



We Accept Medicare

The Ensign Skills Center is a not-for-profit organization and relies on funding from grants and personal donations. Your donations are tax-exempt. Please help us give hope to others working to regain their independence. Thank you.

Tuesday Evening Support Group

The Tuesday Evening Support Group for Working Adults is normally held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at the Ensign Office. Kirstin Hartman is the facilitator.

The meeting time is 6:45 pm.

April 10
May 8
June 12



APRIL 2007

The Ensign Mission

To provide individuals with low vision the opportunity to enhance their life skills, independence and self-confidence in a safe environment through adaptive technology and training.

How can you help?

- **Write letters** to us sharing your experience and changes you have been able to make because of your experience.
- **Volunteering** - collating client packets, client resource packets, new client files. Delivering Ensign flyers to local business'. Folding and labeling monthly newsletter.
- **Participation in fundraisers** - either by volunteering or attending.
- **Donations** of cash or items from the "Wish List". Remember Ensign in your estate planning.

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The Basics of Magnification and Low Vision

Magnification is a major tool of low vision rehabilitation. How do we obtain that magnification? Moving closer to an object provides magnification. The aged related macular degeneration person might move closer to the television. The low vision child may hold reading material only a few inches away. Magnifiers, strong bifocals, telescopic systems, microscopic systems, closed circuit television systems, large print and computer screen magnification programs may all provide effective magnification for low vision patients. Magnifiers are one of the first low vision devices selected by a low vision individual, but unfortunately without professional guidance, individuals frequently obtain magnifiers that are too low in power, too heavy and often without needed internal illumination. Small pocket magnifiers might be used to read a price tag or a menu, while large illuminated stand magnifiers may be used at home or work. Magnifiers with bright halogen and xenon illumination often improve reading particularly in for age related macular degeneration individuals.

Strong bifocals, dedicated reading glasses and microscopic eyewear may improve reading. An individual's acceptance, however, may depend on their willingness to hold reading materials close. The microscopic bifocal provides outstanding optics, but may require a working distance of only a few inches. Near telescopes, like those worn by surgeons and dentists, are used to read at greater distances and are mounted within or attach to eyewear.

To magnify distance objects, telescopic systems are frequently used. These may be handheld or mounted in eyewear called bioptics to drive, watch television or do other distance tasks. Telescopic systems have been found to be an exceptional aid to view television even in patients with visual acuities below 20/600.

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The Basics of Magnification - Continued from previous page.

Telescopes may be attached to prescription eyewear to create what is called a bioptic system. Bioptic eyewear design has evolved from large telescopic tubes to smaller, more cosmetic telescopes.

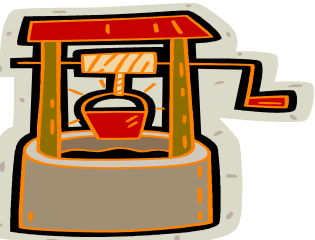
Magnification from telescopes, magnifiers and microscopic lenses is limited by their design, and can rarely be used successfully above magnification of 20X.

Closed circuit television systems are capable of higher levels of magnification and can manipulate the brightness and contrast of the image. The concept of a CCTV is simple. A video camera is used in real time to capture the image of the reading material and display it on a monitor. For example, the poor contrast of newspaper print can be enlarged 40X, but can simultaneously be converted to white letters on a black background. Preferences for imaging size, type of contrast, color and ability to operate the system should be determined. Motion problems from moving the image on the screen may be reduced with larger monitors that allow displaying more text at a time.

New innovations in CCTV technology are expanding their use and availability. Wearable CCTV systems mounted in a headset. Tilting cameras that allow viewing across a room.

Our Wish List

There are several things that we need that would help us run our office but we are reluctant to spend our limited funds. Here is our current wish list, please consider helping.



- **AAA Batteries**
- **Label Maker**
- **Paper products - paper towels, toilet paper**
- **Large print books and books on CD**

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Fort Collins, CO
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*Ensign Skills Center is working to improve the quality of life
for the visually impaired individual.*

SUPPORT GROUP CALENDAR

Our Monthly support group is normally held the 4th
Thursday of each month at the Ensign office. Kirstin
Hartman of Seniors In Transition is our moderator.

Group is held from 10:00-11:30 AM

April 26

May 24

June 28

See Page one for Evening Support
Group Information.

