

Optometry Australia Annual Report

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FY 2021- 2022



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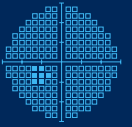
Throughout our Annual Report we feature members from around Australia. For clarification, these members have not contributed to the writing of this Annual Report.

Front cover:
Jo Twaddell
Optometry VIC/SA member

Tim Duffy
Optometry NSW/ACT member



Who we are



Optometry Australia is the peak professional body for optometrists, placing the needs of our members front and centre of all our decision making.

Since 1918 we have united the optometry sector to make Australia a world leader in the delivery of vision and eye health services and patient care. With 100+ years of history servicing optometrists and evolving optometry, no other organisation understands our profession like us or has a more influential voice.

Benefits of membership

Membership means you are part of Australia's largest community of optometrists. We can provide networks, support, and guidance to help you succeed.

With 85% of registered optometrists members of our organisation, you are never alone.

Acknowledgement of Country

Optometry Australia respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities across Australia. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and we pay our respects to their Elders – past, present and emerging. Optometry Australia is committed to honouring First Nations peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.



Key achievements

94% of members consider the organisation to be member-focused

98% of federal politicians received letters from members to raise awareness of the urgent need for better eye health funding and policy reform

96% of members trust Optometry Australia

61 webcasts, interactive workshops, and podcasts were delivered during the year

\$468.6m - Medicare rebates for optometry services in FY2021/2022

335 media articles published on launch of our 2022 Vision Index

Our new GOLD program is supporting **10** members access advanced governance training

91m people reached via our day to day consumer eye health media coverage

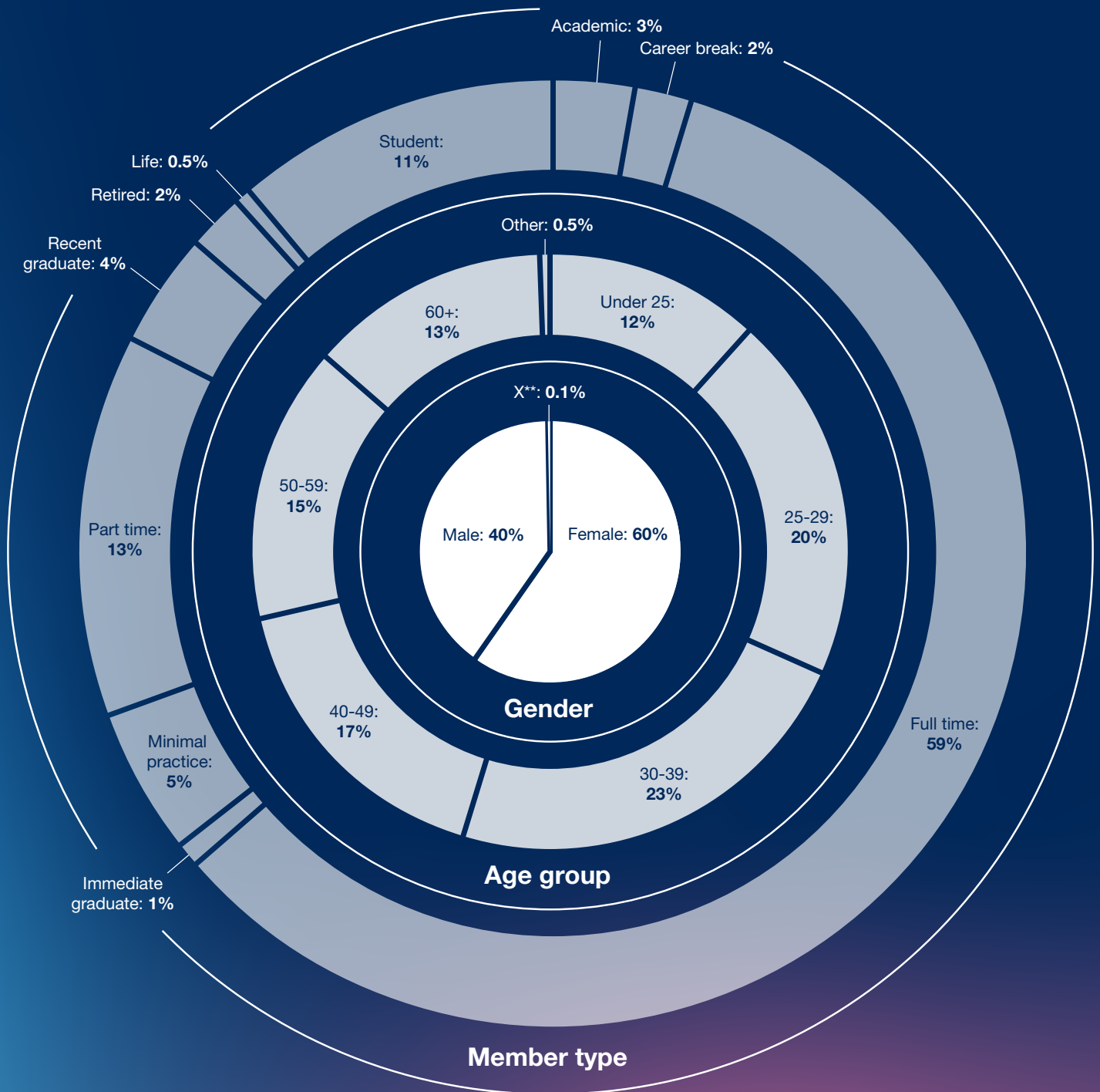
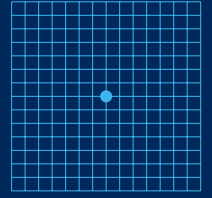
Our Respect! Always campaign is responding to evidence of gender bias, and aggressive and harassing behaviour in the optometry workforce

2021 Best Workplace Award received by Optometry Australia

All members can now access complimentary online cultural responsiveness training delivered by Indigenous Allied Health Australia

In March 2022, our CEO named one of Australia and New Zealand's top association influencers

Membership snapshot



Note: percentages have been rounded up or down to whole numbers

** : Non-binary or prefer not to say

Your board



**Darrell
Baker**

President (Until 26/11/21)



**Murray
Smith**

President (from 26/11/21
– 27/06/22 and prior, Vice
President until 26/11/21)



**Margaret
Lam**

President (from 28/06/22 and prior,
Vice President 26/11/21 – 27/06/22)



**Fiona
Moore**

Vice President (from
28/06/22 and prior, Non-
executive Director 26/11/21
– 27/06/22)



**Tori
Halsey**

Treasurer



**Rob
Howie**

Non-executive Director



**Neil
Wesley**

Non-executive Director



**Theo
Charalambous**

Non-executive Director



**Albert
Lee**

Non-executive Director (from 28/06/22)

President's Report

It is my pleasure to provide a review of the past year on behalf of my predecessors Darrell Baker and Murray Smith who oversaw continued innovation and the creation of extensive member value.

This annual report covers innumerable highlights and achievements over the period that centre on Optometry Australia initiatives that have driven success for all members and the profession more broadly. We represent 85% of all optometrists in Australia and so everything we do is reflected by the profession. It's a substantial responsibility and both Darrell and Murray carried this load with an unwavering commitment to members.

On a personal level, I feel very lucky to have served with them on the Optometry Australia board and to learn from them what it takes to serve and lead our profession and the organisation.

COVID-19 has continued to disrupt our daily lives and it is testament to the culture of our organisation that during the year under review, we balanced supporting members through the challenges while delivering on our strategic objectives.

The Optometry Australia board has had a strong focus on contemporary governance and each year we evaluate our individual and collective performance to ensure we are truly serving members. This same philosophy cascades to monitoring the performance of the CEO and operational team who are guided by the Shared Strategic Plan FY2021-2024 which is continually monitored for changing conditions to make sure it is 'fit for purpose'.

Optometry is an evidenced-based science and, as an organisation, we commit to continual improvement through utilisation of evidence through data and measurement. Member surveys clearly indicate that we are meeting your needs and leading the profession successfully.

We are also enormously proud that the organisation has been recognised with some key awards over the past year, including receiving a 2021 Best Workplace Award in recognition of its exceptional levels of employee engagement and satisfaction. We were further elevated when our CEO Lyn Brodie was named as one of Australia and New Zealand's top influencers in February 2022, as this award recognises her innovation and achievements in leading Optometry Australia.

However, we must continue to be forward thinking to ensure we meet your expectations.

Evolving scope and working to full scope is essential to the ongoing relevance of optometry as a critical element of the primary health care sector. We continue to work diligently in this area, recognising that success takes a coordinated and sustained effort at a federal, state, and territory level. One of the reasons the national board has continued to encourage unification of the federation is to maximise our opportunities for success and leverage skills across the organisation efficiently and effectively.

Quality relationships with key stakeholders in the eye health sector embed optometry's value and that of the association. Over the past year, I would suggest, relationships with RANZCO, and ophthalmology more generally, are probably the best we have ever experienced. It's also enormously pleasing and beneficial for the profession that individual practitioners and employer groups (both independent and corporate) feel embraced by the association and our work is highly valued.

I need to acknowledge that the past has been very challenging, and pay tribute to my fellow directors, including Darrell and Murray, for their diligence, fortitude, and commitment to performing their duties for the membership and profession.

I am reminded at every board meeting of their resolute commitment to members, as under Darrell's leadership we introduced a Member Impact Statement that is front and centre of every board paper. This means that every initiative and every decision we make is directed by how it will benefit members. Under Murray's stewardship, we introduced a Values Decision Framework which means that as directors, we consider every decision aligned to the organisation's values of Forward Thinking, Integrity, Responsive and Accountable, Strategic Vision, and Teamwork.

I also take this opportunity to thank the team at Optometry Australia, including our outgoing CEO, Lyn Brodie. The organisation's culture puts members at the centre of all our decisions, and with such high representation, it automatically means the profession is also central. This steadfast focus and shared values assures success.



Margaret Lam

President



CEO's Report



There is a theme in each of the annual reports that I have authored since taking on this role in 2017, and it is that members, and creating value for them, is at the centre of every initiative that we do. This includes leading the profession and ensuring that optometry and optometrists have a vibrant and exciting future embedded within the health sector, to truly serve the community.

This will be my final report as CEO of Optometry Australia, so it affords me an opportunity to not only reflect on the past year, but also on the past five years.

The national organisation has successfully embedded the values developed over five years ago and lives and breathes them every day. They play a major role in the success of the organisation, driving a positive culture. These values and outcomes include:

Forward Thinking

Optometry 2040, developed in 2018, was designed to ensure members were in control of their future, and has formed the basis of a long-term sector evolution strategy for Optometry Australia and the national organisation. It remains a key guide for determining initiatives.

This year we have begun addressing the issue of climate change and its impact on health, as well as tackling gender inequity and aggressive and harassing behaviours in the optometry workforce through our Respect! Always campaign.

The launch of the GOLD program (Governance, Oversight, Leadership, Development) seeks to develop strong leadership capability amongst our members to enable them to assume key leadership positions on optometry and broader health sector boards. I would like to pay tribute to our previous President, Murray Smith, who had a strong focus on this area. Murray understood the value of quality governance across the federation and the importance of embedding optometry in the health and medical sector.

Likewise, Murray's predecessor Darrell Baker oversaw the establishment of the Student Leadership Program and always noted attending their annual virtual conference as one of the highlights of his role. This year we supported students from the various universities to run their conference once again, an initiative that was born from the early Student Leadership Program cohorts.

We are committed to constantly developing those who will take the profession forward. This work is driven by our team who make sure they are connected to the broad membership, as well as monitoring the external environment to enable the optometry profession to take a leading role in addressing contemporary issues facing the health sector and the wider community. Our team always has one eye on tomorrow, while serving the membership daily.

Integrity

Alignment of values and an organisation driven by its shared values leads to success.

The national team's culture is built on integrity, and honest and ethical decision making is the norm. With this philosophy we deal with all members equally and all the advice that our amazing professional services team offer members centres on truth and fact.

This also means that all our services and support make certain that members, regardless of where they work, live, or their circumstances, are consistent and accessible. The mutual trust and respect amongst the team and the board speaks to the high level of integrity throughout the national organisation.

Responsive and Accountable

The national organisation measures everything we do, so that every dollar spent, importantly every member dollar, makes a difference. Our team log every call and email from members and then assess and respond to the broader themes and trends that may emerge. Just as optometry is evidence based, we ensure that everything we do is evidence based. We are acutely aware that we are spending a portion of the money members pay to their state divisions and we are diligent in being accountable to grassroots members. We consider our expenditure as an investment for members and aim for the very best return on that investment.

We also understand the value of data for the profession. We continue to pursue our big data project that seeks to provide valuable de-identified patient data to support our advocacy efforts and, ultimately, continuous improvement in practice. We are well ahead of many other professions in this area seeing data as critical to responding to future needs while keeping optometry ahead of the game.

The goals set within the Shared Strategic Plan FY2021-2024 are monitored closely by the board and cascade to each member of the national team. This means we are always responsive and take pride in being accountable to our members.

Strategic Vision

I mentioned Optometry 2040 earlier and how it continues to drive our initiatives. Members worked with us to develop the preferred plausible future for the optometry profession, and we are committed to ensuring that they reach the end goal of a vibrant, progressive, and sustainable sector.

This past year has seen us working with a new three-year Shared Strategic Plan for the FY2021-2024 period. This plan, which came into effect on 1 July 2021, builds on the great work of prior years and it will be used as the basis to drive initiatives and realise success for the membership. It's not simply about the vision, but about the strategic vision so that every action we take will result in a step forward for the profession.

Everything that we do is about learning from our past so that we can direct the future.

Our work in evolving scope of practice and working to full scope continues to progress. As an organisation we are also focused on evolving to be 'fit for purpose'. Our strategic vision encompasses members, the profession, and the organisation we need to be to support your future.

Teamwork:

The national team won a 2021 Best Workplace Award through a validated, independently assessed survey that measures employee engagement and satisfaction. Once again, we believe in measuring everything, and the results highlight 'teamwork'. We all bring our individual skills and enthusiasm to the organisation and meld them to make something great.

We consider grassroots members as part of our team, and we all aim to pull in the same direction.

The national board works cohesively to support the operations team and understands its role in governing the organisation and making sure we are the best we can be for members.

We work with many stakeholders and it's particularly pleasing to also consider them as part of our team. Our fruitful relationships with RANZCO and other key organisations in the eye health sector are particularly strong and that ultimately means better eye care for the Australian community. We have built excellent relationships with suppliers and industry media, once again to ensure a shared commitment to optometry and eye health.

It is also pleasing that whenever I, or many of our team, meet members from every spectrum of the workforce, they consistently say that they feel embraced by the association.

In closing, I want to thank the directors on the national board for their hard work, in often extremely challenging times, and for their collegiality. A special thanks to Darrell Baker and Murray Smith who presided over the FY2021/2022 financial year. I wish Margaret Lam and all current directors all the best for the future.

A very special 'shout out' to the Optometry Australia team – all I have had to do is provide a platform for them to excel.



Lyn Brodie

CEO



Treasurer's Report

FY 2021/2022 coincided with the first period of the Shared Strategic Plan 2021-2024. The plan has key goals to drive the maximisation of expenditure on direct member services and support. Astute management and focus on raising revenue from alternative sources allowed Optometry Australia to enhance services to members considerably.

Despite the current economic climate, and the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, Optometry Australia created exceptional member value. A budgeted loss was reported in the profit and loss. This loss was planned and funded by excess reserves, as has been our process over the past few years. This process ensures that excess funds gained through investments are reinvested to support members and the ongoing development of the profession.

Optometry Australia holds two portfolios, managed by First Financial, one of which returned -9.77% and the other -2.61%, net of fees, compared to the relevant Morningstar Category average return of -7.69 and -7.01% respectively.

The organisation's forecast negative budget position for FY2021/2022 was not fully realised. This result was under budget due to a combination of operational fiscal diligence and disciplined sensible financial management and monitoring, and positive performance of investments beyond expectation.

Operating results

Our most recent biennial member survey, undertaken in 2021, demonstrated that most members cited the following services as being 'very valuable' to them:

- professional indemnity insurance;
- online and face-to-face CPD and educational publications;
- professional advice;
- advocacy and representation to government, and
- consumer and health sector awareness programs.

The non-member revenue has predominantly come from the active pursuit of advertisers, sponsors, and financial partnerships, with the aim of improving the services from which the membership benefits, without them being subjected to further financial impost.

Overall expenses for the year were contained to budget which has been achieved by ongoing consideration and review of expenditure associated with all initiatives before they are instigated.

Total expenditure on salaries came in under budget. This is particularly pleasing, in consideration of a major staffing restructuring to ensure the team are 'fit for purpose' to deliver on the new shared Strategic Plan 2021-2024.

Statement of financial position

This statement reflects the financial position of Optometry Australia. For FY2021/2022, there was a decrease in total equity for the year of 11%. This figure is reflective of the decrease in the value of the organisation's investment portfolios combined with the operating loss generated.

The asset allocation policy establishes the investment parameters for the organisation's investment portfolio managed in cooperation with First Financial. The organisation maintains a balanced portfolio, allocating up to 25% to defensive assets and the remainder in equities and managed investment funds. This diversification provides a risk-based approach to the portfolio while still allowing opportunity for the realisation of increased investment returns. Over the investment cycle these returns have historically been higher than they would have been had funds been invested in standard bank accounts or term deposits.

Optometry Australia maintains a set level of reserve funds that ensures sustainability and surety for the future. Excess funds were expended on visionary initiatives that provide direct member benefit.

The organisation's cash holdings are down 23% from last year. The decrease in the cash position is because of increased costs in areas such as professional indemnity insurance, combined with careful spending.

Financial management and the future

As noted above, Optometry Australia has a significant portion of its assets in shares and managed funds. This position is monitored closely at each Optometry Australia board meeting and by the board's Finance, Risk and Audit Committee.

During the FY2021/2022 the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee was comprised of the Treasurer, President, Vice-President and two board directors. The principal representative of Optometry Australia's portfolio manager, First Financial, was an advisor to the Finance Committee as were the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer.

As a member-based organisation, the Optometry Australia board is acutely aware of the need to provide services and to support directly to grassroots members, on behalf of and in conjunction with state divisions, while remaining within our financial means.

We continue to manage our finances conservatively, with this financial year seeing further investment in member services, including the national data project that focusses on the ability to collect and analyse the data available in optometry practices at a national scale, and which will enable stronger advocacy based on high-quality information regarding the role, and value of, optometry-led primary health care. It will also help to facilitate quality improvement approaches and benchmarking to become embedded across the sector.

The year ahead

During the year ahead, FY2022/2023, Optometry Australia will:

- continue to focus on evolving the scope of practice for optometrists;
- continue to enhance tools and CPD offerings through Optometry Australia's Institute of Excellence;

Board reports:

Treasurer's Report

- ensure cultural responsiveness training is accessible for all members and staff;
- continue to focus on the national data project to establish the foundations of an Optometry Australia-owned national optometry data set;
- continue the delivery of the awareness campaign, *Good vision for life*, though notably with reduced funding which is likely to see reduced impact in this period;
- deliver key member engagement services and benefits including professional indemnity insurance and a full range of electronic newsletters, social media platforms, and websites;
- continue to focus on mid-and-long-term sustainability through identifying additional external revenue sources and creating efficient and effective systems and processes across the federated body;
- deliver *Optometry Virtually Connected*, our flagship publication *Optometry Connection* and world-class journal, *Clinical & Experimental Optometry*;
- deliver initiatives to develop leadership capability throughout the professions, such as the Student Leadership Program, early career optometrists' Think Tank, our new Governance Oversight, Leadership and Development (GOLD) program and the LOOK international travel scholarship program;
- continue to enhance human resources legal support for all members; and
- deliver key projects to the benefit of all members, ensuring we grasp the opportunities identified in the Optometry 2040 transformational strategy for optometry.



Tori Halsey

Treasurer



“Optometry is an evidence-based science and, as an organisation, we commit to continual improvement through utilisation of evidence through data and measurement.”

Margaret Lam, President

“Everything we do is about learning from our past so that we can direct the future.”









Lyn Brodie, CEO

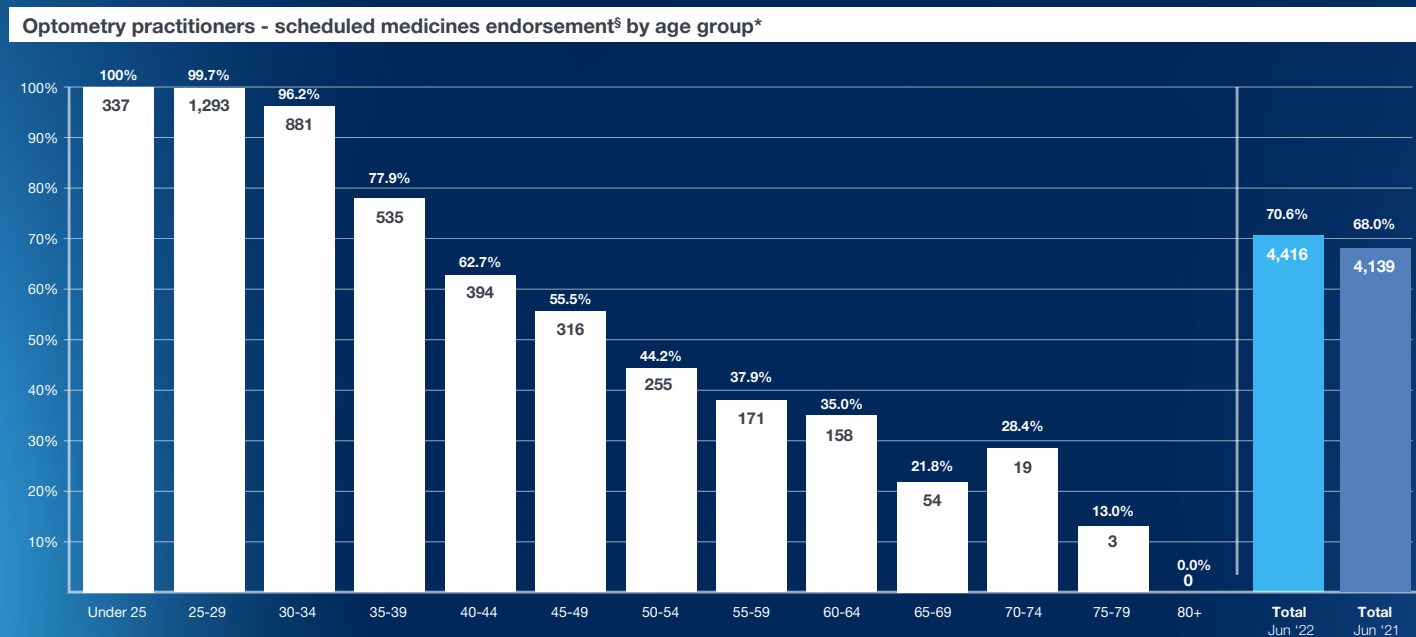
“Despite the current economic climate, and the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, Optometry Australia created exceptional member value.”

Tori Halsey, Treasurer

Your sector in numbers

During the year under review 9,916,246 Medicare rebatable optometry services were delivered by 6,276 practising optometrists. Rebataable services decreased by 529,019 compared to the previous financial year as numbers were impacted by continuing COVID-19 lockdowns. Medicare benefits paid totaled \$486.6m, down 4.1%.

	Principal place of practice*									
Optometry practitioners	 ACT	 NSW	 NT	 QLD	 SA	 TAS	 VIC	 WA	No PPP†	Total
Registration type										
General	107	2,050	35	1,288	419	110	1,680	496	70	6,255
Limited: Postgraduate training or supervised practice	2	2		2	1	1	7	4	2	21
Non-practising	2	49		30	6	1	51	7	78	224
Total	111	2,101	35	1,320	426	112	1,738	507	150	6,500*
Total as at June 2021	110	2,064	33	1,264	399	115	1,671	477	155	6,288
Endorsement*										
Scheduled medicines§	76	1,266	27	898	327	91	1,379	327	25	4,416
% of general registrants endorsed for scheduled medicines										
	71.0	61.8	77.1	69.7	78.0	82.7	82.1	65.9	35.7	70.6
Gender split*										
% Female	63.1	58.6	60.0	56.8	58.9	52.7	58.9	50.1	56.7	57.6
% Male	36.9	41.4	40.0	43.2	41.1	47.3	41.1	49.9	43.3	42.4



* Source: Ahpra, June 2022 data

‡ Total figure includes 35 optometrists on the Pandemic Response Sub-register.

† No principal place of practice

§ Only optometrists holding general registration are eligible to hold the scheduled medicines endorsement

Your strategic plan

Lead

We will lead members and the profession through market and sector evolution and change to achieve the preferred future identified in Optometry 2040

1. Ensure all optometrists are able to work to their full and evolving scope and that they are recognised for their expert skills within that scope.
2. Ensure members have access to evidence-based advice on immediate 'best practice' and emerging 'next practice' optometry.
3. Embrace a culture of innovation that leads both optometry and the health sector and that supports the development, testing, and scaling of new business and operating models so that the profession can realise its preferred future.
4. Support the profession in our region and actively participate in the international sector for the betterment of the Australian profession.
5. Support timely access to culturally safe care across the country, including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
6. Explore and develop initiatives as appropriate on emerging evidence on the impact of climate change specifically on eye health.

Engage

We will efficiently and effectively deliver an essential suite of member services that are tailored to meet the specific needs of specific groups within the membership

1. Reshape our membership model so that it reflects optometrists at different stages of their careers and professional journey.
2. Be the pre-eminent provider of quality continuing professional development.
3. Implement a coordinated continuing professional development strategy that embraces and reflects the needs of members irrespective of where they live within Australia.
4. Develop and deliver flexible and responsive service offerings that can be tested, scaled, re-invented, and retired based on changing conditions.

Promote

We will ensure that Optometry Australia is the 'go to' organisation in eye health and that optometrists are the first port of call for eyes

1. Increase public awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the role of optometry in eye health in Australia and, through this, generate more optometry appointments.
2. Embed optometry as an integral profession in the broad health and medical sector.
3. Shape coordinated and concerted national and state advocacy and lobbying efforts as practicable and required to realise our evolving scope of practice efforts.

Enduring organisation

We will collaborate, work effectively, share resources and capabilities to ensure consistency of services for all members through efficient and effective models that uplift the profession

1. Identify, cultivate, and support current and future association leadership through the development of high performing teams.
2. Be innovative in sourcing new revenue streams and identifying funds that can be reinvested for the benefit of members.
3. Optimise structure and reform the federation as required, to ensure capability to deliver on this plan.
4. Use continual data, evidence, and conditions monitoring to improve organisational practices.
5. Introduce initiatives and programs to reduce our environmental footprint.

Lead



Key achievements:

- Medicare rebates for optometry services in the year to 30 June 2021 totalled \$486.6m
- 252 members sent communications to 120 federal members of parliament to raise awareness of the urgent need for better eye health funding and policy reform
- We participated in implementation liaison groups established by the Department of Health to support the introduction of changes to optometry and ophthalmology MBS items recommended by the MBS Review Taskforce
- Our initial phase of our big data project confirmed that we can obtain meaningful de-identified clinical data which is necessary to improve efficiency and productivity at system and practice level
- We signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Australian College of Optometry to explore ways to mutually support the progress of the optometry profession
- We supported members to extend their clinical and patient services through a range of new initiatives
- We are responding to evidence of gender bias, and aggressive and harassing behaviour in the optometry workforce with our Respect! Always campaign
- We launched a position statement on climate action, and commenced developing an evidence-based roadmap to guide optometry towards greater sustainability and climate-awareness

A Federal Government election provided Optometry Australia with a national platform to raise awareness of eye health amongst Australia's federal politicians. We continued to push for expanded scope of practice and maximum use of the skills of optometrists in eye care pathways through national-led initiatives and, by working directly with members. We also made significant progress to finalising new optometry competency standards within Australia.

Evolving scope of practice

Improved access to eye health

Optometry Australia strongly purports that Australia faces a looming eye health crisis which is resulting in the eye health of Australians being put at increasing risk as many in the population are unable to access the timely eye care they need.

Optometrists in Australia are under-utilised compared to their counterparts in similar developed nations like the United States, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand. If our highly skilled optometry workforce was better utilised, patient access to critical treatments for eye disease would be significantly improved. To achieve this requires reform and removal of barriers currently restricting eye health delivery in Australia.

To ensure maximum exposure of our policy platform, we called on our members to write to their local federal government representative to raise awareness of the urgent need for improved access to eye health in Australia. We again utilised our online advocacy tool allowing members to contact their local federal MP with a couple of mouse clicks. This member campaign occurred in two phases:

1. Policy platform launch:

In August 2021, Optometry Australia released its policy platform, "Working Together for Better Eye Care". This platform identifies and recommends six readily achievable solutions to maximise the potential of our highly skilled optometry workforce within community health.

These recommendations included the extension of optometrists' clinical scope to enable them to prescribe oral medications, and the more effective utilisation of optometrists to support the provision of intravitreal injections for AMD and DMO. The introduction of

integrated collaborative care models between ophthalmologists and optometrists, the establishment of consistent referral guidelines between the two professions, and the introduction of telehealth for brief optometry consults rounded out our recommendations.

2. Federal government advocacy:

In 2022 we advocated for better eye health funding as part of the 2022 Federal Budget and subsequently again in the lead up to the election on 21 May 2022. As part of these concerted campaigns we highlighted how long-term eye conditions impose a \$16.6bn economic burden on Australia annually and how a relatively small federal government investment of \$22.6m over five years could contribute to saving and improving the eyesight of more than 13 million Australians. This figure represents an investment of only \$1.74 per person with a current long-term eye condition.

The \$22.6m would enable Optometry Australia to implement five key initiatives that would have a significant impact on improving eye health access and reducing avoidable blindness and escalating eye disease within the community.

More than 250 members sent communications to almost 120 federal members of parliament, including the House of Representatives and Senate. We have subsequently appealed to the new Labor government, including Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Minister for Health Mark Butler to escalate eye health reform as part of the government's overarching health agenda, while also maintaining relationships with key decision makers within the Coalition. Further, we are organising delegations to meet with key politicians and health decision makers in our efforts to raise awareness of the urgent need for better eye health funding and policy reform.

Medicare & MBS

• Rebatable services:

Medicare benefits paid for optometric services totalled \$486.6m, a 4.1% decrease on the year before with 9.9 million Medicare rebatable optometry services delivered in FY2021/2022 by Australia's 6,276 practising optometrists.

Your strategic plan:

Lead

- **MBS review:**

We continue to await the government's final decision on the Medicare Benefits Schedule Review Taskforce's (MBSRT) recommendations regarding optometry and ophthalmology items. MBSRT handed down its review recommendations in December 2020 and a government decision is expected in 2023.

Optometry Australia played a key role in contributing to the MBSRT review with the goal to ensure favourable outcomes for optometrists and their patients by reducing unnecessary administration, ensuring affordable patient access to best practice care, and facilitating the evolution of optometry's scope of practice in a manner that supports better patient access to needed clinical care. We have also strongly supported a recommendation from the taskforce that consideration be given to utilising optometrists to support better patient access to intravitreal injections, which currently can only be administered by ophthalmologists.

Our organisation is participating in an Implementation Liaison Group established by the Department of Health to support introducing changes to the MBS items resulting from the recommendations of the MBSRT review. We were also invited to join the Ophthalmology Implementation Liaison Group (OILG) which is comprised of key stakeholders from across the eye care sector. OILG is charged with considering how to implement MBSRT recommendations to contemporise ophthalmology items on the MBS. Through our membership of OILG we have been advocating for the skills of optometrists to be more effectively used particularly in intravitreal injection treatment pathways.

- **Medicare indexation:**

With Medicare indexation well below the Consumer Price Index (CPI), Optometry Australia will continue to press the Federal Government to increase indexation for optometry items. The 2022 rebate rise of 1.6% for optometry items was considerably less than CPI which rose 5.1%. Optometry rebates have continued to lag the real cost of providing patient care particularly due to rebate freezes between 2013-2019.

- **Medicare Q&A:**

Members joined an expert panel discussion on Medicare in July 2022 to learn about appropriate use of Medicare item numbers. The aim of the discussion, and question and answer session, was to equip members with deeper knowledge and subsequently avoid repercussions from Medicare for optometric rebate misuse.

Optometry 2040

- **Advisory group:**

Our Evolving Scope of Practice Advisory Group, comprising of 12 optometrists under the stewardship of Chair, Professor Sharon Bentley, has continued to meet since its formation in October 2019. This group provides vital assistance to Optometry Australia through the identification of priority areas for evolving optometry to provide better community care including through an expanded scope of practice and more effective use of optometrists in public health care pathways.

- **Optometry and public ophthalmology integration:**

In our "Working Together for Better Eye Care" policy platform, we have outlined six readily achievable actions to increase the efficiency of Australia's eye-health system. One of these platforms is to integrate successful collaborative care models between ophthalmologists and optometrists across the health system and a second to implement consistent ophthalmology referral guidelines, templates, and pathways for common eye health conditions.

We continue to work closely with several state divisions to support this type of greater integration between optometry and public ophthalmology.

- **Big data:**

Like many primary health care services in Australia no comprehensive, ongoing dataset exists at a national level in relation to how and why people access primary eye healthcare provided by optometrists. Additionally, there is no national dataset to track what occurs in individual consultations and the outcomes of these services. This is despite considerable investment in optometric services at a government and individual level.

In a health care setting, big data is a way to gather relevant information and use it to improve our systems, protocols, and performance management at a practice and practitioner level, while also providing better cost-benefit analysis for decisions relating to patient management. This can be done safely and ethically and there is a huge opportunity across all areas of health to use de-identified data to analyse what's happening in practices and hospitals across the country and use the information to respond to the needs of patients and communities.

Optometry Australia recognised this gap in 2018 when developing its Optometry 2040 strategy, identifying that a comprehensive set of data was vital in shaping the future of optometry. We noted that optometry sits in a unique position across the allied health sector in Australia, due to the relatively small number of practice management software programs used in the profession. If we can rapidly extract and collate de-identified information from practice management software, we are positioned to be leaders in this space.

In 2019 we engaged an expert consultancy group and started to investigate how we could take steps towards building a national optometry data set. We worked with a small number of practices that use Optomate and Sunix patient management platforms to explore the ability to rapidly extract data from these systems.

This initial phase demonstrated that meaningful de-identified clinical data can be obtained from community practices and the goal is to now expand the number of practices involved to provide more accuracy and credibility to the national dataset. Hence, in the next 12 months we plan to recruit a minimum 100 practices to be part of the next phase of this project.

Competency standards

The Competency Standards Working Group, formed by Optometry Australia in 2019, is nearing completion of its review of optometrists' competency standards. These standards reflect the attributes and skills that an optometrist needs as they enter the profession. They form the basis for assessment of optometry courses and assessment of optometrists who have been trained overseas but who wish to work in Australia. The group's goal is to ensure that competency standards, last set in 2015, reflect contemporary and emerging practice.

The working group includes representatives from Optometry Australia, optometry schools, OCAZ, the New Zealand Association of Optometrists, New Zealand's Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board, and consumer representatives with extensive experience in public health policy. The group determined that the existing competency standards needed significant simplification to ensure that they were adequately robust but less prescriptive. As a result, the review has taken longer to finalise than expected, although a draft of the revised standards has been released for priority stakeholder consultation. Once received, members will also be invited to review them before their finalisation.

ACO collaboration

In 2021 we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Australian College of Optometry to explore collaborations and potential joint ventures that mutually support the progress of the optometry profession. Both organisations continue to explore opportunities with the aim of helping the optometry community deliver more value to the public.

Aiding expanded glaucoma management services

During the year, Optometry Australia launched several initiatives to assist members extend their glaucoma clinical management and patient services. This included:

- A clinical note, launched in November 2021, which offers ideas on how optometrists can seamlessly incorporate glaucoma shared care into their own practice.
- A new purpose-built patient management billing tool to assist practices in understanding the financial viability and requirements for glaucoma management. The tool has been set up to support pricing of collaborative glaucoma treatment services and looks at everything from equipment use, staffing, patient numbers, MBS items, and appointment volume.
- Establishing a working group of optometrists who regularly come together to learn from each other and to discuss ways of evolving glaucoma management within their practices.
- Delivering glaucoma management interactive workshops that members can access at any time.

Evolving scope education

Optometry Australia is providing opportunities to support members wanting to evolve their scope of practice through advanced, specialised education. Opportunities offered during the year included:

- **LOOK international scholarship:**
Optometry Australia was again pleased to seek expressions of interest from members interested in a 2023 scholarship to support investigation of international advancements in optometry that are not yet available, or readily available, in Australia. First launched in early 2020, our Looking Outward on Optometric Knowledge (LOOK) scholarship program was placed on hold in 2021 and 2022 due to COVID-19.
- **Paediatric optometry:**
We have partnered with the University of NSW to offer over 50 members the opportunity to undertake a program to develop their paediatric optometry practise. The program, which employs the well-tested Project Extension of Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO) model, began in August 2022, and will be delivered over a four-month period.
- **Diabetes:**
Following Optometry Australia's application to the Board of the Australian Diabetes Educators Association, optometrists are now eligible to apply for recognition as Credentialed Diabetes Educators. Launched in August 2022, we offered this opportunity to our members, enabling further opportunities for optometrists to expand their skill set.
- **Current state of optometric scope:**
In May 2022, 465 members enrolled to attend Optometry Australia's webcast aimed at providing them with a deeper understanding of the current state of optometric scope in Australia. As rural optometrists are often face different challenges, situations, and emergencies than their city counterparts, the course touched on what rural optometry uses as management strategies when tertiary care is not physically available.

In addition, in June 2022 we created a new Communities of Practise and Education (COPE) community group to bring practitioners working in rural and remote regions together virtually to foster support, mentorship, and education in evidence-based practise.
- **Myopia management:**
With myopia identified as one of the most significant eye health issues globally, Optometry Australia recognised the opportunity to help upskill members in myopia management. In December 2021, we partnered with Myopia Profile, an internationally trusted clinical myopia management information centre, to support 400 members to enrol in its Communicating the Myopia Message online course.
- **Paralympic sport classifier:**
On behalf of Paralympics Australia, we promoted the opportunity for members to become a classifier for Paralympic sport, seeing this as providing another interesting and varied scope of practice extension.
- **Eye disease and vision care management:**
Our series of regular webcasts and interactive workshops, and annual education conference, *Optometry Virtually Connected*, are designed to bring members the latest education in eye health and eye disease management and vision care.



Heidi Hunter
Optometry NSW/ACT member

Lead

Climate impact

In 2021, the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) cited that health care is responsible overall for an estimated 4.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions. With sustainability a key plank of our organisation's Shared Strategic Plan FY2021-2024, Optometry Australia believes that optometry must do everything in its power to reduce its environmental footprint. To support this position, we invited members to work with us to draft a Position Statement on the need for climate action in optometry which we then published in April 2022.

We have also contracted a leading consultancy firm to support us in developing a best-practice, evidence-based strategy, known as a Sustainability Roadmap, to guide the optometry profession towards greater sustainability and climate-awareness. Members and key sector stakeholders will be offered the opportunity to provide feedback on our Sustainability Roadmap prior to its finalisation.

Respect! Always

In response to calls on International Women's Day 2022 to #BreakTheBias, we surveyed members to ascertain the propensity of gender bias, and aggressive and harassing behaviour in the optometry workforce. The survey revealed that 64% of those who responded had experienced, encountered, or witnessed this type of behaviour in the workplace with patients and patient families being the main perpetrators.

In response, Optometry Australia is developing a comprehensive set of resources under the theme Respect! Always aimed at helping to reduce, or eliminate, these behaviours in the optometry workforce.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander eye health initiatives

- **Cultural responsiveness training:**
This year we provided 100 members with free access to comprehensive, online cultural responsiveness training delivered by Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA). Following strong response, Optometry Australia subsequently contracted IAHA to provide all members with access to this course.
- **Culturally safe access to eye care:**
In collaboration with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Advisory Group, we developed a position statement on supporting culturally safe access to eye care in optometry. This statement is undergoing review by Aboriginal-led health organisations prior to its finalisation.
- **National Reconciliation Week 2022:**
To honour this year's National Reconciliation Week 2022, we published a series of articles on optometrists working with First Nations communities or committed to improving the eye health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Advisory group participation

We continued to represent the optometry voice on numerous advisory bodies shaping health policy such as the Optometry Board of Australia's Regulatory Reference Committee, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's (Ahpra) Professions Reference Group, Indigenous Eye Health Data Report Advisory Group, National Rural Health Alliance, Allied Health Professions Australia, Vision 2020, OCANZ, and Department of Veterans' Affairs Health Consultative Forum.

Working groups

Optometry Australia also creates and supports several working groups, comprising of members, to guide and advise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health development, scope of practice evolution, glaucoma patient management, infection control, Medicare, optometry standards, and transport and vision standards.



Alison Stuart
Optometry NSW/ACT member

Engage



Key achievements:

- 94% of members consider the organisation to be member-focused
- Trust in Optometry Australia among members is sitting at 96%
- Our Member Advisory help desk team received 98% satisfaction rating from members utilising this personalised service
- New Member Assistance Program offers members access to three counselling sessions annually
- Optometry Australia's Institute of Excellence achieved a record 54,500 pageviews each month
- 34 webcasts, interactive workshops, and podcasts delivered during the year
- *Optometry Virtually Connected* attracted 2,185 delegates to a program of 27 live webcasts
- *Optometry Connection* delivered 29 clinical hours (20T) of quality-assured education
- *Clinical & Experimental Optometry* achieved an impressive impact factor increase to 3.143 and a movement in its global ranking in journals in both the ophthalmology and optometry categories
- We quality assured almost 600 education courses on behalf of optometry educators
- After an enforced hiatus due to COVID-19 restrictions, we launched our 2023 LOOK travel scholarship program
- Our new GOLD program is supporting 10 members access advanced governance training
- All members can access complimentary cultural safety education through Indigenous Allied Health Australia's Cultural Responsiveness training (Levels 1 and 2)
- Seven new guidelines and tools released to support members' clinical and practice management
- A full and evolving suite of tailored, segmented communications tools has been launched
- 106 stories were posted on the news blog to keep members informed and 116 articles delivered in key in-sector media channels
- New images of members nationally now appear on optometry.org.au following an extensive photo shoot in early 2022
- Website hits 184,000 pageviews each month

Optometry Australia provides a wealth of quality services which are well accessed and highly valued by members. In April 2022 we distributed a short "Your Member Fees at Work" video to all members to demonstrate how we allocate our budget and assign tasks to support members.

We know that members value the work that Optometry Australia delivers with our October 2021 survey revealing that 94% of members considered the organisation to be member-focused, 86% citing they would highly or likely recommend membership, and 85% saying that they believed our services provide them with good value for money.

Primary services provided by the national organisation such as professional indemnity insurance (PII), online and face-to-face CPD, professional advice, as well as advocacy and representation to government are strongly endorsed as the top five services we provide to members.

Importantly, trust in Optometry Australia has risen from 76.7% when last benchmarked to 96% in 2021.

Personalised member support

Member advisory help desk

Our teams continue to respond to around 900 calls and emails a month from members. More than half of these are more complex communications managed by our Optometry Advisor Help Desk service which is serviced by seven employees including four optometrists. Advice extended to members has included a range of queries from audits, Medicare support, PII, patient complaints, human resources, CPD, clinical management, and infection control to legal issues. This service consistently receives an 98% approval rating from members.

Members also continue to be provided with complimentary access to specialised external legal and human resources services.

Mental health & wellbeing

Optometry Australia launched a new service, the Member Assistance Program, in March 2022 aimed at supporting members in strengthening their mental resilience and wellbeing. This new personalised and tailored service replaces the Resilience Box App, with access ceasing on 14 March 2022.

The Member Assistance Program is a completely confidential and free service available to all members providing them with access to up to three professional coaching and counselling sessions over a 12-month period. These sessions are offered through the Centre for Corporate Health.

Continuing Professional Development

Institute of Excellence

Since its launch in August 2019, Optometry Australia's Institute of Excellence has continued to strengthen its position as the primary digital destination for quality, professional education. It is one of the most popular sections of our website attracting an average 54,500 pageviews a month – 36% being members who have logged into the website.

The Institute also supports the sector's most comprehensive nationwide calendar of quality assured events and CPD courses searchable by date, location, topic, cost, and provider. During the year under review, the calendar attracted 37,000 pageviews a month.

Quality assurance

Optometry Australia launched its Institute of Excellence Quality Assurance program in 2019. This program is designed to provide optometrists with peace-of-mind that any course carrying our quality assurance badge has been validated by optometry's peak professional body. As a result, only Optometry Australia quality assured courses can now be promoted on our calendar of CPD courses and events. During the year under review, we quality approved almost 600 courses.

Through Optometry Australia's Institute of Excellence, members can access and tailor their own individual Learning Plans. Once they complete a quality assured course, their Learning Plans are automatically updated to reflect the course completion while they are required to manually enter any non-quality assured course completed. By accessing their Learning Plan, members can write a reflection on any of the courses that they complete and if audited, simply print this out as evidence of the completion of their learning objectives.

Shaping our CPD program

Five members joined an Optometry Australia working group to help the organisation shape our CPD program and evolving learning portfolio. The Working Group has been charged with guiding our CPD program to ensure that it is delivering the most appropriate professional development aligned to members' needs.

The Working Group comprises members Tina Jong, Nicola Mountford, Anna Delmadoros, Angie Trinh, and Alex Craig, and Optometry Australia's Head of Education, Simon Hanna, and Education Publications and Content Strategy Manager, Sam Bonwick.

Webcasts and interactive discussions

During the year under review, Optometry Australia hosted 10 CPD live webcasts, each offering one CPD hour. Available as a complimentary member offer, each webcast attracted an average of 500 participants. Webcasts were delivered by educators renowned for their topic expertise with subjects varied to include diabetes, Medicare, evolving scope, glaucoma, and dry eye.

Following their introduction in September 2021, we hosted 16 interactive online CPD workshops during the year, each averaging 450 members. Interactive workshop topics included myopia management, retinal disease, and oral therapeutics. Delivered in conjunction with Optometry NSW/ACT, members can also access a series of on-demand interactive workshops which can be completed at their own pace with one or more colleagues.

Podcasts

During the year, we delivered eight 15-30 minute educational podcast episodes, each averaging 125 downloads per podcast. To support these productions and to enhance their access, in February 2022 we launched the Optometry Australia podcast channel on Spotify.

CASA course

The first online CASA course was offered in September 2021 with 33 optometrists participating. This course complemented a face-to-face offering in March 2021. An additional 28 CASA accredited optometrists also completed our now fully online refresher course.

Optometry Virtually Connected

This year's *Optometry Virtually Connected*, held from 17-19 June 2022, confirmed that this event is now the largest virtual optometric conference in the Southern Hemisphere. Delivered for the third consecutive year, this year's event, held in partnership with the New Zealand Association of Optometrists, attracted 2,185 delegate registrations.

Delegates flocked to the event's program of quality education featuring 27 live lectures each with 10 multiple choice questions, and 12 on-demand courses which combined provided a maximum 40.5 hours. All live webcasts were quality assured to ensure they met the Optometry Board of Australia's stringent education standards, and, to enable New Zealand delegates to claim CPD points, assessed by Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board of New Zealand.

On average, each live webcast attracted over 600 delegates with the plenary sessions on Saturday and Sunday attracting 930 and 960 participants respectively. Keynote speaker Dr Noel Brennan attracted over 800 delegates to his lecture on the future myopia epidemic.

World Congress of Optometry

We are collaborating with Optometry Vic/SA and the Optical Distribution & Manufacturing Association to promote the fourth World Congress of Optometry which is being held in conjunction with O=MEGA23. Taking place from 8-10 September 2023 in Melbourne, the congress alone is expected to attract over 2,000 global professionals to Australia.



Sallyanne Morrison
Optometry NSW/ACT member

Your strategic plan:

Engage

Optometry Connection

Five issues of our flagship CPD publication *Optometry Connection* were delivered during the year under review, providing members with access to 29 clinical hours (20T) of quality assured education. The July 2021 issue, featuring diabetes, also provided members with the opportunity to attend a diabetes-related eye disease webcast to receive an additional 1.5T.

Topics selected to appear in *Optometry Connection* align with the Optometry Australia's strategic objectives for supporting evolution of scope of practice. This includes informative articles and case studies on the latest eye health research, eye disease management, emerging eye health issues, and patient management trends along with the latest optometric equipment updates. Articles are original, sourced through renowned national and international authors with regular member-submitted case studies published.

The delivery of this publication, distributed complimentary to all members in March, May, July, September, and November, often features popular guides and reference material for optometrists to use in day-to-day practice. In FY2021/2022 this included:

- a pull-out clinical resource on OCT interpretation for macular disease and glaucoma (May 2022);
- a step-by-step approach to diagnosing ocular allergy (March 2022);
- update of the PBS list of medicines prescribed by optometrists (November 2021); and
- an update to Optometry Australia's popular Contact Lenses Resource Guide featuring all the latest products in the market, organised across categories to allow for easy comparison (September 2021).

Peer-reviewed journal

During the period, our peer-reviewed journal *Clinical & Experimental Optometry* (CXO) further consolidated its reputation as one of the world's leading optometric journals by achieving an impressive impact factor in 2021 of 3.143, a 15% increase over 2020. CXO also increased its global ranking to 25 out of 124 journals in the ophthalmology category (Scopus) and second out of 11 in the optometry category.

Members were able to obtain 15.5 CPD hours through CXO during the year.

Emeritus Prof Nathan Efron, AC continues as Editor of CXO and A/Prof Maria Markoulli, Deputy Editor. They are supported by an international Editorial Board.

Tailoi Chan-Ling was named the 16th recipient of Optometry Australia's H Barry Collin Research Medal for her outstanding contributions to retinal vascular formation, diabetic retinopathy, and age-related macular degeneration research.

Jack Phu, Michael P Hennessy, Matthew Spargo, Samuel Dance, and Michael Kalloniatis were awarded CXO's J Lloyd Hewett Award for their 2020 paper, *A collaborative care pathway for patients with suspected angle closure glaucoma spectrum disease*.

Career & personal development

Coaching and mentoring

We continue to offer members with access to a mentor program designed to connect member mentors with mentees. This service is provided via an online mentor platform which matches mentors and mentees and enables them to meet virtually regardless of where each is located.

The program was introduced in 2020 to enable members to access support from their peers, to grow their professional careers, and to extend their network and experience within optometry. It is provided as a complimentary service to members.

LOOK travel scholarship

With COVID-19 continuing to present difficulties to travelling, Optometry Australia did not offer the opportunity for members to participate in its Looking Outward on Optometric Knowledge (LOOK) scholarship program. Now that restrictions have eased and travel returned, in August 2022, we invited applications for the 2023 LOOK program. One applicant will receive a \$8,000 scholarship and the opportunity to travel internationally to explore alternative optometric models of care.

Leadership development

Optometry Australia is actively involved in the support and development of the sector's next generation of optometrists and offers the following programs:

• GOLD program:

In May 2022, we launched our new Governance, Oversight, Leadership and Development (GOLD) program to provide governance training to 10 members annually to equip them with the skills and training to hold governance and leadership roles on boards within the optometry and health sectors.

The GOLD program runs over four months with successful applicants accessing self-paced lessons and workshops provided by the Global Governance Initiative, a leader in policy and governance training.

• Bursaries:

Two members are selected each year, following an application process, to attend the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference. Held this year on Larrakia Country in Darwin, Alexandra Coffey and Eleanor Young each received \$1,500 to contribute to their travel, accommodation, and conference registration costs.

• Early career optometrists:

With COVID-19 continuing to play havoc with travel, our Early Career Optometrists (ECOs) 2021 annual Think Tank converted to an online forum held over two sessions in September and October. This forum, attended by representatives from each of our state division's ECO committees, is important to facilitating discussion, experience sharing, and skills development amongst our sector's young leaders. This year's Think Tank focused on the sector's evolving scope, diversity, workforce supply, and distribution.

• Student leadership:

Optometry Australia's fourth annual Student Leadership Program (SLP), was again held completely online between February and March 2022. As it was held virtually, we were able to increase participation from 14 optometry students in 2021, to 22 this year. All optometry schools were represented, including the University of WA for the first time.

The SLP not only gives students the skills needed to become future leaders and to navigate anticipated opportunities and challenges of a changing optometry landscape, it provides opportunities to network with established leaders within the sector.

Your strategic plan:

Engage

- **NOSC support:**

Optometry Australia supported the third annual National Optometry Student Conference (NOSC) with this year's program held online on 14 August 2022. NOSC, the initiative of the Optometry Student Society of Australia (OSSA), includes representatives from all seven university optometry student societies. As with the 2021 event, we again provided OSSA with access to our virtual meeting platform and participated in the program itself through the delivery of several presentations.

The purpose of NOSC is to provide students with insights into life after graduation, career insights, and leadership opportunities as well as an exploration into expanded scope of practice.

Cultural responsiveness

In 2022, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority (Ahpra) and National Boards released a revised shared Code of Conduct which took effect on 29 June. The revised code includes a new section on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and cultural safety requiring that all optometrists provide culturally safe and sensitive practice for all communities.

In 2021 we offered 100 members the opportunity to undertake Cultural Responsiveness training through Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA). Following high interest from members, and in response to the revised code, in August this year we opened access to all members to participate in IAHA's training (Levels 1 and 2). This course provides participants with a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples diversity of cultures and languages as well as barriers they face accessing health care and optometry services.

Optometry Australia has also updated its Cultural Responsiveness Framework for Optometrists, launched in August 2021, to reflect the new code. The framework is available to all members to download from our website. It outlines the need for culturally responsive practice and the need for optometrists to address diversity and cultural competency issues arising in day-to-day practice.

Guidelines, tools, clinical notes & more

Optometry Australia released several new guidelines and tools during the year. These included:

- A new guide for locum optometrists that contains legal advice when entering a contract for service. It was created by Industry Legal Group on our behalf.
- We have released a glaucoma billing tool designed specifically to assist optometry practices in understanding the financial viability and requirements of glaucoma management within their practice. The tool has been set up to automatically calculate pricing collaborative glaucoma treatment services using a range of variables including equipment usage, staffing, patient numbers, and MBS items.
- Released in November 2021, our Glaucoma Care clinical note, offers ideas on how optometrists can incorporate glaucoma shared care into their own practice.
- Optometry Australia devoted significant time engaging with the nine health insurers who collectively comprise of 90% of the market to build a helpful PHI decoder resource to assist members to decode private health billing and compliance.
- We have created a comprehensive webpage as a one-stop-shop for infection control complete with videos, posters, research, and the latest guidelines.

- Our Private Fee Schedule provides a recommended guide to private consultation fees. Fee recommendations are seen as appropriate for optometric practise to support sustainable clinical practise.

We further supported members by distributing information on new standards – the National Safety and Quality Primary and Community Healthcare Standards – introduced in mid-2022 to improve the quality of health care delivered to patients, and to protect them from harm.

Member communications

We employ a wide range of tools to deliver pertinent and timely information to members to keep them informed of Optometry Australia initiatives, member news, and major clinical and patient management announcements. These include regular electronic newsletters (eDMs), news stories, videos, our website, and social media posts.

Segmented communications

- **Early career:**

Working closely with Optometry Vic/SA and Optometry NSW/ACT, we have developed a program of tailored communications targeting our more vulnerable membership groups including students, immediate and new graduates, and Early Career Optometrists. A range of material aimed at supporting their early career journey is distributed to these cohorts through two tailored eDMs: Your Launching Pad and Thrive.

- **Career break:**

We have also redeveloped a section of our website to provide specific information and advice to members taking a career break. The information complements the new parental leave toolkit created by Optometry Vic/SA and that we distributed to all members in October 2021. A Career Break Network community group has been launched on Facebook with the goal of encouraging members on a career break to maintain contact with fellow optometrists and to share tips and information.

All member eDMs

During the year we delivered our full range of Snapshot eDMs, each designed to carry specific information based on a theme: Snapshot Evolve – optometry evolution and scope of practice; Snapshot Practise – clinical and patient management; Snapshot Boost – career development initiatives; and Snapshot Collaborate – opportunities to collaborate and grow networks. During the year, we distributed 37 Snapshot eDMs.

We further delivered 15 Special Announcements, two quarterly Strategic Updates, fortnightly Your Education and, as needed, CPD Updates.

We achieve an average open rate of 52.8% and click-through rate of 11% across all our mastheads with Strategic Updates achieving the highest open rate of 59%.

News stories & social media

We posted 106 stories on the news blog and several hundred social media posts on our Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter pages.

In relation to social media, at the end of June 2022, we had 23,715 followers across all corporate sites (up 11% over the year) with the majority (45%) of followers on LinkedIn. Engagement across these platforms is high as demonstrated via post likes, comments, and shares. During the year under review, there were 1,480 social media mentions on Optometry Australia delivered by either our own organisation or other organisations. This is a 68% increase on the year before. (Source: Meltwater Media Monitoring, 5 July 2022).

Engage

Website & imagery

We are constantly reviewing and updating around 400 pages of website content. Refreshing the content is not only necessary to keep members engaged and returning to the site, but also consistent with best practice website management.

To support this process, we updated our range of member photographs that appear throughout the website. In addition to this, we now have excellent video footage and images taken in January 2022 and these have proven extremely useful in our member communications.

optometry.org.au, our corporate website, attracted 265,000 users during the FY2021/2022 period and 184,000 monthly pageviews. Our "Find an optometrist" search service attracted around 2,400 pageviews per month.

In-sector media coverage

During the year, we delivered 116 articles in *myvision* and *Insight*, the two principle in-sector optometry publications in Australia. This editorial helps to promote the work that Optometry Australia is doing to advance optometry within Australia.

COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic persisted during the last year, impacting the Australian community with ongoing lockdowns in some states and continued border restrictions and specific requirements related to provision of clinical and retail services. To support members, we continued to work with our state divisions on a need's basis to keep members informed of government directives in relation to COVID-19 management mandates. This has included the distribution of information on lockdowns, patient and clinical care, vaccinations, and PPE.

We have also kept our COVID-19 hub on optometry.org.au updated with national and state-by-state information, and the hub remains a highly visited section of our website.

Infection control

In addition to our COVID-19 hub, Optometry Australia created a comprehensive web page on infection control. This hub includes information for practice hygiene and COVID-19 information. It includes step-by-step videos covering disinfection protocols for gonioscopy and tonometry as well as PPE for combined contact and droplet precautions. The hub also includes downloadable videos, posters, research, and the latest infection control guidelines.

Surge workforce

We applauded The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's decision to allow optometrists to not only join the COVID-19 temporary sub-workforce but to administer COVID-19 injections as part of that workforce. We see this as a major development for the profession and one that recognises the clinical skills, experience, and training of optometrists as primary health care workers. This decision followed the earlier September 2021 Victorian Government announcement, supporting optometrist's eligibility to administer COVID-19 vaccinations.

We subsequently profiled two members, Linda Liu and Solana Cua, who shared their experience in administering vaccines as part of Victoria's vaccination surge workforce program.

Industry support

As part of our commitment to leading the sector, we continued to provide stakeholders and industry leaders with updated COVID-19 information to minimise confusion around lockdowns, government directives, and public health orders.



David Shanahan
Optometry WA member

Promote



Key achievements:

- 2022 Vision Index launched, quickly generating 335 media articles
- Live Channel 7 Weekend Sunrise interview on eye health syndicated nationally
- Day-to-day consumer eye health media coverage reaches 91m people in FY2021/2022
- 19 members appointed *Good vision for life* media ambassadors
- 34 stories posted on the *Good vision for life* consumer website shared over 400 times
- Consumer website attracted 60,500 pageviews from 41,900 users
- Almost 7,000 followers engaged on *Good vision for life* social media pages

In the year under review, Optometry Australia maintained ongoing promotion of optometrists and community eye health in a range of media channels nationally. We released our second Vision Index in early July 2022 generating excellent media coverage of eye health issues with particular emphasis on the impact of COVID-19 on eye health.

2022 Vision Index

In 2020, as part of our *Good vision for life* campaign, Optometry Australia commissioned research to gain a broad understanding of Australians' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours around maintaining their eye health. The resulting inaugural Vision Index was launched just before the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The organisation felt it was prudent to conduct similar research in 2022 to understand if, and how, attitudes may have changed and what impact the pandemic may have had on Australians and their eye health.

The 2022 Vision Index¹, launched in early July 2022, revealed that Australians place great importance on eye health in principle, yet misconceptions remain barriers to maintaining it. It also found that, consistent with the 2020 Vision Index, 13% of respondents have never had an eye exam with an optometrist.

The results of the consumer survey, highlighted in the 2022 Vision Index, enabled Optometry Australia to generate exceptional media coverage with 335 pieces of editorial delivered in the first few weeks after its launch. The main topic of focus in media coverage was on eye health prevention and detection particularly relating to the impact of COVID-19 on screen time and subsequently how this has affected eye health.

While mainstream media channels delivered excellent online coverage, we also achieved widespread radio coverage via interviews syndicated nationally across metropolitan and regional areas. Also syndicated nationally was a live Channel 7 Weekend Sunrise interview with our Chief Clinical Officer, Luke Arundel. Weekend Sunrise achieves a viewership of 448,000 people.

Consumer campaign

Promotional activities

Our *Good vision for life* consumer campaign continues although its market presence is relatively low key due to budget cuts. Our focus over the past year has been on keeping the campaign website up to date with new and interesting articles on eye health. Topics of articles have varied to include winter UV, diabetes, myopia, children's vision, eye diseases, private health insurance, and case studies on Australians who almost risked losing their sight, making up a large part of the 34 stories posted.

All stories posted on the campaign website are promoted via the *Good vision for life* Facebook and Instagram pages. As a result, they have been shared over 400 times, mainly on Facebook. We have almost 7,000 people following our *Good vision for life* social media pages and we receive good engagement on these platforms.

Stories are further promoted via our monthly consumer electronic newsletter which has attracted several thousand subscribers.

Consumer website

goodvisionforlife.com.au attracted 60,500 pageviews during the year from 41,900 users. In line with our campaign objectives, 60% of these visitors were females with most visitors falling in the 25-44 age group.

Media liaison

Consumer coverage

In addition to stories generated by the 2022 Vision Index, we continue to receive year-round coverage in mainstream media on various eye health topics. In the year under review, we delivered almost 100 consumer-focused news stories. This media coverage had the potential to reach 91m people, meaning that adult Australians would have been exposed to our messages multiple times. An article published by ABC News on the impact of COVID-19 in February 2022 reached 21.4m alone, followed by a news.com.au article in December 2021 on health insurance which potentially reached 17.2m Australians.

¹: The 2022 Vision Index was conducted via an online survey by Empirica Research on behalf of Optometry Australia. The survey sampled 1,000 demographically representative Australians from 25 February 2022 to 3 March 2022

Your strategic plan:

Promote

In-sector coverage

We delivered 116 articles in *mivision* and *Insight*, the two principle in-sector optometry publications in Australia. This editorial helps to promote the work that Optometry Australia is doing to advance optometry within Australia amongst optometrists and key optometric stakeholders.

Health profession coverage

According to our annual consumer research conducted by iView, outside of seeing an optometrist, doctors and pharmacists are the main primary health professionals that Australians turn to for eye health issues. A core goal of Optometry Australia is to generate articles in publications distributed to these health professionals to increase patient referrals to optometrists.

A key achievement was a feature piece published in the *Australian Journal of Pharmacy* on managing the rise in eye health issues and red flags for referrals to an optometrist. This publication is distributed to over 18,000 pharmacists and pharmacy assistants nationally.

Media releases

We distributed eight media releases during the year. Three of these releases were targeted at mainstream health media to highlight the need for the Federal Government to urgently review policies currently stymieing optometrists being able to work to their full capacity. A fourth release was on Labor's health care agenda and the need to include optometry in this, and a fifth was on MBS indexation not keeping up with CPI.

In addition to targeted pitching to media related to the 2022 Vision Index, we distributed three consumer-angled releases on back to school, Halloween eye costume risks, and diabetic retinopathy.

Media ambassadors

During the year we issued an invitation to members to support our media engagement efforts by becoming a *Good vision for life* media ambassador.

As an ambassador, media-savvy members may be asked to take part in local media interviews given many journalists seek comments from people based within their geographic jurisdiction. We have 19 members registered as ambassadors.

Member marketing support

Members are encouraged to participate in our consumer campaigns and in the year under review, to support these efforts we created and launched a new marketing toolkit, "Engaging with your patients" accessible exclusively to them. This toolkit contains a suite of customisable materials to bolster members' existing marketing and communications efforts, including tools for public outreach, social media posts, media releases, and more.

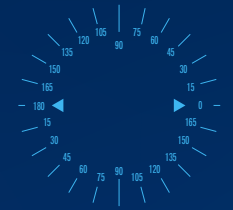
Patient brochures

Members can access and download a range of *Good vision for life* patient brochures on a range of eye health topics.



Your strategic plan:

Enduring organisation



Key achievements:

- Optometry Australia received a 2021 Best Workplace Award
- Our CEO was named one of Australia and New Zealand's top association influencers
- Member trust in Optometry Australia has risen from a benchmark of 76.6% in 2016 to 96% in 2021
- 94% of members cite Optometry Australia as being member-focused
- All staff completed Levels 1 and 2 of the Indigenous Allied Health Australia's Cultural Responsiveness training to gain a better understanding of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples diversity of cultures and language
- Optometry Australia's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) has been conditionally endorsed by Reconciliation Australia and is due to be officially endorsed in the second half of 2022
- Our two websites attracted 190,000 pageviews per month
- To improve efficiencies, to enhance cyber-security, and to reduce costs, the organisation moved to a cloud-based IT platform embracing Microsoft Office 365 as its preferred digital infrastructure
- Our Jobs Board supported a 45% increase in employment listings

Optometry Australia's high-calibre team has continued to deliver quality services despite ongoing COVID-19 restrictions compelling the team to work remotely for the third year in a row. State-of-the-art video conferencing and chat facilities, however, have enabled a superior level of staff face-to-face interaction. Likewise, Optometry Australia's Board of Directors have continued to meet remotely although reverting increasingly to hybrid meetings in 2022.

Following several years of stability, this year saw several major changes in the organisation's leadership.

A major workplace award capped off calendar year 2021 followed by the announcement of our CEO as one of Australia and New Zealand's leading association influencers.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan is nearing full approval and cultural responsiveness training has provided all staff with a deeper understanding of the diversity of cultures and languages, including the variables in terminology and communication with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Shared strategic plan

This financial year, Optometry Australia and majority of state divisions entered a new three-year shared strategic plan for the FY2021-2024 period. With Optometry Australia focused on national initiatives, and state divisions' focus on state jurisdiction outcomes, the aim of the Shared Strategic Plan is to achieve uniformity of approach to delivering member and optometry advancement initiatives based on the four pillars of lead, engage, promote and enduring organisation. These pillars have consistently driven the federation's goals since they were introduced in 2014.

The plan uses a flexible approach allowing for adjustment of goals based on changing market conditions and disruptions. It provides the blueprint that sets our priorities and goals until 30 June 2024.

With the first full year of the current Shared Strategic Plan finalised on 30 June 2022, Optometry Australia hosted an in-person planning update in Melbourne attended by state presidents, state representatives, and key national office staff. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss progress on project and goal delivery.

Member services

Optometry Australia continued to support members throughout the year by providing them with a range of quality services and initiatives to advance, evolve, and promote optometry and community eye health. The response to these initiatives from members has been extremely positive as highlighted in our 2021 survey where:

- 94% of members said they considered the organisation to be member-focused;
- 86% cited you would highly or likely recommend membership; and
- 85% said the services we deliver provide good value for money.

These results support Optometry Australia's objective of expanding the range of member services delivered by the national team. Over the past three years, this has seen the introduction of a national CPD program, leadership development programs, a mentor program, health and wellbeing services, travelling scholarships, and new channels and tools to engage and communicate with members.

We have further strengthened our member advisory team with the appointment of additional optometrist-trained staff who provide personalised one-on-one advice to members. This service consistently receives a 98% member satisfaction rating.

Presidents' meeting

In October 2021, 10 past presidents of Optometry Australia met to reflect on the organisation under, and since, their presidency. They were hosted by the then current President, Darrell Baker, and Deputy President, Murray Smith.

The former presidents were keen to learn about progress of the organisation and efforts made to expand optometrists scope of practice to meet community eye health needs aligned to the organisation's Optometry 2040 strategy. Conversely, current directors were eager to learn from their former peers, their valuable ideas and insights into what they believed Optometry Australia could be doing better to further strengthen the sector's sustainability and the support provided to members.

Your strategic plan:

Enduring organisation

Former presidents who attended included: John Rees (1984-1986), Steve Leslie (1990-1992), Ian Breadon (1992-1994), Colin Waldron (1994-1997), John Davis (1997-1999), Helen Robbins (1999-2002), Ian Bluntish (2002-2007), Andrew Harris (2007-2010, 2011-2014), Kate Gifford (2014-2016), and Andrew Hogan (2016-2018).

Our people

Workplace award

In December 2021, Optometry Australia received a 2021 Best Workplace Award in recognition of its exceptional levels of employee engagement and satisfaction. Using a Voice Project survey, we have been tracking employee engagement annually since 2017.

Voice Project is an initiative of Macquarie University, and it surveys not only our staff but over 3.3 million employees from 700 companies. Once surveyed, Voice Project then benchmarks Optometry Australia's performance against comparable associations with our organisation exceeding benchmarks on all three major indices:

- Engagement/passion (which measures job satisfaction and staff commitment) – our score in 2021: 86% which is 10% above benchmark
- Wellbeing/peace (which reflects the emotional wellness of staff at work) – our score in 2021: 78% which is 6% above benchmark
- Progress (which measures staff perception of organisation performance) – our score in 2021: 96% which is 30% above benchmark

This award recognises the significant, positive organisation culture that CEO, Lyn Brodie, has instilled in Optometry Australia.

2022 staff survey

As highlighted above, Optometry Australia has a formal process for reviewing staff performance annually with results benchmarked against similar sized membership associations. The 2022 results highlighted advancements on the 2021 results with the following scores received:

- Engagement/passion (which measures job satisfaction and staff commitment) – our score in 2022: 88% (+2% on 2021) and 10% above benchmark
- Wellbeing/peace (which reflects the emotional wellness of staff at work) – our score in 2022: 89% (+11% on 2021) and 18% above benchmark
- Progress (which measures staff perception of organisation performance) – our score in 2022: 91% (-5% on 2021) and 20% above benchmark

While staff rated Optometry Australia's Progress lower in 2022 than the previous year, 100% of staff believed that the organisation was innovative and 95% that our customers (or in our case, members) were satisfied with our products and services. This is also reflected in member feedback, as highlighted above.

Likewise, 100% of staff cited the organisation as being ethical and that it has a strong focus on achieving positive results while 95% agreed with the organisation's values.

Overall, we are delighted with the outcomes of our annual staff performance survey given that, for the third year in a row, our team has worked remotely with little face-to-face interaction beyond video conferencing. This situation has been brought about due to ongoing COVID-19 lockdowns, restrictions, and work-from-home mandates, particularly in Melbourne.

Leadership and staff changes

Following several years of constancy, Optometry Australia went through some significant leadership changes during the year.

Board

In line with board tenure protocols, after three years in the role, Darrell Baker stepped down as President at the organisation's annual general meeting (AGM) on Friday 26 November 2021. His replacement, Murray Smith, subsequently made the difficult decision to stand down as President on 27 June 2022.

Margaret Lam was then appointed the 40th President of Optometry Australia on 28 June 2022 and Fiona Moore, Deputy President. They joined Tori Halsey in these leadership positions. Ms Halsey was re-appointed Treasurer at the AGM.

While Dr Lam is only the third female optometrist to be appointed President of Optometry Australia in the organisation's 103-year history, never have there been three women simultaneously in the roles of President, Deputy President, and Treasurer.

CEO

Following five successful years at the helm of Optometry Australia, CEO Lyn Brodie announced her resignation in July 2022. Since July 2017, Ms Brodie has transformed the organisation and re-shaped and expanded the range of services that Optometry Australia delivers to members. She further positively influenced the future direction of Australian optometry through the creation of a clear pathway for evolution and sustainability.

Members have responded well to the 'Brodie era' through not only membership growth but an increase in trust in Optometry Australia. As highlighted in member surveys, trust has risen from a benchmark of 76.6% set in 2016 to 96% in 2021.

In February 2022, Ms Brodie was named one of Australia and New Zealand's association top influencers by the Australasian Society of Association Executives. And in 2020, Optometry Australia was named the Asia Pacific Professional Association of the Year largely due to Ms Brodie leading the federation's swift and positive response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff

In July 2022, Skye Cappuccio was appointed interim CEO. She also maintains per position of General Manager, Member Support & Optometry Advancement. Catherine Roubos was appointed Company Secretary also in July 2022. She too maintains her position as CFO & General Manager, HR.

- Member Support & Optometry Advancement: Following the resignation of Simon Hanna, Professional Development and Clinical Policy Manager, Sam Bonwick was promoted to Head of Education in August 2022 and is now charged with the ongoing evolution and delivery of Optometry Australia's wide range of complimentary member education. He is being supported by Christina Ly who was appointed Education Content Manager in September 2022.

Dom Willson and Lyn Hsieh joined our team of member advisors. Mr Willson is based in Newcastle and Ms Hsieh in Melbourne. Ms Hsieh is also a member of the Optometry Vic/SA team. They join Sophie Koh in these critical member-support roles.

Demi Gertig also joined the team in 2022. Based in Adelaide she is on a fixed-term contract and is responsible for managing our big data project which is key to the delivery of our Optometry 2040 strategy.

Your strategic plan:

Enduring organisation

- **Member & Community Engagement:** After the restructuring of the member and consumer engagement and communications functions over the past few years, the role of General Manager, Member & Community Engagement is being made redundant. This will see the departure of Kerry l'Anson from Optometry Australia in December 2022.
- **Operations:** Events Manager & Advertising Coordinator Nicole Ostrognay has been promoted to the role of Executive Administrator following the resignation and departure of Rosy Dolan-Murphy in September 2022.

Flexible place of work

Our 2022 staff survey highlighted that 100% of staff said that they believed that the organisation offered a level of flexibility to meet their needs while 91% cited that they can maintain a good balance between work and other aspects of their life.

Our workplace philosophy is to allow full-time, part-time, and shared-role positions. Although our main office is in South Melbourne, rather than restrict recruitment to Melbourne-based candidates, we employ the right person for the job, irrespective of where they live in Australia. Hence, we now have staff based in Victoria, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory and South Australia.

Cross federation collaboration

Shared resources

Optometry Australia has reached agreement with Optometry Vic/SA to provide staff on a needs basis to ensure this state division meets its office management and communications obligations. In turn, Optometry Vic/SA is supporting Optometry Australia deliver *Optometry Virtually Connected* in 2023 through a shared resource. Optometry Australia also supports Optometry Tasmania.

Optometry Western Australia's CEO Evan Macrae was retained to consult Optometry Australia on revenue raising initiatives. This retainer concluded in March 2022.

Reducing duplication

Optometry Australia and state divisions collaborate regularly to reduce duplication in the delivery of member services such as member communications and the on-going evolution of the member database.

Training

All staff are provided with the opportunity to participate in training to support their career advancement. This has seen their enrolment in a wide range of courses from leadership, data management, and digital marketing through to project management. As well as these individual courses, three group training programs were offered to all staff during the year under review:

Cultural training

As part of our commitment to our Reconciliation Action Plan and to lead by example, all staff participated in Indigenous Allied Health Australia's Cultural Responsiveness training (Levels 1 and 2). The course has provided all staff with a foundational understanding of the diversity of cultures and languages, including the variables in terminology and communication with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. It also provided them with an understanding of the impacts of communication hinderances which can create barriers between cultures.

Cyber security

With global cyber-crime increasing rapidly, Optometry Australia is acutely aware of the need to protect the organisation's systems, files, and databases from a growing variety of cyber-attack schemes. To bring awareness of these various schemes, all staff participated in a five-part online cybersecurity awareness training program delivered by IT Connexion, an Australian Government funded program.

Strategy in Action

All staff continue to participate in Strategy in Action (SiA) coaching which is designed to foster a culture of innovation through conditions monitoring aimed at forecasting disruption and change. When used appropriately, SiA enables our teams to swiftly pivot to meet emerging conditions.

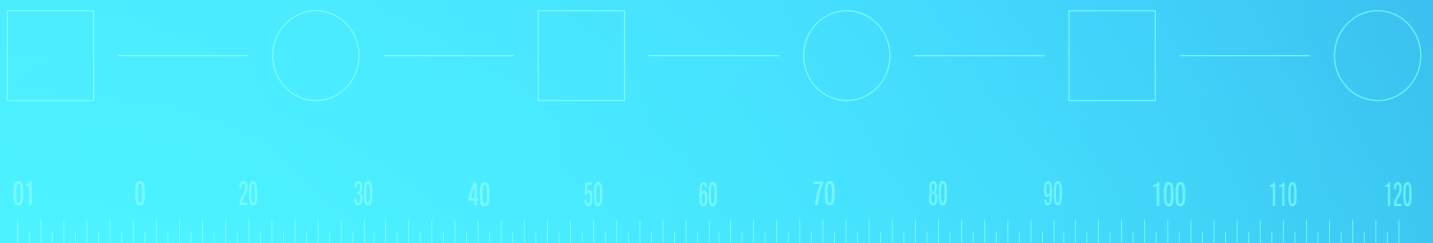
SiA was embedded into Optometry Australia's planning processes in FY2019/2020 and, to support the ongoing delivery of this process, staff came together in June 2022 for an SiA update workshop.

Occupational health and safety

Optometry Australia takes its commitment to providing a safe and healthy workplace seriously with no major incidents reported during the year. We have further ensured that the South Melbourne office is COVID-safe by abiding with all government and DHHS guidelines.

IT infrastructure

The organisation moved to a complete cloud-based IT platform during the year, embracing Microsoft Office 365 as its preferred digital infrastructure. Optometry Australia has embraced Teams as our first option for workplace chat and video conferencing which has enabled us to move away from multiple video conferencing and chat subscription services. A cloud-based service is also considered to provide the organisation with increased cybersecurity due to real time updates to the software.



Your strategic plan:

Enduring organisation

Websites

We maintain a strong website presence through our corporate site located at optometry.org.au and through our consumer site located at goodvisionforlife.com.au. Combined they attracted 190,000 pageviews per month, with the majority visiting optometry.org.au. The corporate website attracted 265,000 users during the FY2021/2022 period and goodvisionforlife.com.au, 41,900.

During this period, our “Find an optometrist” search service, which is located on both websites, delivered 30,000 page views, or just over 2,500 per month, during the period.

Reconciliation Action Plan

Optometry Australia’s Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) has been conditionally endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. We have contracted Aboriginal-owned design firm, Bayila, to support us in finalising the document before submitting it for formal endorsement. In the meantime, our organisation is working towards meeting our RAP obligations and goals including ensuring all staff completed IAHA’s Cultural Responsiveness training (Levels 1 and 2) and ensuring inclusive language within our public and private facing documents and policies.

Our Innovate RAP was developed by an internal working group. Its aim is to support the national reconciliation movement.

To honour National Reconciliation Week 2022, we published a series of articles on optometrists working with First Nations communities or who are committed to improving the eye health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Internally, staff contributed these week-long celebrations by learning more about the indigenous heritage of where their homes are located.

Financial management

As highlighted in the Treasurer’s report, prudent financial management remains a priority for the organisation. It is our goal to expand our income stream through a range of initiatives with revenue generated through the following platforms:

Jobs Board & Classifieds

During the year almost 90 employment listings were placed on our dedicated Jobs Board each month – a 45% increase on the year before. Of these listings, the vast majority (97%) were for positions vacant with 71% for full-time positions and 29% listing part-time and locum positions. As last year, practices in New South Wales advertised the most vacancies (35%) followed by Victoria (24%) and Queensland (20%).

Members can place a position vacant advertisement for free if they are seeking work for themselves while businesses have been able to take advantage of very competitive rates starting at \$36 and rising to \$129 per listing.

Likewise, members can place an advertisement in our classifieds for free with non-members paying \$57 per listing. The organisation supported 160 classifieds listings in the year under review with listings ranging from those wanting to sell, lease, or buy optometric equipment as well as those wanting to sell, lease, or buy a practice, or to lease or rent a room within a practice.

Advertising and sponsorship

We provide several channels that carry advertising, sponsorship, and promotions on behalf of organisations wanting to promote their products and services to the largest community of optometrists in Australia. Our website, range of electronic newsletters, publications, webcasts, and virtual conference provide our main vehicles for carrying messages from sponsors and partners.

Katherine Duong
Optometry NSW/ACT member



Committees & advisory groups

Committees FY2021/2022

The following is the current list of committees that Optometry Australia is a representative on as at 30 June 2022.

Committee	Purpose	Representation lead
Optometry Board of Australia's (OBA) Regulatory Reference Committee	Peak group of the sector providing views to Optometry Board of Australia	Lyn Brodie
Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency's (Ahpra) Professions Reference Group	Provides feedback, information, and advice on strategies for building better knowledge from within the professions about health practitioner regulation, and advising Ahpra on issues affecting the professions	Lyn Brodie
OCANZ, member	To appoint the OCANZ Board and other governance matters	Lyn Brodie
Indigenous Eye Health Data Report Advisory Group	Advice to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare regarding development of a report on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health	Skye Cappuccio
National Rural Health Alliance	Peak advisory and advocacy body for rural health matters	Sarah Davies
Vision 2020 Australia	Vision 2020 Australia represents the vision and eye care sector in Australia and draws together members to exchange views, share information, and collaborate and develop policies, strategies and submissions to improve eye health and vision care for all Australians	Skye Cappuccio, Prevention and Early Intervention committee; Anthea Cochrane, member of Independence and Participation committee; Sarah Davies, member of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee. Optometry Australia representatives are also involved in a number of Vision 2020 Australia project and working groups.
Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA)	AHPA is the peak national organisation for allied health professions in Australia, representing and advocating for the role of allied health professionals in our health system	Lyn Brodie; Skye Cappuccio
Government-appointed		
Department of Veterans' Affairs Health Consultative Forum	Provides principal global advice on areas impacting optometry and issues consistent with other primary and allied health sectors	Kerryn Hart

Committees & advisory groups:

Member-led committees & advisory groups FY2021/2022

The following lists members who participate in our current advisory and working groups.

Working group name	Members	
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Advisory Group	Mitchell Anjou (Chair) Gary Cerie Anyashko Sinead Denny Jose Estevez Luke Higgins	Lauren Hutchinson Nilmini John Josiah Murphy Sarah Nicholls Kate Pecar
Competency Standards Working Group	Skye Cappuccio James Armitage, Optometry school representative Prof Sharon Bentley, Optometry school representative Jayesh Chouhan, ODOB Paula Katalinic, Optometry NSW/ACT Susan Kelly, OCAZ Helen Mees, Consumer Wilson Sue, NZAO Julie Wheeler, Consumer	
Cataract CPG Working Group	Rebekah Hopps Vianh Huyn Can (John) Komser Konrad Pesudovs	Jason Tan Ruxi Wang Jacqueline Warren
Communities of Practice and Education (COPE) Glaucoma	Jason Holland – Co-chair Graham Lakkis – Co-chair Mark Fonseka Riki Gibson Damon Hannay Rebekah Hopps Tina Jong	Christopher Law Thi Thi Nguyen Bregan Soh Daniel Thompson Mary Travis Hiromi Yoshikawa
Communities of Practice and Education (COPE) – Rural	Alex Craig – Co-Chair Fiona Moore – Co-chair Kayla Adams Anthea Cochrane Michelle Ferguson Byron Klein	Candice Pearson Jessica Penna Rhiannon Richer Horst Reiss Clarissa Sheehan Maliha Shorab
Continuing Professional Education Working Group	Simon Hanna (Chair) Sam Bonwick Alex Craig Anna Delamadoros	Tina Jong Nicola Mountford Angie Trinh
Evolving Scope of Practice Advisory Group	Prof Sharon Bentley (Chair) Assoc Prof Nicola Anstice Monica Lette Luke Cahill Mark De Paola Jane Duffy	Garry Fitzpatrick Jason Holland Dr Christopher Law Dr Jack Phu Dr Amanda Sobbizadeh Robyn Weinberg
Glaucoma Clinical Practice Guide Working Group	Kerryn Hart (Chair) Ben Ashby Sandra Au Alan Burrow Cameron Dyson (Private Practitioner)	Cassandra Haines Graham Lakkis Leanne Nguyen Jack Phu Murray Smith

Committees & advisory groups:

Member-led committees & advisory groups FY2021/2022

Working group name	Members	
Infection Control Standards Working Group	Kerryn Hart (Chair) Luke Arundel Dr Nicole Carnt	Ka-Yee Lian Prof Fiona Stapleton
Medicare Schedule Advisory Group (MSAG)	Simon Hanna (Chair) Luke Arundel Skye Cappuccio Paul Graveson Daryl Guest	Peregrine Horton Heidi Hunter Margaret Lam Jason Tan
Standards Australia Working Group	Annette Hoskins David Stephensen Nicole Carnt	
Transport and Vision Standards Working Group	Amanda Douglass Tony Gibson Vanessa Honson Jennifer Long Josiah Murphy	Neil Murray Sharon Oberstein Ho Wah Ng Joanne Wood



David Neilsen
Optometry QLD/NT member

Contact details

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T: 03 9668 8500

E: national@optometry.org.au

Website: optometry.org.au

Consumer website: goodvisionforlife.com.au

Social media platforms

Facebook members: facebook.com/OptometryAustralia/

Facebook consumers: facebook.com/goodvisionforlife

Twitter: twitter.com/OptometryAus or @OptometryAus

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/optometrists-association-australia/

Instagram: @goodvisionforlife

Optometry Australia ABN: 17 004 622 431



Sushweta Pal
Optometry VIC/SA member