

## COVID-19 AND OPTOMETRY

We are closely monitoring announcements around the ever-changing COVID-19 requirements. We are aware that many of you are either having to isolate with COVID or because you are a close contact, or having to work extra shifts to cover practices that are short-staffed.

As always, we are liaising with the Chief Allied Health Officer to bring you up-to-date information about what this means for you and your practice, direct to your inbox. Be sure to look out for our COVID emails and check out the [COVID pages on our website](#).

### **Renewed call for optometrists to deliver vaccines**

The Victorian Government is again calling on optometrists to join the outbreak response workforce as [Limited Scope COVID-19 Vaccinators](#). The rise of the Omicron variant and shortening of the recommended interval for vaccine booster eligibility has resulted in the need to increase the vaccine workforce pool.

Optometry professionals and students are eligible to become part of the workforce. You will be given training, support, supervision, and personal protective equipment (PPE). Short and longer-term positions are available across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. [Find out more.](#)

### **Wondering how to deal with bad patient behaviour?**

Have you encountered bad patient behaviour? If your business is required to ensure that patients are wearing a mask, chances are the answer is yes. If patients are aggressive or intimidating, your safety and the safety of your workers is top priority.

The state governments have resources and support available to help business owners and staff feel safe when asking patients to wear a mask. [Download for Victoria](#). [Download for South Australia](#).

### **Patients' vaccination status**

While optometrists are not required to check patients' vaccination status, we have received questions about if it's possible to refuse patients who are not vaccinated. In response, Ahpra recently advised that it expects all health practitioners to facilitate access to care regardless of vaccination status. This means people cannot be denied care if steps can be taken to keep the person, health practitioners and their staff safe.

Practices may be considering how best to do this while also facilitating access to care in the current COVID-19 environment. Ahpra and the National Boards have developed guidance to help support good practice, which reinforces existing codes and guidelines and other publicly available information. [Read more](#).

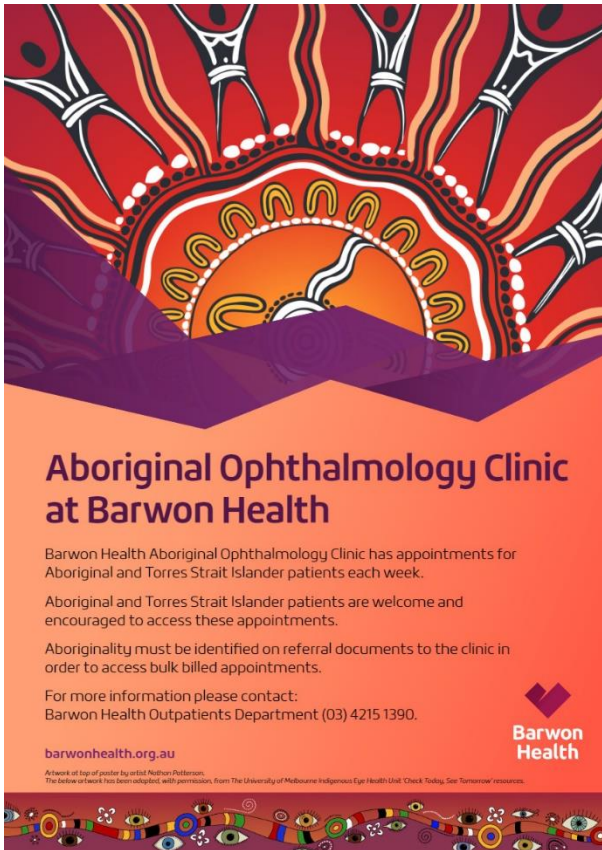
### **Want to know more?**

If you have any questions about the above or anything else COVID-related, why not contact the office on 03 9652 9100 and ask to speak to Lyn or Michelle.

## **LATEST NEWS**

### **Barwon Health Aboriginal Ophthalmology Clinic**

Barwon Health Aboriginal Ophthalmology Clinic in Geelong has announced it has appointments available. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients are welcome to access these appointments and optometrists

The poster features a vibrant, stylized illustration of an eye at the top, rendered in traditional Aboriginal art style with red, orange, and purple tones. Below the illustration, the text is set against a red-to-orange gradient background. At the bottom of the poster, there is a decorative border with various colorful eyes and patterns.

**Aboriginal Ophthalmology Clinic  
at Barwon Health**

Barwon Health Aboriginal Ophthalmology Clinic has appointments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients each week.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients are welcome and encouraged to access these appointments.

Aboriginality must be identified on referral documents to the clinic in order to access bulk billed appointments.

For more information please contact:  
Barwon Health Outpatients Department (03) 4215 1390.

[barwonhealth.org.au](http://barwonhealth.org.au)

Artwork at top of poster by artist Nathan Peterson. The below artwork has been redigited, with permission, from The University of Melbourne Indigenous Eye Health Unit. Check Today, See Tomorrow resources.

**Barwon  
Health**

are encouraged to refer patients where appropriate. The clinic would like to make clear that despite recent directives that only urgent cases would be seen due to COVID, any urgent referrals will be seen if optometrists state why it is urgent.

Aboriginality must be identified on referral documents in order to access bulk billed appointments. For more information contact the Outpatients Department on (03) 4215 1390.

## The future of kids' vision



OV/SA is in the process of drafting a children's eye health position statement to better guide how we work with children. As part of this, we want to know what you do in the field of kids' vision screening within schools. Whether you take part in school screening or not, [we want to hear your thoughts](#).

The purpose of the position statement is to establish parameters for how OV/SA plans to achieve our strategic goals relevant to children's vision and eye health as detailed in [Optometry Victoria South Australia's Strategic Plan 2021-24](#). [The survey](#) has been extended to give more people the chance to respond, and will now close on 31 January.

# RESEARCH

## Opportunities and clinical trials

**Vision Initiative webinar presenters:** OV/SA in collaboration with [Vision Initiative \(VI\)](#) are looking to provide eye health information webinars to community health workers around Victoria. We are seeking Victorian based optometrists that are interested in presenting to either one or multiple community groups.

The webinars are designed to empower community health professionals to understand the importance of eye health and identify when referrals to optometry are required. The content will cover basic anatomy of the eye, main causes of low vision and blindness, when to refer to an optometrist, and a basic overview of equipment. There is some flexibility available with content

Events will be held on:

- 22 February 12.30-2.30pm: North Metro Melbourne Eye Health Training
- 24 March 4-6pm: East Regional Vic Eye Health Training
- 5 April 2-4pm: West Metro Melbourne Eye Health Training
- 7 April 4-6pm: West Regional Vic Eye Health Training
- 12 April 2-4pm: Southern Region Eye Health Training

Interested in taking part? Contact Lyn at [l.hsieh@optometry.org.au](mailto:l.hsieh@optometry.org.au)

**Survey establishing optometrists' interest in genetic testing for glaucoma:** A Flinders University research team wants to understand South Australian and Victorian optometrists' perspectives of polygenic risk testing for glaucoma, and is asking for survey participants.

Results from the survey will help develop training and resources for health care workers including optometrists who may be involved in offering, referring or counselling patients as well

as interpreting results. [The survey](#) takes 15 minutes to complete and answers remain confidential.

Questions? Contact Georgie on [georgie.hollitt@flinders.edu.au](mailto:georgie.hollitt@flinders.edu.au) or 0493 057 068.

[Fill in the survey now.](#)

# CPD AND EVENTS

## OV/SA launches calendar of events



Our hardworking events team has launched the 2022 OV/SA events calendar, helping you get those much needed CPD hours throughout the year. And this year, to make it even easier for you to plan ahead, we've put together a poster for you to save to your desktop or print out so you never have to miss an event.

[Download our events calendar now.](#) You can also head to our website to [read more about all the events and book your place.](#)

Date	Event type	Details	State	CPD hours
21 February	Webinar	ECOV/SA: Practical paediatric prescribing	VIC/SA	TBC
2 March	Regional webinar series	Port Lincoln: Anterior Eye & Diabetic Macular Oedema	SA	2.5TI
22 March	Regional webinar series	Traralgon: Anterior Eye & Diabetic Macular Oedema	VIC	2.5TI
4 April	Webinar	ECOV/SA: Interesting corneal cases	SA	TBC
1 May	Seminar	ECOV/SA: Interesting corneal cases	VIC	TBC
3 May	Regional seminar series	Mildura: Anterior Eye & Diabetic Macular Oedema	VIC	2.5TI
15 May	Conference	SRC Mini: Anterior Eye	SA	TBC
16 May	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
24 May	Regional seminar series	Ballarat: Anterior Eye & Diabetic Macular Oedema	VIC	2.5TI
25 May	Regional seminar series	Warrambool: Anterior Eye & Diabetic Macular Oedema	VIC	2.5TI
31 May	Regional seminar series	Moolleen Vale: Anterior Eye & Diabetic Macular Oedema	SA	2.5TI
6 June (day & evening)	Regional seminar series	Melbourne: Anterior Eye & Diabetic Macular Oedema	VIC	2.5TI
20 June (day & evening)	Regional seminar series	Adelaide: Anterior Eye & Diabetic Macular Oedema	SA	2.5TI
17 July	Conference	SRC Mini: Anterior Eye	VIC	TBC
17 July	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
1 August	Webinar	ECOV/SA: Diabetes	VIC/SA	TBC
9 August	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
5 September	Regional seminar series	Shepparton: Subject TBC	VIC	2.5TI
6 September	Regional seminar series	Bendigo: Subject TBC	VIC	2.5TI
12 September	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
13 September	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
26 September	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
27 September	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
3 October	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
4 October	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
24 October	Seminar	ECOV/SA: Build your wealth, build your health	SA	TBC
25 October	Regional seminar series	Barossa: Subject TBC	SA	2.5TI
8 November	Training	CPR	VIC	N/A
11-12 November	Conference	Blue Sky	SA	TBC
11 November	Training	CPR	SA	N/A
14 November	Seminar	Melbourne Museum: Subject TBC	VIC	2.5TI
28 November	Seminar	ECOV/SA: Build your wealth, build your health	VIC	TBC

ECOV/SA events are targeted at early career optometrists, up to 10 years from graduation. Regional series are open to all members.

Our events are FREE for members, with the exception of conferences and CPR training.

For more about any of these events, head to [www.optometry.org.au/institute-of-science/cpd-events/](http://www.optometry.org.au/institute-of-science/cpd-events/), or contact OV/SA on (03) 9552 9100 or [office.vic@optometry.org.au](mailto:office.vic@optometry.org.au).

\*As at January 2022. Subject to change.



28 Drummond Street, , Carlton VIC, 3053

[Unsubscribe](#)