<INSERT DATE>

<MP NAME>

<MP ADDRESS>

Dear <MP NAME>,

As a constituent, I am writing to you to support the recommendations contained in Vision 2020 Australia’s Clear Vision: Key Priorities for Eye Health and Vision Care election platform.

Vision 2020 Australia is the national peak body for the eye health and vision care sector. In developing this platform, they have worked with more than 50 member organisations involved in local and global eye health, low vision support, health promotion, vision rehabilitation and eye research to identify groups most in need.

To improve eye health and vision care in Australia and the region, Vision 2020 Australia and its members are calling on key decision makers to invest in:

1. Eye care at the community and primary care level, to improve access to prevention, early intervention and treatment and reduce unnecessary referrals to the public health care system. This is especially important for people living in remote, rural and regional areas.
2. Provision of early intervention services for older adults with vision impairment, to significantly reduce long-term healthcare costs and the need for support workers. Providing older people with specialised training via block funded low vision service providers will enhance the quality of life of older Australians and reduce the overall cost to the healthcare system.

**Clear Vision for Eye Health: Right care, right place, right time**

Nearly 1 in 2 Australians live with at least one long-term eye condition. Public hospitals face long waitlists, with some patients waiting up to five years for treatment, exacerbating healthcare inequities.

**Recommended Solution**A successful and scalable pilot in Victoria demonstrated the potential in strengthening primary and community-based eye care and improving early detection of eye conditions. Expanding this model nationally could reduce costs, improve access and address growing eye health needs and affordability.

Vision 2020 Australia is calling on the Australian Government to fund a national initiative through the Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to improve the delivery of eye care at the community and primary care level.

**Clear Vision for Older Australians: Streamlining eye health support for better outcomes in the Support at Home Program**

Vision impairment costs the economy $27 billion annually, a figure set to rise in the decades ahead as Australia’s population continues to rapidly age. Many people who live in residential aged care facilities have eye conditions.

The assistive technology and specialised training that helps older people with eye conditions continue to live safely at home isn’t widely understood in the mainstream community, or even within the aged care sector.

**Recommended Solution**
To address this growing problem, it is necessary to improve aged care assessors’ training and awareness of vision impairment. All participants in the new Home Support Program and residential care settings who have vision impairment flagged at the assessment stage should be automatically referred to accredited blindness and low vision service providers.

Vision 2020 Australia is calling on the Australian Government to prioritise vision rehabilitation in the aged care reform agenda by improving the assessment and referral process and providing dedicated funding to specialist providers to deliver adequate and cost-effective care.

The Australian Government can achieve this through the following actions:

* **Improving Awareness and Training for Assessors** - Develop guidelines and training programs for aged care assessors that clearly outline when to refer clients to vision service providers, based on specific triggers identified in the assessment. This will ensure that vision impairment is not overlooked, and that older Australians receive the support they need promptly.
* **Streamlining Referral Pathway** - Introduce a new requirement that all participants in the new Home Support Program and residential care settings who have vision impairment flagged at the assessment stage be automatically referred to accredited blindness and low vision service providers. This approach would remove the burden on generalist assessors to identify specific services, ensuring quicker access to tailored care for those with vision loss.
* **Dedicating Block Funding for Vision Services** - Allocate specific funding for vision support services to address unmet needs in aged care. This funding should cover both episodic and ongoing care, reflecting the varying nature of vision impairment management. By funding specialist providers directly, the government can incentivise outcome-focused care, optimise resource use, and enhance the quality of life for older Australians.

More detail on these recommendations can be found in the full document of [Vision 2020 Australia’s Clear Vision: Key Priorities for Eye Health and Vision Care election platform](https://www.vision2020australia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Vision-2020-Australia-2025-Clear-Vision-priorities.pdf).

I hope you will support Vision 2020 Australia’s recommendations. 90% of vision loss can be prevented or treated if detected early enough, and people whose vision loss is permanent could live much more independently and safely with the right training and support.

Sincerely,

<NAME>