic. LipiView® is a strong visual tool for educating patients on the lipid layer of the tear film and the role that partial blinking plays in the spread of lipids on the ocular surface. With LipiView®, patients feel validated with their concerns, gain a better understanding of dry eye, and can make informed decisions on treatments.

### Staff Training & Accountability

TearScience® provided comprehensive training to the Eye Health Northwest staff prior to launching its new dry eye service. As the dry eye expert in the office, Dr. Hagen clearly communicated to his staff the importance of the new dry eye service and how they would be held accountable for their new roles and responsibilities in helping dry eye patients.

"When patients tell me of their dry eye discomfort, I always express my concern and reassure them that they are in the right place," added Kellie. "I'm glad we have the TearScience® system to properly assess what is going on with the patient and treat them, if necessary. In the end, it's all about bonding with the patient and letting them know that you have their best interest at heart."

For full product and safety information, visit [www.tearscience.com/physician/breakthroughtechnology/labeling-and-safety/](http://www.tearscience.com/physician/breakthroughtechnology/labeling-and-safety/).