

MEDIA RELEASE

Optometry 2040 – transformational vision for eye health care launched

The 20-year vision for the future of optometry has been unveiled by Optometry Australia.

[Optometry 2040 taking control of your future](#) has provided the sector with a 20-year agenda and strategy to create a plausible, sustainable future for optometry, optometrists and community eye health care in Australia, Optometry Australia CEO Lyn Brodie said today.

The significant initiative was launched on the 100-year anniversary of the formation of Optometry Australia.

“The timing is ideal. Optometry 2040 and the 100-year anniversary are a perfect juxtaposition from which to launch – the bookends of a hard-earned past and an exciting future,” Ms Brodie said.

Ms Brodie said that Optometry 2040 will be used to reform government policy, regulation and education – to realise preferred futures for optometry and eye health identified through comprehensive, nation-wide consultations. It will also guide Optometry Australia to best serve optometrists and the sector.

“Optometry is changing rapidly due to demographic, technology, economic, government, and societal forces. Practice models, working conditions, clinician training requirements, patient eye care and communication are evolving at an unprecedented rate.

“I think it is fair to say this has made many in the sector uncertain about the future of optometry.

“Optometry 2040 is about taking control of our future and taking decisive action to shape the ongoing evolution of optometry in Australia,” Ms Brodie said.

Optometry Australia spent more than six months consulting members, working with futures studies experts and consulting optometrists, ophthalmologists and other key sector influencers to identify likely and preferred futures for the sector, and to recommend the key steps to realise them.

Optometry Australia’s new President, Darrell Baker said the future of optometry would be built on a solid and successful foundation as a result of Optometry 2040.

“It was on 3 December 1918 when a group of visionary optometrists representing their state organisations agreed to create a dedicated national professional body.

“Now on its 100th birthday, Optometry Australia is undoubtedly leading the profession to a successful and sustainable future”, Mr Baker said.

“Optometry in Australia has evolved into a respected primary health care profession, attracting the ‘best and brightest’ to complete high quality, accredited, entry-level university courses, and providing clinical care to around nine million patients annually, he said.

“We will support the evolution of the profession to ensure it takes advantage of the opportunities of new technology, big data and a growing workforce, to support ready access to quality eye care for all Australians. Integral to this will be further evolution in the scope of practice of the profession”.

Major identified trends shaping optometry’s future

- 1. Consistently evolving technology** including artificial intelligence, mobile and wearable devices.
- 2. Evolving scope of practice**, to ensure the highly skilled optometry workforce are used more effectively to meet community need.
- 3. Consumer centric care with high consumer participation**, facilitated by digital communication.
- 4. Big data driving decision making**, which can improve efficiency and productivity at both a system and practice level.
- 5. Alternative models of funding**, with a need for new approaches potentially drawing on multiple sources.
- 6. Changing demographics of the workforce**, the Australian optometry workforce is growing quickly, becoming more female and younger.
- 7. Changing social demographics**, with an ageing population and escalating rates of chronic disease.

Ends

- [A copy of the report is available for download here.](#)
- [The Optometry 2040 report findings video can be viewed here](#)

For more information or to interview the CEO or President contact:

Kerry I’Anson, 0419 004 920, k.ianson@optometry.org.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.