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# Consumers' Vision Care Decisions Clouded by Costs, According to New Study from CareCredit, a Synchrony Solution

*VisionIQ, a national consumer survey, reveals cost is a major barrier to vision products and services; 55% of patients are more likely to choose optometrists and ophthalmologists offering payment options*

- **Financing Gap**: 44% of patients are willing to switch vision providers entirely for financial convenience, however, only 22% recall being offered financing options.
- **Impact on LASIK Procedures:** 59% of consumers interested in LASIK cite cost as the reason they do not more forward with the procedure, exceeding other factors such as fear of the surgery going wrong (34%) and negative results (34%).
- **Gen Z Needs Financing Support:** 78% of Gen Z consumers say cost impacts how often they seek vision care. This hesitation is starkest for procedures such as LASIK - 50% of Gen Z expressed interest in LASIK, yet only 5% of LASIK patients are Gen Z.

STAMFORD, Conn., April 10, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- A new study conducted by Synchrony (NYSE: SYF), a premier consumer financial services company, on behalf of CareCredit, which offers a leading health and wellness credit card, reveals that while patients want to pursue proactive vision care, a critical disconnect in how providers discuss care costs and financing for products and procedures is impacting access. The "VisionIQ: Intelligence on financing trends in eye care" study, which surveyed 2,000 U.S. consumers, pinpoints cost as a primary driver of vision care decisions and a significant barrier to patients moving forward with recommended treatments.

According to The Vision Council, nearly 76% of adults in the United States need some form of vision correction, making eyewear an essential – and recurring – expense for 166.5 million adults who wear prescription eyeglasses.[1] Nearly half of consumers (45.8%) spend between $100 and $150 on frames alone, before factoring in additional costs such as lenses, ongoing replacements, exams and corrective procedures.[1] Vision loss is expected to cost the U.S. economy an estimated $35 billion annually among adults 40 and older between direct costs for vision correction and lost productivity.[2] Collectively, eyewear and vision care represent a significant financial commitment for millions of Americans.

"Cost concerns are a key driving force behind patients' care decisions, with a majority (64%) reporting that cost impacts how often they seek vision care – influencing everything from provider choice and service utilization to adherence to ongoing care," said Jeff Miller, Senior Vice President and Specialty and Wellness General Manager at Synchrony. "Our study clearly highlights the opportunities for providers to bridge these gaps, help ensure patients can access the vision care and eyewear they want, when they want it."

**The Financing Gap: A Clear Opportunity for Providers to Expand Care Access**
The study reveals a striking disparity: 8 in 10 consumers would consider financing vision care expenses when costs reach approximately $761, and 44% of patients are willing to switch providers entirely for financial convenience. The data show a clear demand for access to vision care and eyewear financing options.

"Access to vision care shouldn't be something patients have to overthink. But the reality is financial hurdles are still one of the biggest barriers," said Troy Cole, a coach and advisor in the refractive surgery space. "I see it all the time – patients delay procedures that could genuinely improve their quality of life because they're unsure how to navigate the money side. When practices can offer clear, flexible payment options, it changes the conversation. They give patients confidence to move forward and ultimately support better long-term eye health and overall lifestyle."

Despite interest in financing vision expenses, just 22% recall being offered financing options by their provider. Demand exists even though most patients (65%) have insurance, with over half (54%) facing an out-of-pocket balance and actively seeking providers who offer financing solutions. This gap between patient interest in financing vision care and being presented with options to manage costs with financing represents a significant barrier to care for patients and a substantial missed opportunity for providers to grow and retain their patient base.

**Generational Divide: Style-Forward Youth Face Biggest Financial Barriers**
78% of Gen Z reported cost impacts their vision care frequency compared to 64% of respondents overall – yet, they over-index on style products, with 33% owning designer frames.

"Beyond eyewear selections, the generational paradox in vision care is the most clear with LASIK care decisions," said Miller. "Our VisionIQ results show a striking disconnect: half of Gen Z (50%) expressed interest in LASIK, yet Gen Z accounts for only 5% of actual LASIK patients. This represents a substantial segment of the population not pursuing the vision care they desire."

In ophthalmology practices, where procedures like LASIK are common, 59% of patients cite cost as their main concern, with 64% of those who decide to move forward paying out-of-pocket. On average, LASIK costs can surpass $3,000.[3]

**The Solution: Empowering Vision Practices and Patients to Proactively Address Financing Concerns**
The research definitively shows that timing and approach matter when it comes to vision care decisions. When practices proactively address payment concerns, patients respond positively: 43% say they would be more likely to get care if they could pay in installments, representing a dual win for improved care access and competitive advantage for providers.

The CareCredit credit card, a Synchrony solution, is one financing option providers can offer to patients to finance vision expenses – with more than 12 million open cardholder accounts with a total of $40 billion in available credit across the country. With acceptance at more than 26,000+ vision providers, it is a convenient and reliable solution that offers financing options for qualified consumers.

For vision practices, CareCredit is more than a financing option; it's a powerful business tool, designed to support growth and help patients say "yes" more often to recommended care:

- **Driving Loyalty and Repeat Visits:** 45% of cardholders returned to the same practice. People can reference CareCredit's Procedure Cost Calculator for more information about the cost of health and wellness care services in their area, including vision care.
- **Seamless Integration:** Integrating CareCredit within leading ISVs lets practices offer financing directly in the software they already use, streamlining workflow and improving access.
- **Fast Payments:** With Synchrony you receive payment within two business days, so you can focus on providing exceptional, personalized vision care. Plus, Synchrony is a regulated bank.

To read Synchrony's VisionIQ study research, please visit CareCredit.com/providers/insights/vision-care-industry-study/. To learn more about CareCredit, please visit: www.carecredit.com.

**Methodology** The Synchrony VisionIQ study was conducted by Synchrony July 15-22, 2025. Researchers surveyed 2,000 respondents in the U.S (aged 18-75) through an online device-agnostic survey.

**About Synchrony** Synchrony (NYSE: SYF) is a leading consumer financing company that has been at the heart of American commerce and opportunity for nearly a century. Synchrony delivers credit and banking products that empower tens of millions of consumers to improve their financial lives and access what matters most. Leveraging innovative solutions that are shaping the future of retail commerce, Synchrony supports the growth and success of some of the nation's most respected brands, alongside hundreds of thousands of small and midsize businesses, including health and wellness providers. Committed to excellence in service and culture, Synchrony is honored to be ranked the #1 Best Company to Work For® in the U.S. by Fortune magazine and Great Place to Work®. For more information, visit www.synchrony.com.

**FAQ**

**What is in the new CareCredit VisionIQ Study?**
Consumers and providers can read key findings and takeaways from the VisionIQ study across four key topics: Cost concerns, Financing Results, Optometry (designer eyewear), and Ophthalmology (LASIK), and view various consumer and/or provider-centric resources to support the care journey.

**How easy is it to set up CareCredit into current practice management systems?**
CareCredit is integrating into leading practice management software offered by independent software vendors (ISVs) for ophthalmology and optometry practices including Clover, CoFi, Nextech, Promptly, and Solutionreach. Implementation is simple.

**What are the key findings from the Synchrony VisionIQ Survey?**
Synchrony's VisionIQ study reveals that despite strong consumer interest in vision care, cost can significantly impact access, particularly among Gen Z. Study findings indicate a strong demand for financing solutions for vision care.

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[1] VisionWatch Vision Correction and Frame reports." The Vision Council. December, 2021. Retrieved from: https://thevisioncouncil.org/sites/default/files/assets/media/TVC_OrgOverview_sheet_2021.pdf

[2] Rein DB, Zhang P, Wirth KE, et al. The economic burden of major adult visual disorders in the United States. Arch Ophthalmol. 2006;124(12):1754–1760. doi:10.1001/archopht.124.12.1754

[3] Synchrony Procedure Cost Calculator. Retrieved from: https://www.carecredit.com/well-u/financial-health/procedure-cost-calculator/