4-Step Adult Eye Check

MBS Item 715 (Health Assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) now includes a mandatory eye check component.

The following provides 4- key steps for eye and vision screening for GPs and others providing Health Assessments:

STEP 1: History
- Ask about problems or difficulties with vision or eyes: Consider 'sore or watery eye' as a possible symptom of trichiasis.
- Ask about problems with glasses or contact lenses.
- Ask “Can you see clearly and comfortably?” When looking at things up close (e.g. when held in your hands), When looking at things far away?
- Ask/check whether the person has diabetes.

STEP 2: Vision Test/Visual Acuity
- Test near vision:
  Test both eyes together, with glasses if normally worn (use normal size print at a comfortable distance).
- Test distance vision:
  Test one eye at a time, with glasses if normally worn, for vision using an acuity chart.

STEP 3: Eye examination
- Check eye movements.
- Check pupils.
- Check the front of the eye:
  Lids, lashes, conjunctiva, cornea
  Consider trichiasis, remember the 3 T’s – Think, Thumb, Torch.
- Check the retina for people with diabetes each year:
  Dilated ophthalmoscopy, retinal photography if camera available, or refer.

STEP 4: Refer
- Refer to an optometrist or ophthalmologist if:
  Vision or eye problems including a change in vision.
  Reduced vision at near (worse than N8) or distance (worse than 6/12).
  Retinal examination is needed for people with diabetes each year.
Diabetes Eye Care: Key Messages

- Everyone with diabetes is at risk of going blind.
- Diabetes is a major cause of vision loss and blindness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people however, up to 98% of blindness is preventable.
- Primary health care providers should include an eye check in care plans for people with diabetes.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes need a YEARLY eye check to reduce their risk of vision loss and blindness.

1. Early Detection and YEARLY Eye Checks
   Yearly eye checks are key to detecting problems early even before symptoms start to show.

2. Education and Support for Self-Management
   Controlling blood sugars, blood pressure and cholesterol levels is important for preventing vision loss and blindness.

3. Referral Pathways
   Providing information about eye care pathways will help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people get to the next step – for further assessment with an eye specialist optometrist and/or ophthalmologist (specialist eye doctor). Most optometry services are covered by a Medicare rebate.

4. Timely Treatment
   Following treatment as directed by an eye specialist can prevent further vision loss and blindness from diabetes.