



MEDIA RELEASE

Optometry Australia celebrates its centenary year

February 1 2018. Optometry Australia is celebrating its 100-year anniversary since its foundation as the peak professional body for optometrists.

Established in 1918, the organisation today continues the founding fathers' commitment to ensuring that our sector is represented by a national organisation to lead, engage, unite and promote optometry and optometrists to benefit Australian eye health and vision needs.

Optometry Australia's 42nd National President, Andrew Hogan, said the organisation remains strongly committed to uniting the sector and securing the future of optometry through long-term forward thinking.

In celebrating its centennial, Optometry Australia is revisiting key milestones the organisation has achieved to advance the sector.

"Key to shaping optometry and eye health in Australia was securing the inclusion of optometry services in Medibank – now Medicare – in 1975 as the only non-medical health profession whose services were covered," Mr Hogan said.

"Since then, the organisation has successfully lobbied to have a government decision to remove the Medicare rebate for optometric consultations overturned in 1993; secured the expansion of optometry services covered by Medicare from the original four items to over 30, in line with the profession's evolving scope of practice; and, successfully lobbied for the removal of the 'cap' on fees optometrists could charge under Medicare," he said.

Beyond Medicare, the organisation has helped shape the evolution of the profession's scope of practice, including through co-ordination of the first and subsequent entry-level competency standards. It has also played a key role in supporting the profession move to a system of national registration in 2010, and in ensuring the Visiting Optometrists Scheme continues to support outreach eye care. Optometry Australia succeeded in getting prescriptions for medications written by optometrists eligible for government subsidy under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Optometry Australia's centenary year also celebrates the fantastic achievements of optometrists.

"Our members are award-winners in their profession and their achievements are testament to the value of optometry to the Australian community and the important role that all optometrists contribute to Australian health care," Mr Hogan said.

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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.

Optometry Australia The influential voice for Optometry

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