

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee meeting update October 2015

Committee meeting update

On 27 October 2015, the Committee met for the last meeting of the January 2014 to December 2015 term. The Committee noted updates against the action plan, including:

- Based on advice from Minister Ley's office, advocacy regarding a successor to the 2014-16 National Framework Implementation Plan has been delayed while a number of reviews relevant to eye health and vision care are being undertaken. This activity will recommence as part of the Vision 2020 Australia 2016 Federal Election policy platform
- The Committee was also provided an update on the progress of the National Eye Health Survey (NEHS), noting that the NEHS is on track and due to be complete by 30 June 2016.
- The Committee was provided an overview of recent funding commitments from the Australian Government to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health and vision care. It was noted that a roundtable for sector representatives met on 2 October 2015 with the Department of Health to discuss and shape the next steps in terms of the sector funding proposal.
- The Committee was provided an update on action in the jurisdictions regarding a nationally consistent subsidised spectacle scheme.
- The Committee was advised that AIHW had released a report, Elective surgery waiting times 2014-15: Australian hospital statistics on 15 October 2015 with specific relevance to cataract surgery and ophthalmic procedures
- The Diabetes Blindness Prevention Program (DBPP) proposal has been finalised and a meeting with the Minister to formally submit the proposal has been requested.
- The Committee also noted that the Implementation Plan for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023 was launched in October 2015.

The Committee was advised that Vision 2020 Australia had been invited to attend a National Targeted Consultation in Melbourne during November, to provide feedback on the first draft of the National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions (NSFCC) had been released in October 2015.

The Committee was also provided an overview of the Sustainable Development Goals, and it was reported that Vision 2020 Australia will send a letter to the Australian Government highlighting the importance of including key eye health and vision care indicators in the Sustainable Development Goal Indicator framework.

The Committee extensively considered Vision 2020 Australia's draft Federal Election campaign plan and policy platform for 2016, providing feedback and input that will be considered as these documents are finalised. It was particularly noted that that Vision Summits are planned for mid to late February with the Liberal Party of Australia (to be held in Sydney), the Australian Labor Party and the Australian Greens (both likely to be held in Melbourne).

A. Morse from the Brien Holden Vision Institute advised the Committee that the Vision CRC Eye and Vision Care Toolkit will be released prior to the end of 2015 and will be circulated to the Committee for comment and feedback.

Finally, the Committee discussed achievements over the January 2014 to December 2015 term and provided recommendations for advocacy to carry forward. Members were advised that the committee member survey had gone live and a call for nominations for the January 2016 to December 2017 term had been sent out.

Organisations represented

- Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW
- Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia
- Australian College of Optometry
- Brien Holden Vision Institute
- Indigenous Eye Health, Melbourne School of Population Health, University of Melbourne
- Indigenous and Remote Eye Health Service
- Lions Australia
- Lions Eye Institute
- National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- OneSight Foundation
- Optometry Australia
- Optometric Vision Research Foundation
- The Fred Hollows Foundation
- Retina Australia
- Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children

- The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists

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