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SightLife Surgical names medical advisory board to champion advancements in corneal therapeutics

Board comprised of leading corneal surgeons from across the U.S.

Seattle, WA (February 10, 2017) – SightLife Surgical announced today that it has appointed a medical advisory board of distinguished ophthalmologists to help guide the organization’s commitment to medical advancements in corneal therapeutics. The board will play a key role in the challenging the status quo of the cornea ecosystem and drive advancements in treatments for corneal blindness.

The board will be chaired by Edward Holland, M.D., Director of Cornea Services at Cincinnati Eye Institute (Cincinnati, OH), and also will include John Berdahl, M.D., ophthalmologist at Vance Thompson Vision (Sioux Falls, SD); Nicole Fram, M.D., ophthalmologist at Advanced Vision Care (Los Angeles, CA); Terry Kim, M.D., Professor of Ophthalmology at Duke University Eye Center (Durham, NC); Elizabeth Yeu, M.D., ophthalmologist at Virginia Eye Consultants (Norfolk, VA); and Richard Lindstrom, M.D., founder and attending surgeon at Minnesota Eye Consultants (Minneapolis, MN).

“We are honored and humbled to bring together such a well-respected group of ophthalmologists to support our mission to eliminate treatable corneal blindness by 2040 by driving innovation in the cornea ecosystem,” said Monty Montoya, president and CEO of SightLife Surgical. “Their combined experience, knowledge of the field and intuition will be critical to our work to provide surgeons and their patients the best possible treatment and therapeutics to restore sight for the corneal blind in the U.S. and around the globe.”

The board will work alongside SightLife Surgical’s board of directors and executive leadership, and provide advice on current and new directions the organization should take in order to better serve corneal surgeons. This board is separate and distinct from the medical directors who currently determine if donated tissue is suitable for transplant.

“In the years I’ve been practicing ophthalmology, there have been significant advancements in corneal surgery but there has not been a corporation dedicated to our specialty. Having a corporate partner to help develop new therapeutic and surgical innovations will accelerate our progress,” said Dr. Holland, chair of the SightLife Surgical Medical Advisory Board. “To be part of the only organization that is tackling this issue is a privilege and I strongly believe that this board can help SightLife Surgical push the boundaries, which will ultimately mean that my colleagues across the U.S. and beyond will be able to provide their patients more options.”

In 2016, SightLife Surgical was created as a for-profit subsidiary of SightLife with a \$10 million investment from Flying L Partners, William Link Ph.D.’s new healthcare investment firm. In order to scale to meet the demand of the 10 million corneal blind around the world, medical advancement in the cornea ecosystem became a key component of the organizations’ mission to eliminate corneal blindness.

“The first cornea transplant was performed over a century ago and continuous advances in technology and surgical technique have improved patient access and outcomes worldwide. However, compared to other fields in



ophthalmology, investment and innovation in cornea have lagged. We need disruptive breakthroughs in corneal acquisition, preservation and distribution, as well as the medical and surgical treatment for diseases and abnormalities of the cornea to better meet the needs of our patients.” said Dr. Lindstrom, SightLife Surgical board of directors and medical advisory board member. “The SightLife Surgical Medical Advisory Board will advise and direct investment into new and innovative approaches for the preservation, restoration and enhancement of corneal health and function, working together with their SightLife Surgical colleagues to help alleviate the suffering of people affected by corneal disease worldwide.”

SightLife Surgical’s focus on medical advancements also will feed its commitment to prevention and early treatment—corneal transplant technologies are not possible in every corner of the world due to the lack of surgeons, after care, and more. The final core commitment of SightLife Surgical is to improve the reimbursement and policy paradigms in the U.S., which can limit patients’ access to care and surgeons’ ability to provide the best corneal treatments to their patients.

About SightLife Surgical

SightLife Surgical was founded in fall 2016 to challenge the status quo of the cornea ecosystem, primarily by driving the systemic change needed to enable innovation and access to treatments for corneal blindness. This cornea-focused organization provides comprehensive services to support ophthalmic surgeons, from corneal tissue and devices to reimbursement consulting and political advocacy. Based in Seattle, SightLife Surgical is a for-profit subsidiary of SightLife, the only non-profit global health organization working relentlessly to eliminate corneal blindness worldwide by 2040. This mission-driven structure maintains the non-profit status of SightLife as the parent organization and adds a for-profit “engine” to power and accelerate achievement of the mission. www.sightlifesurgical.com

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