



## Strong Eyes, Strong Communities – 12 month progress report

Vision 2020 Australia made 24 recommendations to support implementation of *Strong Eyes, Strong Communities* with a total budget ask of \$85.5m in new funding over 5 years.

In the first 12 months since the Plan's release:

- There was confirmation of funding for various outreach programs to 2024 (recommendation 1)
- The Department of Health has indicated its intention to review guidelines for some outreach programs (partial commitment towards recommendation 4)
- Support has continued for AIHW for its national reporting activities (recommendation 23)
- A tender has been released for a second National Eye Health Survey (recommendation 24)

Alongside this:

- The Australian Government has increased its overall focus on self determination and community led models
- All Health Ministers, through the COAG Health Council, have committed in principal to end avoidable blindness in Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities and the Australian Government has committed, as part of its *National Long Term Health Plan*, to do so by 2025
- Allocation of funds through the national subsidised spectacles project has been agreed providing short and longer term improvements to access and some jurisdictions have moved to expand their programs for optical appliances (linked to recommendation 8)
- There has been increased engagement of state and territory governments regarding the Plan and its recommendations, by Vision 2020 Australia member organisations and more recently, through AHMAC processes
- Another national forum was held with Jurisdictional Fundholders/Workforce Agencies to discuss areas of common interest and build relationships

The Strong Eyes Strong Communities Implementation Working Group met periodically over the period. It has focussed its efforts across a range of areas including:

- Development of detailed implementation plans for priority recommendations, and
- Initial work on models for active involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and representatives in the implementation of the Plan.