

Annual Report 2022-2023





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President and CEO report

This year has brought significant changes to OV/SA, from a return to in-person events to the Integration proposal with Optometry Australia. Every step of the way, members have been engaged and enthusiastic about the changes, and the future of our organisation is looking brighter than ever.

After a few years requiring flexibility in our events and member services, this year we were pleased to be able to return to a full suite of in-person events for members across each state, including interactive workshops, dedicated Early Career and graduate events, and the well-received Regional Series. We are always delighted when we have the opportunity to speak to members directly, and 2023/24 is set to be even bigger, including O=MEGA23 to be run in collaboration with the 4th World Congress of Optometry in Melbourne.

Whilst maintaining our focus on delivering outstanding services to members and continuing our advocacy, we were also delighted that members voted 'Yes' on our proposal to operationally integrate Optometry Victoria South Australia with Optometry Australia, paving the way for integration to occur during 2023-24. This move will allow us to continue to enhance collaboration and sharpen our strategy, ultimately benefiting our members. We would like to particularly thank those who attended member consultation sessions and helped articulate the concerns and needs of members directly during these integration discussions.

This past year has seen strong progress on our advocacy objectives, particularly when it comes to enhancing collaboration between optometry and ophthalmology and contributing to the significant new state-wide referral criteria (clinical prioritisation criteria in SA). Our work includes addressing the rigid health systems that do not allow the automatic sending of communications to optometrists. Following a series of meetings

with health services, including the Department of Health in both Victoria and South Australia and Heads of Public Ophthalmology Departments, we've made strong progress and will continue to work towards strengthening channels of communication to ensure optimal patient care.

Another key area of advocacy this past year has been increasing community awareness about the importance of children's eye health, and our ongoing advocacy efforts are aimed at increasing the amount of testing in schools. To this end, we have successfully reapplied to insert a 'Healthy eyes for kids' postcard and magnet into the Victorian Department of Education and Training Prep bag provided to new students at public schools in Victoria. We have been working with the Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS) in SA to look into ways to reach the families of school starters in that state.

Following concerns from our members through the lockdown period, last year we also conducted a front-of-house workforce survey to assess the extent of the issue and help determine our role in finding solutions. In addition to the survey, we visited practices in both states and, following direct feedback, this year launched our new, content-rich resource to support our members with the challenge of recruiting appropriate front-of-house staff.

With the lockdowns preventing us from running our biennial O=MEGA conference in 2021, we took the time to reimagine the event as a fully integrated program for 2023. In addition to

partnering with the World Council of Optometry for the event, this year for the first time we included a call for abstracts from prospective presenters. This was met with an outstanding response, with over 300 submissions from around the world, and the result is one of the best conference line-ups we've ever put together.

Our organisation is rich with history, and this year we were proud to launch lunches for retired members in both Victoria and South Australia. This gave us the chance to thank our longstanding members for their decades of service to the community as well as the opportunity to gain insight about times past and input about times yet to come. In further recognition of our diverse membership, and the multi-faceted nature of modern optometry careers, we also launched two new annual award categories in the form of the Rising Star Award and Optometrist of the Year Award. We look forward to these awards recognising emerging and established optometrists in the years to come.

Lastly, with OV/SA in the final year of a three-year plan, the Board has undertaken a review and has now set revised objectives for the year ahead that will guide activity across our states in tandem with the Optometry Australia integration process. The future is looking bright, and we're confident that we will continue to deliver outstanding services to members, made even stronger by our Integration with OA.



Elise Pocknee-Clem
President



Ilisa Hampton
CEO



Board and committees

Optometry Victoria South Australia is overseen by a Board of Directors elected from the membership, and the key function of the Board is to ensure sound governance of the organisation. As part of this work, the Board considers the broad trends affecting patients, the membership, and the profession.

The Board must contain a minimum of three and a maximum of ten Directors. Up to two external Directors with specific skills and experience can be appointed to the Board, while the Board can also appoint members to the role of Associate Board Member.

Associates can participate in Board meetings and discussions and view Board papers, however the Associate is not a full Director and can't be counted in a quorum or vote.

In the 2022-23 year, Optometry Victoria South Australia acknowledged the departure of outgoing Directors Allison McKendrick and Jason Tan and extended a warm welcome to new board members Simon Hanna and Andrew Anderson, who were confirmed at the AGM on 30 November 2022.

OV/SA appreciates the time and consideration given to the association by all our Directors and Associates.



Cassandra Haines
attended six meetings

Timothy Lo
attended six meetings

Stephanie Callisto
attended six meetings

Andrew Anderson
attended four meetings

Anne Weymouth
attended six meetings

Kristin Guppy
attended six meetings

The Board is assisted in executing its duties by two subcommittees:

- Governance Committee: Anne Weymouth (Chair), Elise Pocknee-Clem, Cassandra Haines, Jason Tan (until 12 August 2022) and Laura Carson (from 5 December 2022).
- Audit Committee: Timothy Lo (Chair), Stephanie Callisto, Allison McKendrick (until November 2022), Jason Tan (until August 2022), Kristin Guppy and Simon Hanna (from 5 December 2022).

During the financial period, 6 meetings of Directors were held which included board meetings, strategic planning meetings and the AGM. Attendances by each director during the period were as follows:



Elise
Pocknee-Clem
*attended six
meetings*

Isaac
Curkpatrick
*attended four
meetings*

Laura
Carson
*attended six
meetings*

Simon
Hanna
*attended four
meetings*

Allison
McKendrick
*attended two
meetings*

Jason
Tan
*attended no
meetings*

Board and committees



The Board wishes to thank the advisory committees who assist greatly in making sure OV/SA services are led by optometrists, for optometrists and community eye health. In particular, the Board thanks:

- The CPD committee, which is Timothy Lo (Chair), Andrew Anderson, Anthea Cochrane, Isaac Curkpatrick, Jose Estevez, Suit May Ho, Kristina Iacovangelo, Jeremiah Lim and Mitchell Walker. This Committee expanded its activities during 2022-23 to form the Program Committee for O=MEGA/WCO, at which time they were joined by James Armitage and World Council of Optometry colleagues Sandy Block, Susan Cooper, and Alyssa Callaghan.
- The Early Career Optometrists Victoria South Australia (ECOV/SA) committee, which is Alek Sims, Chelsea Lane, Grace Hand, Hayley Gobell, John De Francesco, Linda Bui, Mina You and Pooja Bindi (until May 2023), Liam Hua, Kaavya Nair and Simi Sarin (until May 2023).
- The State Advisory Committee Victoria South Australia (SACV/SA), which is Mitchell Anjou (Co-Chair), Jason Booth (Co-Chair until March 2023), Joanna Croft (Co-Chair from March 2023), James Armitage, Sarah Case, Jelle de Bock, Stuart Holden, Alice McLennan, Viki Nikas, Ken Thomas, Loucia Calder, Lisa Ho, Paige Lynch, Senthil Murugappa, Phillip Fent, Kerryn Hart, Jessica Chi, Mark DePaola, Hui Ming Goh, Graham Lakkis, Paige Lynch. This Committee was attended by an observer from OTas during 2022/23 (Shazaan Khambiye until March 2023, Luke Burns from March 2023).

OV/SA O=MEGA/WCO Conference Committee included:

- Ilsa Hampton, CEO, OV/SA (chair)
- Chris Rektsinis, Eye Health Project Officer, Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia
- Courtney Hammond, Research Assistant, Aboriginal Eye Health | Taingiwilta Pirku Kawantila Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity South Australian Health & Medical Research Institute
- Lauren Hutchinson, Brien Holden Institute
- Noela Prasad, Statewide Eye Health Coordinator, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- Anthea Cochrane, A/Professor University of Melbourne & OV/SA Education Consultant
- Kristin Guppy, Optometrist & OV/SA Board Director
- Jenny Hall, OV/SA Business Services and Operations Manager (until October 2022)
- Lyn Hsieh, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator
- Susan Cooper, Managing Director, World Council of Optometry
- Alyssa Callaghan, Operations and Marketing Manager, World Council of Optometry
- Simon Hanna/Kerryn Hart/Sam Bonwick, Optometry Australia
- Lisa Busuttil, OV/SA Member Events Coordinator

OV/SA Team

Our energetic, talented and highly committed team worked hard over the year to progress our strategy and ensure outstanding value for members.

Ilsa Hampton	CEO
Melanie Andrews	Operations Coordinator
Lyn Hsieh	Senior Policy and Advocacy Coordinator
Lisa Busuttil	Member Events Coordinator
Venesse Chiang	Members Liaison Officer
Fergus Inder	Projects Officer (from Nov 2022)
Rebecca David	Member Events Assistant (from Dec 2022)
Michelle Marven	Policy and Advocacy Manager (until Sept 2022)
Jenny Hall	Business Services and Operations Manager (until Oct 2022)
Greta Irvine	Communications Coordinator (until Sept 2022)

We commenced new staffing collaborations with Optometry Australia to bring our organisations closer together, creating a better experience for our members. This included shared communications staff (in particular, we benefited from the expertise of Jenna McGowan, Alex Wisdom, Trixie Do and Trinity Scarf) and our Events Coordinator, Lisa Busuttil, working with OA to deliver their online conference, Optometry Virtually Connected.





Member engagement and services

Our members make up 90% of optometrists in Victoria and South Australia and are always the focus of our events and engagement services. This year we broadened the scope of our events to better support a diverse community of optometrists at every stage of their career.

While conferences act as cornerstones to the OV/SA events calendar, our Member CPD events provide regular opportunities for members to stay up to date on the latest evidence, earn CPD hours and connect with their colleagues throughout the year. With the COVID-19 lockdowns in Victoria now definitively concluded, we took the opportunity to fill out the calendar with a suite of in-person events to foster direct engagement for members.

To address the growing concerns of members not showing up to events, this year we introduced a cancellation and no-show policy to encourage members to advise us if they can no longer attend. This has led to fewer no-shows at events and allowed more members on event waiting lists to attend in the event of cancellations.

Special Member Evening at the Melbourne Zoo

On Monday 21 November 2022, our special end of year member CPD event at the Melbourne Zoo saw over 170 members attend in-person to hear from guest speaker Graham Lakkis on the clinical management of glaucoma and enjoy the 'African Sunset Experience' at the giraffe exhibit. The presentation was well-received, and members were exposed to a variety of cases in an interactive session.



Golf Day 2023

This year we marked the end of an era, with the 100th Annual Charity Golf Day at the popular Peninsula Kingswood Country Golf Club in March 2023 marking the final OV/SA-hosted version of the event. Over 70 members and their guests attended the special day, with some even donning golf costumes of times past to mark the hundredth year.

Victorian member Michael Wicks won the main Stableford competition and will be the last name to be engraved on the perpetual Golf Day trophy on display at the OV/SA office in Carlton, Melbourne. To help improve eye health outcomes for disadvantaged communities, the event raised funds for partnering charity Sight For All, who will also take over future organisation of this event.

Regional Series 2022/23

OV/SA's 10 Regional CPD seminars across 2022-23 consisted of a combination of face-to-face and online events, with Shepparton, Barossa, Melbourne, and Adelaide presentations held in person and equivalent sessions in Bendigo, Sale, and Mt Gambier held online.

Guest speaker Ken Thomas impressed with his presentation 'Myths, misconceptions and mistakes in optometry', which covered common and rare optometry missteps, shone light onto some opaque areas of the profession, and challenged traditional clinical thinking. Due to a high volume of feedback received from our members in southeast metropolitan Melbourne, an additional session was created and held in Glen Waverley. This new session very quickly sold out and proved a great opportunity for local networking for members who otherwise may not have been able to attend a session.



Member engagement and services



Retired optometrists Christmas lunches

To better connect with our retired members, OV/SA hosted a special Retired Optometrists Christmas Lunch in Adelaide on 6 December and Melbourne on 12 December 2022. The events attracted over 20 retired optometrists, some of whom had come together for the first time in many years. CEO Ilsa Hampton attended both sessions and board members Elise Pocknee-Clem and Timothy Lo attended in Adelaide and Melbourne respectively. Both events were very much appreciated by those in attendance and have paved the way for future planning of these special functions.

CPR certification sessions

Every three years, AHPRA requires that optometrists renew their Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certificate via refresher training courses. This year, OV/SA ran courses in July, October, and November in Victoria and July in South Australia to help our members keep up with this requirement and maintain the skills and knowledge needed to perform CPR in line with Australian Resuscitation Council guidelines. This year we also introduced additional 'out of hours' sessions to accommodate different member schedules.

ECOV/SA events program

ECOV/SA Diabetes: collaborative care in action

Eye health is an integral part of managing patients with diabetes, and OV/SA believes that patient-centred care through high-level multi-disciplinary collaborative care is an ideal model of care if able to be achieved. This virtual inter-professional diabetes seminar on 1 August 2022 brought together health practitioners that manage diabetes, including optometrists, podiatrists, ophthalmologists, diabetes educators, and representatives from patient groups Diabetes Australia and Macular Disease Foundation Australia to discuss how

to build multi-disciplinary collaborative care relationships. In addition, this seminar also provided the space for health professionals to share and learn about the specific roles they have in the managing the eye health of patients living with diabetes.

ECOV/SA: Optimise your optometry career

Some of the harder conversations to have as an optometrist aren't with patients, but with your employer. These in-person seminars taking place on 24 October 2022 in South Australia and 31 October in Victoria explored how early career optometrists can discuss topics such as a pay rise or a contract negotiation with their employers, with attendees given the opportunity to submit anonymous questions for the experienced panel of optometrists to discuss.

ECOV/SA: Lids and conjunctival lesions

OV/SA ran in-person sessions on 13 February 2023 in Victoria and 20 February in South Australia to bring early career optometrists a comprehensive refresher on all the things to remember on lids and conjunctival lesions. The Victorian session was presented by ophthalmologist Rod O'Day and optometrist Chelsea Lane, while the South Australian session was presented by ophthalmologist James Slattery and optometrist Pooja Bhindi.

ECOV/SA: Optic neuropathies webinar

Neuro-Ophthalmology doesn't have to be scary! This workshop on 3 April 2023, presented by Dr Celia Chen and Thi Thi Nguyen to early career optometrists, consisted of a series of neuro-ophthalmology cases and a review of the systematic approach to diagnose neuro-ophthalmic conditions. The session emphasised neuro-ophthalmologic emergencies to highlight important red flags that may signify life-threatening or sight-threatening conditions.

Member engagement and services

ECO panel and careers expo

OV/SA led sessions at all optometry-affiliated universities in Victoria and South Australia to provide final-year students with detailed information on employment contracts and considerations, covering different modes and types of clinical practice settings as well as things to note on employment contracts. These sessions were followed by a panel of representative early career optometrists who shared their personal account of those first few days and weeks of employment, including tips and tricks for new graduates and advice on making the transition from study to practise. After the panel, the events concluded with a careers expo where potential future employers showcased their graduate opportunities or future employment opportunities to students, which provides a great networking opportunity for students and employers alike.

Student and graduate engagement

Peer mentoring sessions in regional areas

Working in regional and rural areas is an incredibly rewarding experience, in which new optometrists are exposed to a diversity in clinical presentations, increased professional autonomy, and stronger patient relationships. However, we know that this career choice may come with some steep learning curves – perhaps your friendly local ophthalmologists have preferred collaborative working models, or perhaps you aren't sure where best to send ocular emergencies that require emergency ophthalmology care.

OV/SA recognises these challenges, and since 2019 we have run the well-received ECOV/SA peer mentoring program in regional areas. Peers can often offer the best support, and regional peers also have the most accurate insights into the local community. Having a peer support network that you can go to for professional and personal advice can make the transition from graduation to full time

work much smoother for early career optometrists working in regional and rural locations. This year we held sessions in Mildura, Eyre Peninsula, Wangaratta, and Mt Gambier.

Immediate graduate dinners

We held multiple Immediate graduate dinners throughout the year in Melbourne and Adelaide for graduates in their first year as optometrists to come together to share their experiences and reconnect with their graduating year, sometimes for the first time as a large group since graduation. It is highly valued as an opportunity to share their experiences as practicing optometrists.

Recent grad special evening with panel

This year we piloted a Recent Graduate Evening on 4 April in Victoria to support facilitating the career pathway considerations. This evening included a photographer providing professional headshots for optometrists to use for their career profiles, and a panel of optometrists that work in non-clinical optometry roles to discuss the many pathways available to optometry graduates in their first few years and beyond. Plans are underway for a similar session in South Australia in the coming year.

Policy and advocacy placements

For the past few years, OV/SA has regularly hosted final year optometry students from Deakin University, Flinders University, and The University of Melbourne on Policy and Advocacy placements at our office in Melbourne. Over these 2-3 week placements, students gain non-clinical experience and insight into the day-to-day process of influencing change, through meeting and building relationships with a variety of stakeholders such as public ophthalmology, government bodies, and other non-profit organisations. On these placements, students also have the opportunity to be involved in drafting resources and communications to be delivered to members.



Member engagement and services

Strategic projects

Member data and cyber security

OV/SA remains committed to safeguarding the privacy and security of our members' data. To enhance member data protection, we successfully implemented a new privacy policy, ensuring that sensitive information is handled with the utmost care and compliance. Recognizing the evolving landscape of cyber threats, we also acquired comprehensive cyber insurance covering data and digital assets. As part of our forward-looking strategy, we also explored the use of artificial intelligence language models like ChatGPT in our workflows. As an organisation, we aim to leverage new technology responsibly while maintaining the highest standards of data security.

Digitisation of historical archives

To preserve our long and proud history of service to the profession, OV/SA worked with Public Records Victoria to digitise our historical archives most vulnerable to deterioration and destruction. The process of digitising these archives has inspired a further History Project for the next financial year, aiming to ensure our legacy is not forgotten and to inspire future optometrists with what can be achieved when we work together. This documenting effort will be conducted in consultation with our Retired and Life Members, whose insights and experiences will help capture the essence of the profession's history and preserve our optometric heritage for future generations.

Cultural responsiveness

This year, all OV/SA staff and Board members completed Indigenous Allied Health Australia's Cultural Responsiveness training in alignment with our commitment to bettering health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In addition, we commenced planning for a comprehensive cultural responsiveness organisational action plan to recognise the importance of acknowledging the country we work on. To create a culturally safe office space and reflect the rich diversity of the regions we serve, the OV/SA staff introduced formal acknowledgments of country into meetings and communications and partnered with Artbank to source a new piece of artwork for our office at 28 Drummond St. We are now proud to display Pitjantjatjara artist Alison Munti Riley's Ngayuku ngura (My Country) in our boardroom. This year we were also thrilled to welcome Aboriginal representatives to participate in our O=MEGA23/WCO4 conference committee, ensuring their invaluable perspectives help shape all elements of our conference, from the clinical program to social functions. Through these initiatives, OV/SA is actively contributing to a more inclusive and culturally aware community within the optometric profession.

Tailored updates and sector news

In November 2022, OV/SA entered into an agreement with Optometry Australia, enabling Optometry Australia to deliver collaborative communications on behalf of OV/SA. This process necessitated a review of existing communications channels, with a view to enhancing member engagement through timely and meaningful communications tactics, maximising collaboration to increase efficiencies and quality of communications, and consolidating existing channels where necessary.

This review process led to a refinement of channels and an increase in member engagement with OV/SA content. The quarterly Scope and monthly e-Wink newsletters were distilled and combined into a new, fortnightly digital format titled OV/SA News. This masthead has since become the key news channel for OV/SA members, supported by single-subject eDMs around important information relating to events, governance, renewals, and special announcements.

While engagement levels with the previous Scope and eWink publications were already excellent, reflected by 65% and 66% average open rates respectively, the average open rate of OV/SA News for the year crept even higher to 71%. Average open rates across all industries in Australia sit at 21.5% (reported by Campaign Monitor and Mailchimp), further illustrating the strong engagement members demonstrate with our content.

Supported by social media platforms Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, OV/SA effectively communicated information on CPD requirements, registration renewal, strategic CEO updates, resources such as workforce recruitment guides and visual standards for driving requirements, opportunities for research participation, member awards nominations, industrial relations and employment issues, and more. We also kept members informed during the introduction of the Integration proposal, including information on member consultation sessions and instructions on the voting process, and rolled out a significant communications campaign in the lead up to O=MEGA23/WCO4.



Conferences

2022-23 was a busy year, with a return to in-person events and regular annual conferences across Victoria and South Australia.

SRC Mini 2022

SRC Mini is our one-day incarnation of the original SRC (Southern Regional Conference) and was delivered in July 2022 at the Pullman Melbourne Albert Park with the key topic of Anterior Eye/Diabetes.

Speakers Ian Gutteridge and Lyndell Lim covered systemic diseases and the impact of COVID infections on the presentation and management of patients with uveitis, while Mandy Truong presented on the social and commercial determinants of health and eye care. Ash Vigneswaran also provided an Early Career Optometrist perspective on the complexities of working with GPs and how to overcome related challenges. We received a great turnout with 200 attending, and a small trade of 7 exhibitors provided members the opportunity to view the latest innovations in eyewear.

Blue Sky 2022

A returning biennial favourite, Blue Sky 2022 did not disappoint with the theme of 'All that Blue Sky Jazz' at the Adelaide Convention Centre. Day 1 commenced with a powerful and inspiring 'Welcome to Country' with Elder Jack Buckskin, and Chris Rektsinis from the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia put on a great performance over the two days singing his own eye-health related adaptations of well-known songs to set the scene before each presentation.

Speakers included optometrists Prof Nicola Anstice, Jose Estevez, and Daniel Tretola as well as ophthalmologists Dr Raymond Loh, Dr Ben LaHood and Dr Jack Phu. In addition to CPD hours, CPR refresher training was also provided before and after the conference lectures, with 45 members taking advantage of the opportunity to update their certificate. The trade exhibition was popular with 16 exhibitors in attendance. The 'Spicks and Spectacles' trivia session at the end of the first day was particularly well regarded and provided attendees an opportunity to unwind and have a laugh before heading into the social networking drinks.











Government relations, advocacy, and promotion

OV/SA membership fees help us provide resources which lead, protect, and promote community eye health and the profession of optometry, as well as the standing of members as eye health experts. As an organisation, we support the expanded scope of practise of optometrists to prescribe oral medications for eye health conditions, and we continue to advocate for optometry as a primary care solution to reduce increasingly long public ophthalmology wait times.

Progress with the Victorian health sector

OV/SA has been a long-standing and active member of the Victorian health sector network, and in April 2023, OV/SA CEO Ilsa Hampton met with the Chief Allied Health Officer as part of a combined Victorian health sector network meeting. As a result of this meeting, several actions were discussed for optometry, including movement on the proposal to improve on patient outcomes and reduce overall costs in the health system by giving optometrists prescribing rights for oral medications, the possibility of optometry participating in a rural and regional health practitioner recruitment and retention project, and the critical issue of poor patient transfer of care protocols that mean that patients are having to report back to their referring optometrist after seeing a specialist in the public health system (in the absence of correspondence from the hospital).

OV/SA has also now secured quarterly catch-ups between the Chief Allied Health Officer's office and the Victorian health sector network to ensure that the needs of optometrists will remain front of mind.

Teaching the importance of eye care to the next generation

During the Victorian health sector meeting, attending organisations also discussed emerging work underway concerning prevention and early intervention across the sector, and OV/SA agreed there are opportunities in the critical area of children's eye health and that optometry should play an essential part of future health systems conversations.

To support this, OV/SA has successfully reapplied to ensure the inclusion of a 'Healthy eyes for kids' postcard with magnet into the Victorian Department of Education and Training prep bag provided to prep students at Victorian public schools, reminding kids and their parents of the importance of regular eye checks and providing information about finding a local optometrist. The postcard will contain our well-liked 'Eye Guy' graphic to be coloured in and a clear message about the importance of regular eye checks, and will contain a QR code to link instantly to the most up-to-date information through our consumer website *Good vision for life*.

Addressing long public ophthalmology waiting times

On October 25, OV/SA CEO Ilsa Hampton and Acting Policy and Member Services Manager Lyn Hsieh met with the South Australian Minister for Health Chris Picton and presented him with the Waitlist Reduction Project Roundtable Report. This report proposed optometry inclusion in collaborative models of care and the opportunity to improve the Clinical Prioritisation Criteria (CPC) for ophthalmology, which will assist in improving access to outpatient clinics and streamlining referrals to relevant services. Following this, the proposal was updated for subsequent meetings with South Australia's Health's Chief Medical Officer, Michael Cusak, and Executive Director Health Services Programs, Helen Chalmers. The OV/SA team was supported by Optometry Australia's Ben Hamlyn and South Australian optometrist and LOOK scholarship winner Jacqui Warren.

In early 2023, we were excited for the commencement of Ophthalmology CPC with both adult and paediatric criteria to be created. Strong representation of OV/SA was seen on the Ophthalmology Clinical Pathway Group (CPG) to provide support in the development of the CPC.

Improving clinical handover at transfer of care

When optometrists do not receive sufficient information on patient ocular status and continuing management, the patient is disadvantaged. This piece of advocacy work serves to address the identified issue of gaps in current communication from public ophthalmology to optometrists in the community and to develop strategies to bridge them with the goal of improving patient ocular outcomes.

Receiving correspondence from public ophthalmology, particularly when a patient has been discharged but requires ongoing optometry management, is critical to ensure optimal patient care. OV/SA has since communicated with the Heads of Ophthalmology of all hospitals with public ophthalmology departments to discuss this matter. All hospitals recognised the value it would bring to enhancing patient care and expressed strong agreement that this issue required prioritising, but also acknowledged that current hospital systems required changing and will take significant time. Currently, there are steps being taken to assist ophthalmology teams to better utilise new software systems to automatically generate patient reports. OV/SA will continue to work towards strengthening these channels of communication.

Regulating the Supply of online contact lens Sales

In early June, a concerned member brought an article published on Broadsheet to our attention regarding a coloured contact lens online retailer. The article blatantly left out the eye health risks of wearing contact lenses without the supervision of eye health professionals. OV/SA were able to get in contact with Broadsheet and amend this article and previous articles to ensure that the readership was aware of the risks of wearing contact lenses without the care of a qualified practitioner.

Subsequently, it came to our attention that this same Australian-based online retailer was selling contact lenses without the required verification of a valid prescription. Given that the supply of contact lenses in South Australia without a valid prescription attracts a penalty, we have written to relevant government bodies to address this issue and will continue to investigate further action.

Government relations, advocacy, and promotion

Front of House recruitment

Practice managers, receptionists, optical assistants and qualified optical dispensers all play critical roles in viable optometry practices in 2023, but finding and retaining suitable people to fill these positions is an ongoing challenge. Not only does a shortage of front-of-house staff mean a reduction in the ability to manage practices and dispense glasses to patients, but it can also mean busy optometrists have to add dispensing duties to their often-overloaded days. To help members address this challenge, we've put together a suite of resources with guidelines around targeted recruitment efforts, onboarding and managing staff, using language that better reflects the role, and more. This resource is available to members on the Optometry Australia website under 'Career and Employment' within the 'Practice and Professional support' section.

Driving and licensing advocacy

OV/SA continue to maintain strong relationships with state-based driving and licensing authorities. In Victoria, we have recently been able to secure Dr Anne's Weymouth participation as optometry representation on the Department of Transport Medical Fitness to Drive working group. This group informs and provides feedback on the Australian Fitness to Drive (AFTD) standards and we are very pleased to now have optometry representation.

While South Australia does not have an equivalent working group, we were able to meet with the Registration and Licensing team at the South Australian Department for Infrastructure and Transport to advocate for optometry inclusion in vision testing licensing discussions. This will be considered if future working groups are initiated.

Our persistent advocacy in this space, particularly with the change in AFTD 2023 orthokeratology requirements, meant that optometrists would not be administratively burdened as a result. In South Australia this meant that, apart from an initial orthokeratology recording, further review is not required unless the person has some other medical condition or eyesight disorder that does require ongoing review. Similarly, in Victoria, VicRoads have confirmed that patients undergoing orthokeratology require submission of an eyesight report and annual reviews only. OV/SA released an update to our Fitness to Drive guide to reflect these recent legislative changes across both states, including revisions to the minimum visual standards for monocular commercial vehicle drivers and clarification on patients with diplopia. OV/SA continues to be the first point of contact by these organisations to communicate any updates for vision testing and reporting requirements.



Treasurer's report

Our financial result for 2022-23 was a surplus of \$132,992 (against a budgeted deficit of approximately -\$106,000). This was largely due to strong membership renewals and support from OA on some membership categories, in addition to our budgeting being completed prior to the capitation fee being set (the final fee was less than budgeted).

Capitation fees paid to the National office remains our primary expense (\$1 955 064). Services provided by National are a strong supplement to OV/SA's focus on local needs.

The BlueSky conference was held successfully in Adelaide in November 2022. Income was unfortunately down against budget, mainly due to lower delegate and exhibitor income. We were able to offset the majority of this by savings in expenses.

Our investment portfolio once again provided a modest cash income (around \$2,000 per month) towards operational costs with its main purpose being ongoing financial security for our organisation. Despite the ups and downs of the market over the last year, our portfolio maintained its value (-\$658). During the year, we completed the process of moving the invested funds to NetWealth, under the management of Koda Capital.

The valuation of the property, 28 Drummond Street, was appropriate to carry on the books. This will be reviewed accordingly in the coming year.

Our annual audit was completed by Nexia Sydney Pty Ltd. The audited financial reports were received, with an unqualified opinion in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001. The Financial Reports for the organisation are available to members on the OV/SA website, and the auditor will attend the AGM in November 2023.



Timothy Lo
Treasurer





Strategic goals 2022-23



Lead

- Implement a model for integration between OA and State Divisions
- Lead membership through evolution of market and sector changes
- Improve community eye health and vision care, with a particular focus on under-serviced populations
- Uphold and promote professional standards
- Drive positive outcomes for optometry through collaborative projects and initiatives in South Australia; evolve relationships with SA Health and other key stakeholders through Health Pathways etc.



Engage

- Inspire collegiality in membership
- Enhance social media engagement
- Promote OV/SA to optometry students
- Provide outstanding member resources and information



Promote

- Work to further develop professional practice toolkits for members
- Improve engagement with GPs, pharmacists, and other health care professionals



Create an enduring organisation

- Ensure long-term financial sustainability
- Ensure organisational capability
- Drive efficiencies and avoid duplications by being a collegial and dynamic member of the federation

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