

MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Government champions good vision

Tuesday 5 May 2020: Optometry Australia has received a substantial Government grant to be used to promote optometry and community eye health under the *Good vision for life* consumer brand.

The grant in excess of \$400,000 was allocated as part of Optometry Australia's pitch to support the organisation's 'Good vision for life' campaign efforts with "2020" being so closely aligned to eye health.

Optometry Australia President Darrell Baker expressed thanks to the Minister for Health, Greg Hunt and the Department of Health for entrusting the peak body to carry out this significant promotion.

"The allocation of this grant indicates the Minister's commitment to the eye health sector and the Government's support for optometry. It is an endorsement for our on-going efforts to advocate the importance of regular eye examinations to Australians.

"Earmarked to promote 2020 as the year of good vision for life, the grant will be vital to raising awareness of eye health and optometry this year, particularly in the lead up to, and post COVID-19 restrictions lifting.

"While we want every Australian to make this – and every year – their year of good vision for life, the Government has given us until 30 June 2021 to finalise our grant-funded campaign which gives us added flexibility for our promotional activity delivery", Mr Baker said.

It is estimated that up to 12 million Australians are living with an existing eye or vision condition, and the Department of Health estimates (2015) that vision disorders are costing the community \$9.85 billion per annum.

In January, the peak professional body released the [2020 Vision Index Report](#), which revealed that three quarters (76%) of all Australians consider their eyesight to be their most important sense, with three in five Australians stating they're worried about the quality of their eyesight.

The research also showed that the majority of Australians understand the benefits of a regular eye examination (57%), one third of Aussies don't undertake regular checks (35%), and an alarming one in eight Aussies have never seen an optometrist in their life (12%).

While the report takes a birds-eye look at the eye health of Australians, it also aims to highlight the intrinsic link between eye health and preventable chronic diseases, conditions and their risk factors, underscoring the significant extent to which eye health affects general health and wellbeing.

The results of the 2020 Vision Index highlight the importance of motivating Australians to make their eye health a priority.

Optometry Australia The influential voice for Optometry

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Optometry Australia will employ the Government grant to aid distribution of eye health messages via its highly successful *Good vision for life* campaign. Advertising, public relations and social media will be used to emphasise the importance of prevention and early detection, as well as the role optometrists play as part of a general health regime.

Mr Baker said that “A visit to the optometrist is about getting a comprehensive eye examination that will help identify eye conditions and diseases that can be treated 90% of the time if detected early and of course about getting prescription glasses.

“Many eye conditions are preventable or treatable, so making time for regular eye examinations is essential to overall health and maintaining good vision in 2020 and beyond,” he said.

“The additional funding provided via the grant presents us with a significant opportunity to focus Australians’ attention on eye health, when the time is right.”

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Visit www.goodvisionforlife.com.au

Optometry Australia is the peak professional body for optometrists. Representing eight out of every 10 Australian-based optometrists, Optometry Australia’s focus is to lead and advance the profession of optometry by putting eye-health front and centre of Australian health care.

Good vision for life is an Optometry Australia initiative and aims to educate Australians about their eye health.