



Vision 2020 Australia is inviting parliamentarians to join us in championing eye health and vision care on World Sight Day, next Thursday 11 October 2018. We will be using social media and the #WorldSightDayAU hashtag to share information about eye health and vision care, highlighting the important work of the sector and our members.

Overall, we will be encouraging Australians to get their eyes tested, acknowledging that approximately 90 per cent of vision loss and blindness is preventable or treatable if diagnosed early.

This document provides some additional examples of key eye health and vision care messages to be used on social media:

Prevention and Early Intervention

- In Australia, approximately 90 per cent of vision loss and blindness is preventable or treatable and can be attributed to five main conditions - refractive error, diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration, cataract and glaucoma.
- The 2016 National Eye Health Survey found that more than 453,000 Australians are blind or vision impaired.
- More than 50 per cent of participants with an eye condition weren't aware of their condition before taking part in the 2016 National Eye Health Survey, highlighting the need for improved awareness

Independence and Participation

- In Australia, it is estimated that more than 453,000 people are blind or vision impaired.
- The prevalence of vision impairment and blindness doubles with each decade over 60 years for non-Indigenous Australians.
- With specialist supports and services, people who are blind or vision impaired can become or remain independent with the freedom to participate fully in the community.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are three times more likely to be blind or vision impaired than non-Indigenous Australians.
- Around half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes are not having an eye examination at the recommended frequency
- Ongoing, targeted effort is required to provide equity in eye health and vision care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Global eye health and vision care

- The Lancet Global Health Journal reported in 2017 that globally, 253 million people are vision impaired.
- At a global level, the prevalence of blindness is five times higher in low income countries than in high income countries
- 89% of vision impaired people live in low and middle-income countries and 55% of vision impaired people are women
- Recent global estimates suggest that up to 80 per cent of vision impairment and blindness is avoidable through the appropriate implementation of cost-effective prevention and treatment strategies
- The American Journal of Ophthalmology estimates that Global VISION 2020 eye care program could prevent more than 100 million cases of blindness between 2000 and 2020

About World Sight Day

World Sight Day is an annual day of awareness to focus global attention on blindness and vision impairment, and is held on the second Thursday in October each year.

Established by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2000, World Sight Day is the main advocacy event for raising awareness about blindness and vision impairment for VISION 2020: The Right to Sight, a global initiative created by WHO and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB).

This year World Sight Day will be on Thursday 11 October 2018 and the international theme for World Sight Day 2018 is Eye Care Everywhere. Vision 2020 Australia will be using social media and the #WorldSightDayAU hashtag to share information about eye health and vision care and highlight the important work of the sector and our members.

About Vision 2020 Australia

Established in October 2000, [Vision 2020 Australia](#) is part of [VISION 2020: The Right to Sight](#), a global initiative of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB).

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.

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.

To achieve this vision 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 Australian Government departments across health, ageing, disability and international development, advocating for improved eye health and vision care outcomes.