

VISION 2020
AUSTRALIA
2017–2020
STRATEGIC PLAN





Vision 2020 Australia respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and pays respect to the ongoing living cultures of Australia's First Peoples.

Contents

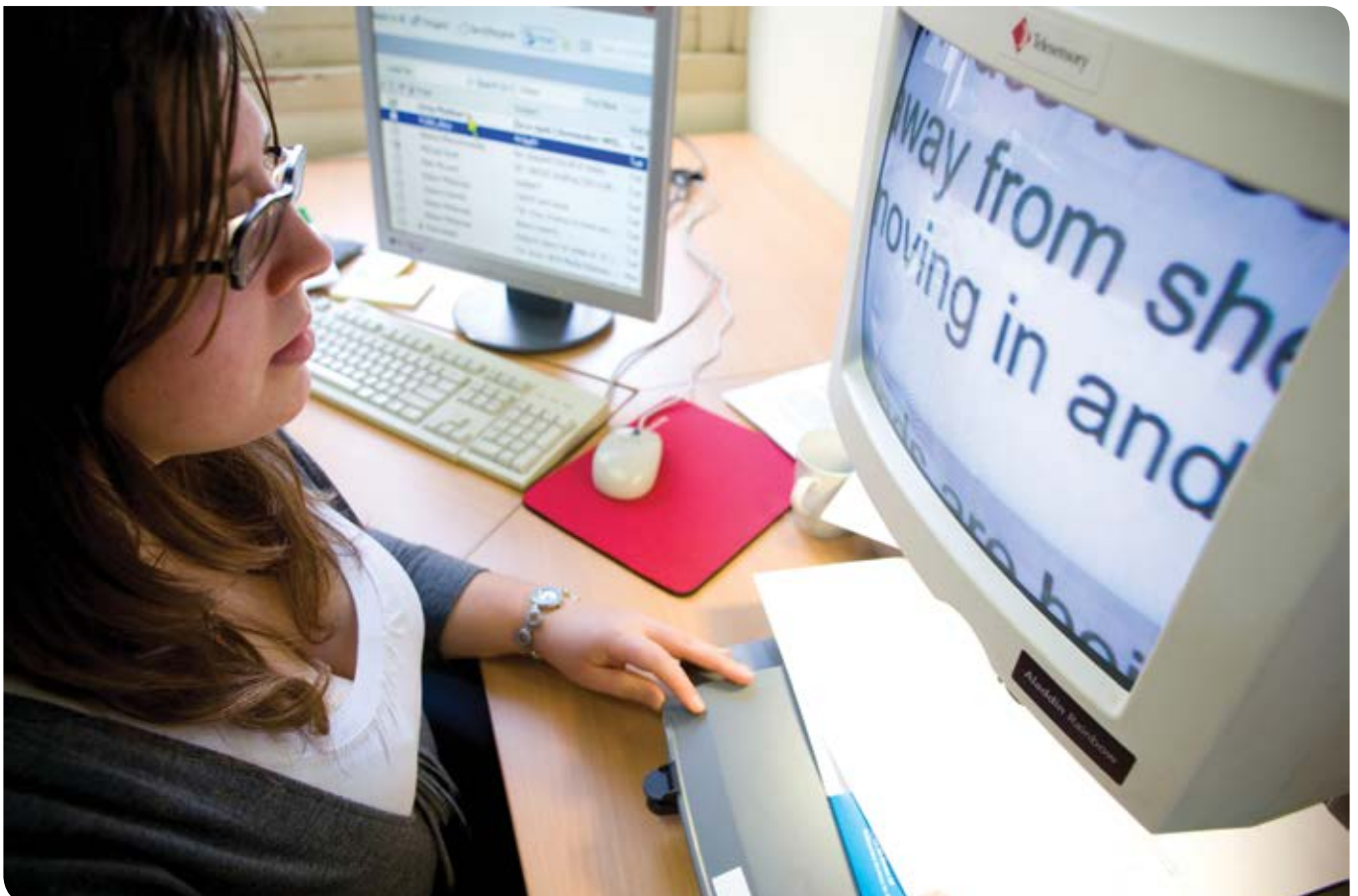
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About us

Established in October 2000, Vision 2020 Australia is part of VISION 2020: *The Right to Sight*, a global initiative of the World Health Organization and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness.

Vision 2020 Australia is the national peak body working in partnership to prevent avoidable blindness and improve vision care in Australia and our region. We represent around 50 member organisations involved in local and global eye health and vision care, health promotion, low vision support, vision rehabilitation, eye research, professional assistance and community support.

Within a diverse sector, Vision 2020 Australia engages its members to facilitate collaborative partnerships in order to advocate for and raise awareness of eye health and vision care. We work closely with the Australian Government across health, Indigenous affairs, ageing, disability and international development, advocating for improved eye health and vision care outcomes.



Vision

Our vision is the elimination of preventable blindness and vision loss and the full participation of people who are blind or vision impaired in the community.

Motivation

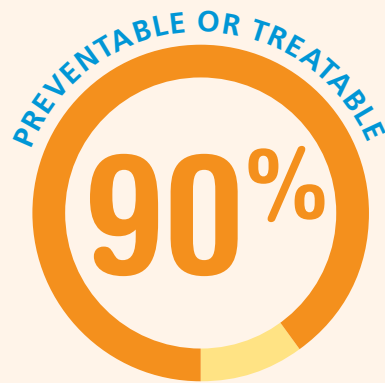
Nationally: The 2016 National Eye Health Survey was the first representative nationwide study of the burden of eye disease in Australia, it found:

>453,000

AUSTRALIANS ARE **BLIND**
OR **VISION IMPAIRED**¹

x3 

THE PREVALENCE OF BLINDNESS AND
VISION IMPAIRMENT IN **INDIGENOUS**
AUSTRALIANS IS THREE TIMES THAT
OF NON-INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS²



APPROXIMATELY **90%** OF BLINDNESS
AND VISION IMPAIRMENT AMONG
BOTH INDIGENOUS AND NON-
INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS IS
PREVENTABLE OR TREATABLE,
IF IT IS DETECTED EARLY³

Estimates show that the annual economic cost of blindness and vision impairment is approximately \$16 billion. This figure takes into account the social and personal cost to individuals and their families, providing an economic estimate of the impact of blindness and vision impairment on Australian communities.

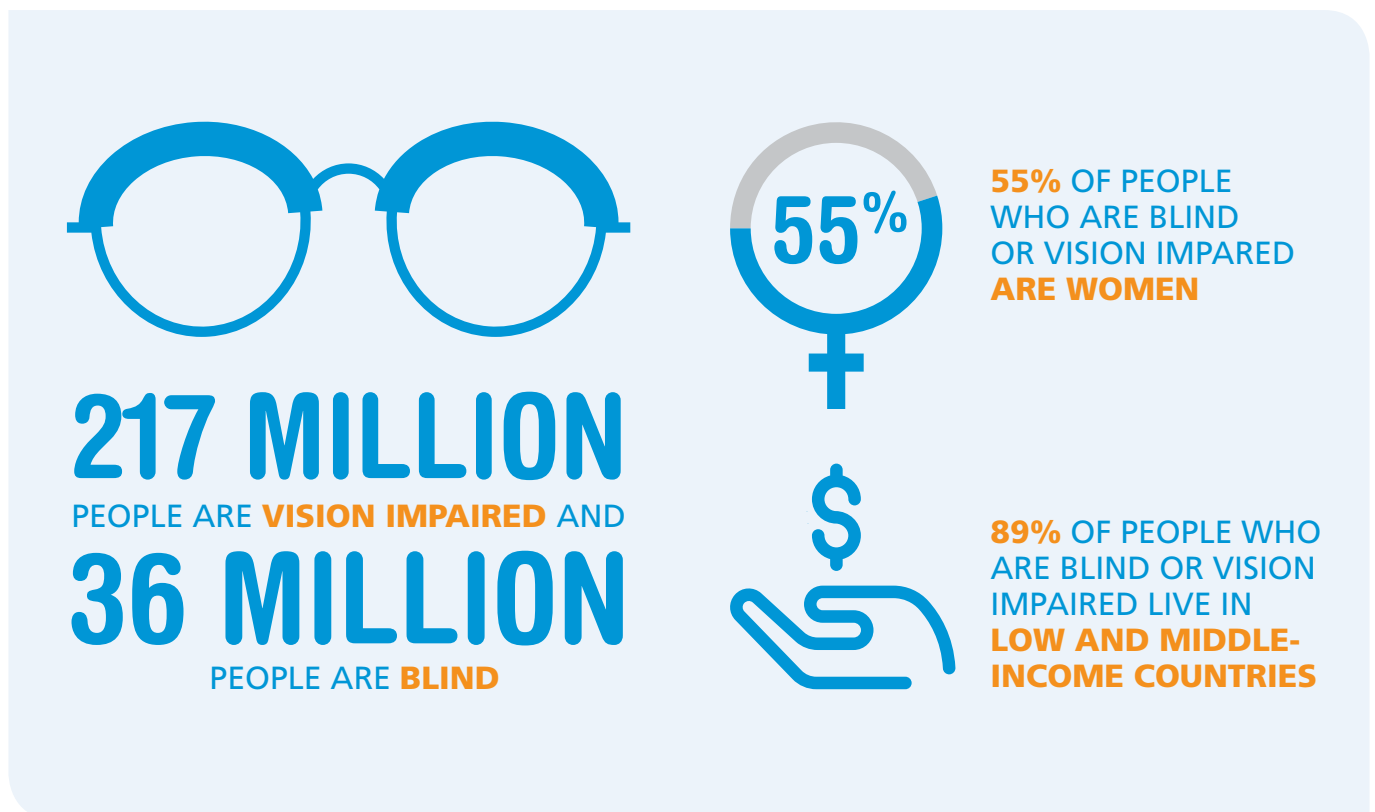
In comparison to the general population, people who are blind or vision impaired have more than four times the rate of unemployment, suffer twice as many falls, have three times the risk of depression, are admitted to residential care three years earlier and often lose confidence to independently manage everyday life.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are further disadvantaged by their disproportionate experience of blindness and vision impairment and lack of access to culturally safe services.

However, equitable access to effective and appropriate supports will enable people who are blind or vision impaired to increase their social and economic participation with innumerable benefits, including improved education and employment outcomes.

Additionally, access to culturally aware and culturally safe services is critical to closing the gap in eye health and vision care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Globally: In 2017, the Lancet Global Disease Journal estimated that globally⁴:



In recent years, the global community has strengthened its commitment to prevent the impact of avoidable blindness and vision impairment, resulting in the World Health Assembly endorsement of a renewed strategy, *Universal Access to Eye Health: A Global Action Plan 2014-19* (the Global Action Plan).

The vision of the Global Action Plan is a world in which nobody is needlessly blind or vision impaired, where those with unavoidable vision loss can achieve their full potential, and where there is universal access to comprehensive eye care services. It sets a target of a 25 per cent reduction in the prevalence of avoidable vision impairment by 2019.

¹ Foreman, J., et al, 2016, *The National Eye Health Survey Report 2016*, The Centre for Eye Research Australia and Vision 2020 Australia, Melbourne

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Bourne RRA, Flaxman SR, Braithwaite T, et al, on behalf of the Vision Loss Expert Group. Magnitude, temporal trends, and projections of the global prevalence of blindness and distance and near vision impairment: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Lancet Glob Health* 2017; published online Aug 2. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(17\)30293-0](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(17)30293-0).

Approach



Vision 2020 Australia is focused on engaging our members, the Australian government and other relevant stakeholders in developing effective policy solutions.

Our members have the knowledge and expertise to identify the crucial issues that need to be addressed for improved eye health outcomes. We have the strength of a united voice.

We engage with members to exchange views, share information, collaborate and develop policy positions, strategies and submissions to improve eye health and vision care for all Australians, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and across the region.

Vision 2020 Australia oversees four policy committees:

- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Independence and Participation, and
- Global advocacy.

Drawing on the knowledge, experience, and resources of the broad and inclusive membership of the policy committees, Vision 2020 Australia offers a unified and consistent voice to government.

Vision 2020 Australia has identified the following four foundations of our approach which, together, are critical to achieving successful outcomes.



Advocacy

Influencing policy change on behalf of the eye health and vision care sector, presenting a united voice to the Australian Government and other policy makers to improve eye health and vision care outcomes.



Collaboration

Partnering with members and developing relationships with other relevant stakeholders to identify and successfully achieve eye health and vision care priorities.



Awareness

Facilitating access to the latest information and research to build awareness of eye health and vision care among the Australian Government, policy makers, the community and other relevant stakeholders.



Evidence

Building a strong evidence base is critical to identify service delivery gaps, support effective policy development and strengthen the sustainability of the eye health and vision care sector.



Strategic goals

To achieve our vision, Vision 2020 Australia will work in partnership with members, the Australian Government and other relevant stakeholders. We will work towards the following strategic goals, raising awareness of eye health and vision care and developing sector representative policy positions supported by innovative and collaborative policy approaches, focused on disadvantaged and vulnerable populations, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

1

Represent the eye health and vision care sector with a united voice by facilitating member engagement and collaboration

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- > Facilitate engagement with members and other relevant stakeholders to utilise expertise and knowledge in the development of Vision 2020 Australia's positions on prevention and early intervention, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's eye health, independence and participation, and global advocacy in eye health
- > Initiate member consultations and senior-level briefings to inform sector leaders and government representatives
- > Advocate for the Australian Government to meet their domestic and international obligations under the World Health Organization's Universal Access to Eye Health: A Global Action Plan 2014-19 and the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

2

Influence policy changes to enable equitable access to eye health and vision care

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- > Engage members, the Australian Government and other relevant stakeholders in developing strategic national approaches to improve access to eye health and vision care
- > Work collaboratively with members to advocate for the delivery of programs to improve eye health and vision care outcomes in Australia and our region

3

Influence policy changes that ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equitable access to quality eye health and vision care services

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- > Work with members, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the Australian Government and other relevant stakeholders to develop an aligned national approach and advocate for the delivery of eye health and vision care services that are culturally safe, timely and coordinated

4

Advocate for policy changes that empower people who are blind or vision impaired to remain independent and participate fully in the community

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- > Engage in Australian Government reforms, including the National Disability Insurance Scheme and aged care, to facilitate beneficial outcomes for people who are blind or vision impaired
- > Collaborate with members and other relevant stakeholders to advocate to improve access to support and rehabilitation services for people who are blind or vision impaired
- > Work with members and other relevant stakeholders to identify mechanisms by which people who are blind or vision impaired have improved access to information, as well as greater education and employment opportunities

5

Support activities that increase the evidence base used to promote effective, efficient and sustainable eye health and vision care

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- > Advocate for effective national oversight and reporting mechanisms
- > Facilitate a collaborative platform to share and improve the availability of evidence and research
- > Support the sector to identify evidence gaps and potential funding opportunities for research to improve the evidence base, evaluation and improve eye health outcomes

6

Facilitate and support collaboration with members and other relevant stakeholders to increase awareness of the importance of eye health and vision care

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- > Employ innovative and coordinated approaches to health promotion and education, raising awareness of the symptoms of eye disease in at-risk groups
- > Support effective communication initiatives to raise awareness of the availability of services and supports for people who are blind or vision impaired, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- > Increase information sharing among members, the Australian Government and other stakeholders through innovative communication channels

7

Develop partnerships enabling eye health and vision care integration into other key sectors

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- > Work with members to develop initiatives to improve service integration and pathways across the health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, disability and aged care sectors
- > Implement the Victorian Vision Initiative on behalf of the Victorian Government, increasing referrals from primary health providers to eye health professionals through providing eye health messages, improving interventions which target at-risk groups and delivering general awareness campaigns
- > Identify funding opportunities that foster collaborative approaches to program development and implementation of eye health and vision care projects in our region

8

Increase Vision 2020 Australia's sustainability as the national peak body for eye health and vision care through consistently adding value to our members

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- > Identify opportunities which strategically assist Vision 2020 Australia to remain agile in our fast-changing landscape
- > Develop and enhance relationships to ensure Vision 2020 Australia remains sustainable
- > Operate with strong governance through continual review and strengthening of Vision 2020 Australia's systems and structures
- > Develop Vision 2020 Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan

Member organisations

Principal members:



Brien Holden
VISION INSTITUTE



The Fred Hollows Foundation
www.hollows.org

Corporate member:



Gold member:



Silver members:



Bronze members:



Major supporting members:

Supporting members:



Corresponding members:



Associate members:





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Established in October 2000, Vision 2020 Australia is part of VISION 2020: The Right to Sight, a global initiative of the World Health Organization and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness.

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- Vision Australia
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