

MEDIA RELEASE

Men neglecting eye health at the expense of their overall wellbeing

June 14, 2017. Melbourne: Men are neglecting the health of their eyes to the detriment of their overall wellbeing, according to Optometry Australia.

During [Men's Health Week](#), June 12 to 18 2017, men's health advocates are encouraging men and their families to have meaningful conversations about the factors that keep them healthy in body and mind.

Optometry Australia is urging that eye health be part of that conversation.

Medicare statistics reveal that of the 8.67 million optometric services provided in 2016, women received around 57.6% of those services and men, 42.4%.

Men between the ages of 45 and 74 years of age utilised the least level of optometric services (around 1.84 million services) compared to those provided to women in the same age group (around 2.40 million).

Optometry Australia's resident optometrist, Luke Arundel, said, "vision loss prevents healthy and independent ageing. When you consider 75% of vision loss is preventable or treatable, having regular eye examinations with an optometrist is critical to having good vision for life."

According to a report commissioned by Vision 2020 Australia in 2009, vision loss also puts you at three times the risk of developing depression. If not properly managed, it can also negatively impact your social connectedness and sense of independence, particularly if the loss of a driving license also occurs.

Men also neglecting eye safety

Another eye health area in which men need to improve is eye safety, said Mr Arundel.

In 2016, men accounted for 83% of the 11,078 of cases registered on the Medicare database in which optometrists removed a foreign body embedded in the eye.

"While more men than women may require this type of treatment due to male gender skews across certain occupations (in particular trades and labouring) and home duties such as maintenance, renovating and gardening, it does signal that Australians also need to be taking eye safety more seriously," Mr Arundel said.

Optometry Australia highly recommends that you wear Australian standard safety glasses if you are going to be working in an environment, or with equipment, that generates debris such as wood cutting, carpentry, grinding, hammering, mowing or pruning. Safety glasses are available in clear, sunglass and prescription options for those who need to wear glasses for clear distance or near vision.

Time to have the conversation

Optometry Australia urges you to start conversations about physical and mental health with the men in your life. Don't overlook eye health as an important factor to overall health and wellbeing.

Booking an eye examination, or encouraging the men in your life to do so, is an easy way to combat preventable vision loss that can affect men's overall health and wellbeing.

Find an optometrist in your local area [here](#).

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Optometry Australia is the peak professional body for optometrists. Representing around 83% of all 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.