

Jose Rizal International Medal Lecture: Refractive Lensectomy in 2026

Speaker/Awardee: Prof. Jorge L. ALIO (Spain)



[Plenary Session 1] Celebrating Excellence in Ophthalmology - APAO 2026 Award Lectures

Date: February 5, 2026 (Thursday)

Time: 13:30-13:50

Venue: Convention Hall A-C (L1), Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Refractive lensectomy is today a frequently used surgical technique to correct ametropia in the middle-aged person. Described for the first time in the late 19th century, it has not been until recently that improved knowledge of the evolution of the crystalline lens with the emerging concept of dysfunctional lens syndrome and the possibility to upgrade the human eye diopter with the use of special lenses, known today as premium lenses, has allowed us to treat ametropia including astigmatism, improving visual function, with either extended depth of field, multifocal or, more recently, accommodative lenses. We are now in 2026 at the beginning of an emerging moment in which cataract surgery no longer aims to restore and improve vision but to restore optical functions of the eye, keeping the eye in the most adequate optical and functional conditions.

Refractive lens exchange used as a method to improve visual function makes several issues mandatory, such as refractive precision, prevention of complications with adequate patient selection, good surgical skills and, finally, to follow adequate ethical limits in its indication. To accomplish this, the lens surgeon in 2026 must use the best tools in preoperative exams, IOL calculation, IOL selection, managing surgery with prevention and avoiding problems and, finally, looking for the best patient-reported outcomes.

While refractive lensectomy has gained popularity over the last years, ethical boundaries need to be respected. The risk of complications in the myope, the potential macular problems in the hyperope and surgical risks oblige the modern surgeon to a general update and a guideline to use this well-developed surgical technique, to be developed further for the benefit of our patients.