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National advocacy ahead of the 2019 Federal election

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DON’T MISS OUT!

O=MEGA19 EARLY BIRD RATE FOR OA MEMBERS OF $399 FINISHES ON 23 APRIL.
EDITORIAL

We might be moving into the cooler autumn weather in Victoria, but for the association the year is definitely hotting up.

Activities for our amalgamation with Optometry South Australia are advancing well. A recent planning day with the Board Directors for the new Optometry Victoria/South Australia has resulted in the development of a strategic plan that will guide the future direction of the new organisation. A proposed budget and CPD events calendar for the coming twelve months has also been developed.

We are very confident that we’re on track to deliver on our promises of increased services to members and reduced membership fees, as a result of the amalgamation. We’re excited to share this information with members over the coming months in more detail, as we head towards the 2019-20 financial year.

Membership renewal advice will be distributed to members on 15 May. You will notice a change, in that you will be asked to renew to Optometry Victoria/South Australia.

Planning and promotion for O=MEGA19, which replaces SRC is well underway, with early bird registrations now open.

The early bird, full conference registration rate for members only of $399 is outstanding value for a three-day, dual stream conference with leading international and Australian speakers, and the largest trade expo in the country.

Don’t miss out on the terrific O=MEGA19 member rate which closes on 23 April.

As usual, if you have any questions or would like to express your view on any of the work of the association, please feel free to contact me in the office. I’d welcome the opportunity to speak with you.

Warm regards,

Pete Haydon
Chief Executive Officer

EYEING OFF MYOPIA IN GEELONG

Optometry Victoria’s current regional CPD seminar series will finish in Geelong on 29 April at Deakin University. While the seminar is targeted to local member optometrists, student members are also welcome to attend.

The topic for the seminar is myopia, a long-established bread and butter condition for optometry. However radical shifts in epidemiology are driving individual demands and public health needs for more proactive management.

Guest speaker Tim Fricke will review the current evidence and consider key questions. Are there ways to adjust modern life to avoid myopia? Are we part of the cause of the ‘myopia epidemic’? Are there ways we can control myopia development in our patients?

Tim is an optometrist, researcher and international development practitioner. He has held clinical, teaching, research and management roles in private, public, community health, hospital and refugee camp settings, including Director of Specialty and Community Services at the Australian College of Optometry and Research Manager at the Brien Holden Vision Institute.

Participants will receive 6T CPD points (with assessment). An evening meal and refreshments are included.

Registration for the seminar is essential. Book online through the member portal or contact Optometry Victoria on office.vic@optometry.org.au or call (03) 9652 9100.

Geelong

| Date:      | Monday 29 April |
| Time:     | 6:00pm – 8:30pm |
| Venue:    | Reach Lecture Theatre  
Deakin Optometry  
Deakin University  
75 Pigdons Road,  
Waurn Ponds |
| Cost:     | Free to Optometry Victoria members |
BACK TO BASICS GLAUCOMA SEMINAR FOR EARLY CAREER PRACTITIONERS

Glauc...
A FULL HOUSE FOR ECOV’S DIAGNOSTIC DILEMMAS

There was a very positive response to the Early Career Optometrists Victoria (ECOV) seminar on diagnostic dilemmas in March, with around 60 members taking time out of their busy schedules to attend.

Guest speaker Anne Weymouth delivered an interesting and challenging presentation on diagnosing the less obvious causes of vision loss such as neurodegenerations, retinal and optic nerve dystrophies and autoimmune, inflammatory and paraneoplastic related disease.

Anne’s presentation included discussion around non-glaucomatous visual field loss, acquired colour vision defects and electrodiagnostic and imaging tools that are useful in diagnosing neural aetiologies to vision loss.

A team-based learning session facilitated by members of the ECOV committee followed Anne’s presentation, and provided participants with the opportunity to work together in small groups on case-based discussion.

Participants received 6 CPD points (with assessment).

DELICIOUS DINING WITH IMMEDIATE GRADUATE MEMBERS

Optometry Victoria was delighted to host the Immediate Graduates dinner in early April. We had a fantastic turnout with 25 members making the time to come along.

The dinner was a great opportunity for members to reconnect with their graduating class of 2018, over a delicious meal and drinks.

Optometry Victoria’s CEO Pete Haydon and Member Services and Policy Manager Michelle Marven also attended the dinner, along with Early Career Optometrists Victoria committee members Patrick Mac and Lyn Hsieh.

Thank you to all the members who attended on the night, making the dinner a terrific success.
Optometry Victoria’s regional seminar series travelled to Wodonga in late March. There was a fantastic response from local practitioners, with 15 members and guests attending on the night.

Tim Fricke’s presentation provided participants with an overview of the increasing prevalence of myopia globally. Tim outlined the practical implications for practice in Australia now and in the near future, and included an update on the latest evidence regarding treatment.

Local optometrist Kelly Gibbons also delivered a brief presentation on the Visiting Optometrists Scheme (VOS), outlining her experience with the program and the benefits for optometrists.

As part of the seminar, Optometry Victoria’s Member Services and Policy Manager Michelle Marven undertook 11 practice visits in the region.

Participants at the seminar received 6T CPD points (with assessment). Thank you to all the members who attended, making this another very successful member CPD event.

FLEXIBLE WORKPLACES WEBCAST POPULAR WITH VICTORIAN MEMBERS

The flexible workplaces webcast in early March provided interesting and practical information on managing that elusive work life balance, or creating a flexible working environment in your own practice.

Guest speaker Vanessa Vanderhoek took participants through a range of strategies for establishing and negotiating flexible working arrangements.

The webcast was developed and delivered by Optometry Australia, and hosted by Optometry Victoria at our office in Drummond Street, Carlton. Victorian members were invited to either participate in the webcast online or to attend the seminar face-to-face if they preferred.

The webcast was popular with Optometry Victoria members, with around 60 per cent of those participating online or in person, practising in Victoria.

Participants could self-report 1 non-clinical CPD point for participating.

To watch this webinar, or any of the other Optometry Australia webcasts visit optometry.org.au/for-optometrists/professional-practice/cpd-resources/
Optometry Victoria worked closely with Glaucoma Australia to support the free glaucoma screening clinic which was held as part of the World Glaucoma Congress in Melbourne on 27 March.

Seventeen members responded to the call from Optometry Victoria to participate in the screening clinic. Utilising the latest mobile detection technologies 36 patients were screened by measuring intraocular pressures, by taking fundus photographs and performing visual fields tests.

The screening clinic was followed by Glaucoma Australia’s patient symposium, which aimed to inform and educate glaucoma patients and their families with presentations from leading glaucoma specialists.

Optometry Victoria warmly thanks the members who generously donated their time in support of patients and their families.

KeepSight is a new national program designed to ensure that the 1.3 million Australians living with diabetes undergo regular eye examinations.

The program is an initiative of Diabetes Australia and Vision 2020 Australia, and is supported by Optometry Australia, Specsavers, the Centre for Eye Research Australia and a range of other eye health organisations.

The program aims to prevent diabetes-related vision loss by encouraging people with diabetes to make an appointment with their local eye care professional for a diabetes eye check.

Optometrists are encouraged to register with the KeepSight webportal. This enables optometrists, with the consent of the patient, to record a patient’s diabetes-related eye examination. The KeepSight portal will then automatically remind patients registered with the National Diabetes Services Scheme when they are next due for a comprehensive eye health examination.

For optometrists to register with the KeepSight webportal takes about 60 seconds. Optometrists will need their AHPRA registration number handy, to complete the registration process. For more information visit keepsight.org.au

(L-R) Optometry Victoria member and ECOV committee member Patrick Mac at the KeepSight launch with Centre for Eye Research Australia Deputy Director Associate Professor Peter van Wijngaarden and Diabetes Australia CEO Professor Greg Johnson.
Optometry Victoria Golf Day 2019 had a new look and feel this year at the Commonwealth Golf Club. Despite the brisk and windy autumn day, 84 players enjoyed a very challenging round of golf, raised funds for Optometry Giving Sight and networked with friends, colleagues and sponsors.

There was a tie for the Stableford winner, and the initial version of the scoreboard showed that Optometry Victoria Golf Day doyen Peter Lewis had won. Later that night it emerged that Kuong Chang was the overall competition winner on countback.

Thankfully Pete magnanimously stepped aside to ensure Kuong’s name will be etched alongside all of the other champions from the last 94 years.

Many thanks to all of the attendees, sponsors and supporters who made the day such an enjoyable one. Around $5000 was raised through the event for Optometry Giving Sight.
The winner of the 2019 Optometry Victoria international postgraduate travel grant is Kai Lyn Goh.

The $1,000 grant will enable Kai Lyn to travel to the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology meeting in Vancouver, Canada from 28 April to 2 May, to deliver a poster presentation.

Kai Lyn’s research has analysed vision screening data from a Victorian children’s vision screening program Glasses for Kids that ran from 2016-2018. The program screened 20,634 school students in Grade Prep, 1, 2 and 3.

For this presentation, Kai Lyn analysed a subsection of these students screened between February and March 2018 by final year Doctor of Optometry students from the University of Melbourne. She found that referral rates from the program were two to three times higher than other comparable programs, with 61 per cent of children recommended for further review.

“We believe that the high rate of referral may reflect the strictness of the referral criteria used, including referring all children who were unable to complete a test. Referral rates were highest in the youngest children, and this is likely the result of when the screening was conducted for these particular students, very early on in the school year,” Kai Lyn said.

“Using different tests that young children are more likely to complete, as well as relaxing the referral criteria, might improve the performance of any future iterations of the program,” she said.

Since graduating Isaac has taken a role with OPSM in the Adelaide CBD in South Australia.

“I really enjoy making my own clinical decisions now that I am not a student, and I’m excited that there is still so much to learn,” Isaac said.

We asked Isaac how he feels about winning the award.

“I feel very honoured to be recognised for all the hard work I put in over the years. I was caught by surprise when I found out I was the recipient, as there are so many deserving colleagues that graduated with me,” Isaac said.

The Academic Award recognises the final year student who epitomises the highest commitment to patient care, including outstanding clinical aptitude, commitment to evidence-based practice and professionalism.

Isaac completed his optometry degree with the University of Melbourne in late 2018.

“I really enjoyed my time at the University of Melbourne. The highlight of the course was definitely my externship placement in Oklahoma in the United States,” Isaac said.

“The scope of practice for optometrists in Oklahoma is incredible. I had the opportunity to perform anterior eye YAG laser procedures as well as minor eyelid surgical techniques. My training here in Australia was easily translated to skills needed for this wider scope of practice,” he said.

Since graduating Isaac has taken a role with OPSM in the Adelaide CBD in South Australia.

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Suzy and Richard Lenne are group practice optometrists in a busy independent practice in Echuca. The business has eight optometrists with an outreach location in Kyabram and visiting arrangements with local nursing homes and the Nathalia hospital. Suzy and Richard have worked together since they graduated, and have also been married for twenty-three years.

“Suzy and I were both from country Victoria, but met in the first year of our optometry degree at the University of Melbourne. We graduated in 1992, but I stayed on and completed a Masters of Optometry, graduating in 1996,” Richard said.

Suzy had been keen to get back to country however. “After four years of student-living in the city I took a job in Swan Hill when I graduated,” Suzy said. “When Rich finished his Masters he joined me there, and we worked together for two and a half years.”

Suzy and Richard relocated to Townsville for two years, before moving back to Victoria and settling in Echuca where they’ve lived and worked for the last 19 years.

We asked them what they most enjoy about their work.

Suzy said, “I’ve developed an interest in children’s vision and behavioural optometry. I’ve started taking a more holistic view of vision and brain development, and seeing kids is rewarding. I like being able to follow children and other family members over the years.”

“I’m also a bit of a perfectionist,” she said. “I still enjoy refracting and taking the time to explain things and answer patients’ questions.”

Richard has developed an interest in therapeutics, and completed his therapeutics qualification in 2006.

“I enjoy dealing with acute eye symptoms,” Richard said. “I was the first optometrist in our practice with therapeutics and initially saw all the ‘red eyes’. As more and more of our team are therapeutically endorsed the cases are spread out, however I’m still eager to see a patient who has acute ocular symptoms,” he said.

“The advent of good imaging equipment has allowed me to collect a lot of interesting cases,” Richard said. “I’ve been honoured to have the opportunity to speak at optometry conferences, including previous SRCs and the new O=MEGA19 in July this year. I was also part of a Collaborative Care Panel at the World Glaucoma Congress in Melbourne in March. I’ve really enjoyed sharing these cases with other optometrists, students and on a few occasions medical practitioners as well,” he said.

We also asked Suzy and Richard what they find most challenging about their work.

Suzy noted that working part-time can bring its own challenges. “It’s sometimes difficult to stay abreast of changes in frame and lens technology, and it can take me longer to become proficient in using new equipment simply because I am not there doing it every day,” she said.

“As a part-timer you can sometimes feel outside of the day-to-day happenings of the practice and it can be more difficult to follow patients. Having said that, I love working part-time and am lucky enough to be able to do so,” Suzy said.

Richard highlighted that the challenges for him are associated with the non-clinical aspects of running a business.

“I don’t have a natural business brain, so I attend ProVision events to fill in this weakness,” he said.

“Being a group practice the partners have taken different responsibilities and mine has been to liaise with our IT support. With so many staff and optometrists the IT problems can be quite a handful,” Richard said.

We also asked Suzy and Richard what inspired them to become optometrists.

Suzy noted that while she didn’t have eye problems as a child her mother did. “My Mum had astigmatism and myopia and she wore glasses and contact lenses. In year 12 I became aware of optometry as a profession. I had no idea how much more than glasses and contact lenses optometry would be,” she said.

Suzy added, “These days the positive feelings I get from building relationships with patients, as well as continuing education in my areas of interest, are what keeps me motivated. Use of OCT and other digital imaging has helped me maintain my confidence in managing patients and I love the extra information we can give patients about their eyes. I have started vision training in recent times and like anything new, it is making me think more deeply about what I am doing and why I am doing it.”

Richard always wanted a science education and was happy to work in health care. “I feel fortunate that my job has plenty of variety and solving individual patient’s eye health questions is rewarding,” he said.

Suzy added, “We talk about work at home – I think we both find it good to debrief sometimes and we help each other out with tricky cases. It’s great to discuss work and know that your partner understands exactly what you’re talking about. We don’t really have a problem with it, although sometimes if there’s too much optometry talk our kids roll their eyes at us!”

Richard Lenne is co-presenting ‘Rural case studies of community impact’ with Mark de Paola at O=MEGA19. To find out more view the O=MEGA19 program lift out with this edition of Scope.

To register visit omega19.com.au
REGISTRATIONS CLOSE 23 APRIL

Registrations for O=MEGA19 are filling fast, with an unbeatable full conference, early bird registration rate for Optometry Australia members of only $399.

Presented by Optometry Victoria and ODMA, O=MEGA19 replaces SRC and ODMA Fair.

O=MEGA19 will take place from 19-21 July 2019 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

O=MEGA19 will be the strongest optometric conference presented in Australia for many years with cutting-edge, clinical speakers from Australia and around the world in a dual-stream format, including twin keynote lectures and breakout sessions.

Delegates must register before 23 April 2019 to lock in the full conference, three day early bird rate and earn up to 48 clinical CPD points.

CHILDCARE AT O=MEGA19

No babysitter? No worries! O=MEGA19 is proud to offer a childcare service for conference delegates, which will be operating across all three days of the conference.

Delegates at the O=MEGA19 clinical conference can use the childcare service at a special half day rate of $25 per child or, the full day rate of $50. People attending only the tradeshow and masterclass program will need to pay $25 per hour to access the service.

Run by Crechendo Childcare, the service will be located close to the clinical conference area. This will ensure that drop-off and pick-up is quick and easy, as well as providing parents with confidence that their children are not far away.

Bookings are essential. Contact Optometry Victoria on 03 9652 9100 to discuss your childcare needs or to make a booking.

REGISTER NOW AT: omega19.com.au
Optometry Australia is calling on the next Federal Government to support the organisation’s vision for a sustainable and effective eye care system accessible to all Australians.

It’s imperative that all political parties recognise the contribution of optometry and support optometrists’ mission to meet the changing needs of our population by embracing a rapidly advancing clinical, technological and communications landscape.

Optometry Australia is calling on members to help broadcast the campaign key messages. Join the campaign by using the new political lobbying tool which with a few simple clicks, delivers a message to local federal Members of Parliament and Senators.

By working together to ignite the collective voice, Optometry Australia can ensure key influencers and decision makers receive thousands of pieces of correspondence all supporting the same priority recommendations.

To join the campaign, send a message to your local Member of Parliament and Senator and, ensure your voice is heard visit optometry.org.au/advocacy

A VISION FOR EYES IN THE 2019 FEDERAL ELECTION

Priority one:
Ensure the relevant recommendations of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) Review are implemented, including the reinstatement of two-yearly rebates for initial comprehensive examinations for middle-aged Australians as a high priority.

Priority two:
Reassess scheduled fees for MBS optometry items so primary eye care services are sustainable and accessible. The lengthy freeze on indexation combined with the five per cent reduction to all optometry rebates in 2015, means that patient rebates for optometry items on the MBS are five per cent less today than in 2012 - yet the cost of providing quality primary eye care has continued to rise.

Priority three:
Increase awareness of the importance of comprehensive eye examinations for all in early childhood.

Priority four:
Support ongoing advancement in primary eye care through investment in applied research directed at shaping new models of care that maximise the skills of optometrists and further integrate optometry across the health system.

Submit a Case Report and Earn CPD Points

Optometry Victoria members are invited to submit a case report for consideration for publication in Pharma magazine.

For a case report to be considered for publication members should send a 200 word explanatory summary, plus one or two captioned images, graphs or scans.

Optometry Australia’s Pharma magazine aims to provide information that optometrists can use in their day-to-day patient care, or that will improve the knowledge of members across a range of eye health issues. Each edition of Pharma offers members six accredited CPD points per issue.

Pharma is published quarterly in March, June, September and December.

If a case report is accepted for publication, members can claim an additional one CPD point per hour that is spent researching and writing the full published report.

For further information visit: optometry.org.au/publications/pharma-submissions/
Board Directors: Murray Smith (President), Anne Weymouth (Vice-President), Timothy Lo (Treasurer), Steve Dinh, Allison McKendrick, Genevieve Napper, Rowan Prendergast, Jason Tan (Associate Director), Jayson Ward.

National Director: Kylie Harris

The Optometry Victoria Board welcomes discussion and input from our members.

If you have an issue or point of discussion you would like to raise with the Board, please feel free to contact President Murray Smith directly at m.smith@optometry.org.au

Alternatively you can reach individual Board members via the Optometry Victoria office on (03) 9652 9100 or email office.vic@optometry.org.au

OV’S MYOPIA SEMINAR: GEELONG

Through this seminar guest presenter Tim Fricke will review the evidence and open discussion regarding trends in myopia epidemiology and pathological consequences, and the range of myopia management options.

Venue: The Reach Lecture Deakin Optometry, Deakin University, 75 Pidgions Road, Waurn Ponds
Date: Monday 29 April, 2019
Time: 6:00pm-8.30pm (dinner provided)
Cost: Free to Optometry Victoria members. Registration is essential.

OV’S MYOPIA SEMINAR: MELBOURNE

Through this seminar guest presenter Tim Fricke will review the evidence and open discussion regarding trends in myopia epidemiology and pathological consequences, and the range of myopia management options.

Venue: Optometry Victoria, Level 1, 28 Drummond Street, Carlton
Date: Monday 27 May, 2019
Time: Matinee session – 12pm – 2:30pm (lunch provided)
Evening session – 6:00pm-8.30pm (dinner provided)
Cost: Free to Optometry Victoria members. Registration is essential.

O=MEGA19 EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION

O=MEGA19 replaces ODMA Fair and SRC combining the largest annual optometry conference in the southern hemisphere with the largest eye care and eye wear show in Australia. The early bird member rate of $399 is a saving of over $300 on the full price of registration for SRC 2018.

Venue: Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre
Date: 19-21 July, 2019

Early bird registration closes: 23 April, 2019

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Optometry Victoria/South Australia membership is an investment in your future and the future of the profession. Membership provides you with free, face-to-face and online CPD events, highest quality PII, online tracking of CPD points, national and state-based advocacy on the issues important to you, access to journals and publications, retail discounts and much more. We hope you’ll continue with us!

Renew your membership online through the member portal from May 15 to June 30, or contact the office on office.vic@optometry.org.au or call (03) 9652 9100.

For more information on any of the above events or to register online visit www.optometry.org.au/vic