

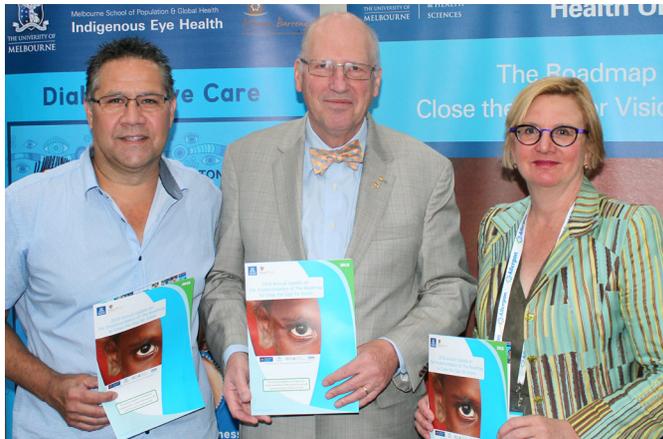
Indigenous Eye Health Newsletter December 2018



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Welcome to the end of year edition of the [Indigenous Eye Health](#) (IEH) Newsletter. There's been a lot of activity over the past 6 months in the effort to close the gap for vision by 2020. We wish you a happy end of year and all the best for 2019.

Annual Update on the Implementation to Close the Gap for Vision by 2020



Shane Mohor, CEO of the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia, Professor Hugh Taylor, head of IEH and Dr. Heather Mack, President of RANZCO at the launch of the 2018 Update in Adelaide.

The 2018 Annual Update on the Implementation of The Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision was launched on Monday 19 November at the 50th Annual Scientific Congress of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) in Adelaide.

Shane Mohor, CEO of the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia launched the Annual Update with Professor Hugh Taylor, Head of Indigenous Eye Health at Melbourne University. Dr Heather Mack, President of RANZCO hosted the launch. Professor Taylor said:

"It is terrific to see the progress that has been made with great work being done by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations and all of our partners in eye health"



Roadmap Recommendation Progress

19 of 42 recommendations identified to fix Indigenous eyecare and three quarters of the intermediate activities have now been completed.

However, more funding is required for:

- Regional and local coordination
- Outreach services to meet population-based need
- Prompt repair and maintenance of washing facilities
- Additional equipment for eye care

www.mspgh.unimelb.edu.au/centres-institutes/centre-for-health-equity/research-group/ieh/about/publications/reports

"All of these improvements are very encouraging, but more needs to be done if we want to achieve our goal of giving all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people the same eye health as other Australians. It is crucial that we keep working closely with local communities through Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, and at higher levels to make sure that services are properly provided and resourced across states and territories" said Professor Taylor.

RANZCO Scientific Congress Aboriginal Cultural Symposium

IEH also delivered a cultural symposium at the RANZCO Congress in Adelaide. The symposium was chaired by Professor Taylor and Dr Ashish Agar, Chair of the RANZCO Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander committee and Mr Trevor Buzzacott, a member of the IEH Advisory Board. It featured a range of South Australian Aboriginal leaders across health and the arts.

Tanya McGregor, Director Aboriginal Health Strategy at SA Health and Dennis Stokes, CEO of Tandanya Aboriginal Cultural Institute both emphasised the importance of culture and place and community to support health and wellbeing. Tina Miller from Ceduna Koonibba Aboriginal Health Service in Ceduna emphasised the importance of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework and the work going on to incorporate it into the various health professions' training.



L to R: Prof Hugh Taylor (IEH), Tanya McGregor (SA Health), Dennis Stokes (Tandanya Aboriginal Cultural Institute), Tina Miller (Ceduna Koonibba Aboriginal Health Service), Trevor Buzzacott (IEH Advisory Board), Prof Dennis McDermott (Flinders Poche Centre for Indigenous Health) and Dr Ashish Agar (RANZCO).

Professor Denis McDermott, Director of the Flinders Poche Centre for Indigenous Health spoke about institutional racism and the demand of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to assume a place at the table around health and other issues.



Close the Gap for Vision by 2020
National Conference 2019
Strengthen & Sustain

Thursday 14 - Friday 15 March 2019
Alice Springs Convention Centre, NT

For registration and further information visit www.ieh.unimelb.edu.au or email Indigenous-EyeHealth@unimelb.edu.au

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Vision 2020 Australia 5 Year Plan

Vision 2020 Australia has been developing a five-year plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health.



This plan is being developed in response to the request of the Minister for Indigenous Health, Ken Wyatt. IEH has participated with Vision 2020 Australia members in workshops to develop the plan, undertaken consultation with jurisdictional fundholders and contributed to work groups developing the various themes of the plan.

National Subsidised Spectacles Scheme

Uncorrected refractive error contributes almost 60 % of vision loss among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In August, Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, and Minister Ken Wyatt, committed \$2 million to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with easier access to affordable prescription glasses.

Subsidised spectacles schemes vary between jurisdictions and this funding will provide an opportunity to standardise approaches to provide more glasses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Vision 2020 Australia is managing this initiative and IEH is a member of the steering group guiding this important work.

National Diabetes Services Scheme KeepSight



The launch of the KeepSight initiative in Canberra on 15 October

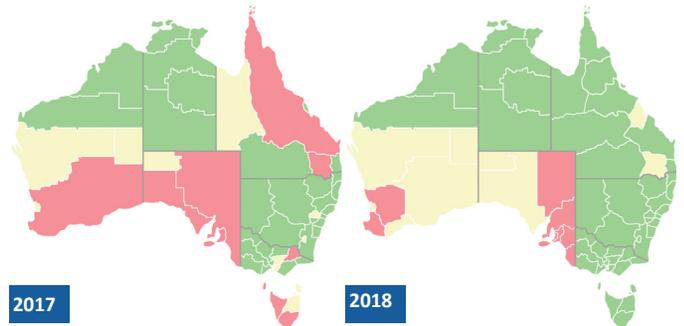
A new national diabetes eye program funded by the Australian Government and the private sector is being established to ensure people registered with the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS) get regular reminders for their eye exams.

The new program will connect the existing NDSS database with a digital platform being built by Oculo so that alerts and reminders can be sent to people with diabetes to get their eyes examined. Eye care providers and consumers can register clients and this coupled with a marketing push to the general public will increase the number of people with diabetes receiving retinal screening.



Regional Implementation

Roadmap Progress



The Annual Update reports 53 of 63 regions across the country are now working to co-ordinate eye care for Indigenous people – covering more than 70 percent of the nation's Indigenous population

The Roadmap regional implementation team has been busy encouraging, participating in and supporting stakeholder and regional meetings across the country. This year has seen new groups formed in Tasmania, Victoria and Queensland and some interest in South Australia. Collective work in NT has resulted in active discussions around a Northern Territory stakeholder eye group.

Challenges remain in regional implementation to access resources to increase services offered to meet population-based need and provide the regional and local coordination to organise pathways of care and support patients along the eye care pathways. Data to monitor progress and performance and access to public ophthalmology are also key issues identified across the country.

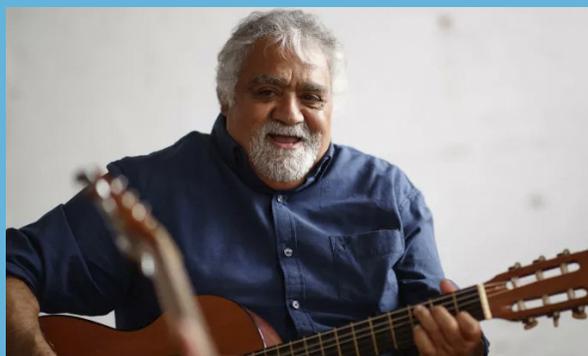
IEH has also attended and presented at a wide range of conferences including OZMOZ18, Optometry Tasmania Annual Conference, Australian Health Promotion Conference, My PHN Conference, Yanikan-werritj Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Conference, Australian College of Optometry Conference, ACRRM/RMA Conference, RANZCO and Orthoptics Australia Conference.



Nick Schubert (IEH) with Gail Wason (Mulungu Aboriginal Medical Centre) and Tony Coburn (CheckUp Qld)

'Ending Avoidable Blindness' Campaign

The Made Possible by Melbourne campaigns showcase to the public the world-changing research taking place at the University of Melbourne. The latest campaign, 'Ending Avoidable Blindness' focuses on the work of Professor Hugh Taylor and IEH and features Yorta Yorta man, Jack Walker.



Jack Walker, a Yorta Yorta man living in Ballarat features in the new 'Made Possible by Melbourne' campaign, 'Ending Avoidable Blindness'.

Campaign statistics (as at December 7, 2018):

- 678,384 video views
- 14,208 clicks to read the Pursuit article
- 3,576 reactions on Facebook

www.pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/on-track-to-ending-avoidable-blindness

TRACHOMA

Trachoma & Trichiasis eLearning Modules

The RAHC Trachoma and Trichiasis eLearning Modules are practical training tools to equip primary health care professionals with the capacity to assist in the elimination of trachoma as a public health problem in Australia by 2020 and beyond. Many people in health and other sectors such as housing and education are working hard to achieve the goal of eliminating trachoma in Australia but there is still a need for support and ongoing surveillance after 2020.

Access the eLearning modules here:
<https://www.rahc.com.au/elearning>



Environmental Health Workshop

The Environmental Health Improvements Workshop was held at the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia in Adelaide on Tuesday 23 October 2018. The workshop brought together key sectors and services in South Australia to discuss key issues and to identify appropriate, effective and sustainable solutions that will help eliminate trachoma and address numerous persistent hygiene-related health issues including ear, respiratory, skin, gastro-intestinal infections and more. Key speakers presented current issues to over fifty representatives from a vast range of sectors and services.



Prof Taylor presenting at the Environmental Health Improvements Workshop

Trachoma education with young people in Central Australia

IEH has been working in Central Australia with the NT Department of Education and the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) supporting creches, preschools and schools to eliminate trachoma through the 'Clean Faces, Strong Eyes & Ears' project. Hygiene routines are taught to young children aged 0-4 and Mums, Dads and other family members.



The Trachoma Story Kit is used to engage young children and talk about the importance of good hygiene. Respected community members have been appointed as 'Community Champions' to promote clean faces and provide information to community members about trachoma elimination. IEH is grateful to the 'Community Champions' for their support of the trachoma team and the 'Clean Faces, Strong Eyes' campaign.

Santa Teresa, Docker River & Mutitjulu Art Murals & Dance Workshops

IEH has been working with Indigenous Hip Hop Projects (IHHP), artists Andrew Bourke, Leecee Carmichael and community members to undertake art mural and dance workshops in Mutitjulu, Docker River & Santa Teresa. The art murals have a focus on local dreaming as well as promoting the trachoma elimination 'Clean Faces, Strong Eyes' message. Thank you to the many community members and partners who have been involved in these projects. Some of the organisations include Centre for Disease Control, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, Mutitjulu School, NPY Women's Council, AAAC, MacYouth and ATA.

There are now 13 communities with murals. Thank you to everyone involved.

SAFE Bathroom Checklist

IEH has developed the "Clean faces, Safe bathrooms" campaign further with a focus on prompt repair and maintenance of bathrooms. IEH has collaborated with key stakeholders to develop the SAFE bathrooms checklist.

The checklist assists community members to identify and report bathroom repair and maintenance issues to drive a prompt response so that children can maintain clean faces.

Localised versions of the checklist will be developed that provide contact information for the relevant maintenance authority for each region.

SAFE BATHROOM CHECKLIST

Shower

- Shower tap (hot)
- Shower tap (cold)
- Water flow
- Shower head
- Shower drain
- Soap holder
- Shower screen

Bathroom Floor

- Floor surface
- Floor drain

Hand Basin

- Hand basin
- Basin tap (hot)
- Basin tap (cold)
- Water flow
- Coloured
- Drain

Bath

- Bath
- Bath tap (hot)
- Bath tap (cold)
- Water flow
- Bath drain

Other

- Mirror
- Towel rail
- Hooks
- Light
- Exhaust fan
- Powerpoint
- Walls & ceilings
- Window
- Bathroom door

Legend: Tick if works Cross if doesn't work Circle if don't have

If things don't work call:

Fill in your details:

Name: _____
 Community: _____
 Address/House Number: _____
 Contact Phone Number: _____
 Date: _____

Trachoma and hygiene resources are available free from www.iaehp.com.au

Trachoma Education Session with HMOs and R&M staff

In November, IEH delivered trachoma awareness sessions in partnership with CDC to over 50 Housing Maintenance Officers (HMOs) and Repair and Maintenance staff from Tangentyere Constructions and Ingkerreke Construction. The sessions discussed the maintenance of functioning bathrooms and health hardware in houses to support the elimination of trachoma and other hygiene-related diseases. Specific measures included agreement to mount 50 Rotary acrylic mirrors and 'didya wash ya hands and face' stickers in houses with children.

IEH looks forward to building our relationship with these two organisations covering 7 of the 8 housing repair and maintenance jurisdictions stretching out across Central Australia from Willowra in the North to Finke in the South and from Kintore and Docker River in the West to Atitjere in the West.



Staff from Tangentyere Constructions participating in the awareness session



Milpa dancing with IHHP, and posing at the mural in Docker River. Below, Clean Faces, Strong Eyes art mural in Mutitjulu





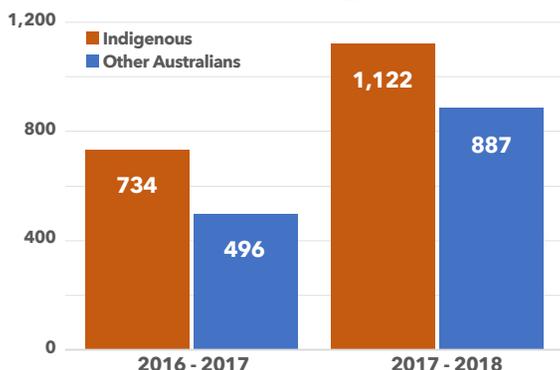
Diabetes Eye Care

Diabetic Retinopathy Roundtable

IEH hosted a Diabetic Retinopathy (DR) Roundtable- **DR vision loss for Indigenous Australians - what next?** in Adelaide after the RANZCO conference in November. Over 30 participants participated in a facilitated workshop and identified practical and deliverable solutions to the key issues impacting the eye care of patients with diabetes building on the great work that has occurred to increase screening for DR and developing the pathways to treatment.

A workshop report provides a summary of those issues and solutions and identifies the steps required in the near term and over the next three to five years to eliminate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander blindness and vision loss from diabetes.

MBS Item Performance - 2 Years On



MBS 12325/12326 Claims- Annual Basis

The Medicare item for diabetic retinopathy screening has been operating for 2 years and shows growth and higher uptake for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people compared to other Australians. However, uptake remains relatively low and it is hoped that the retinal camera and training rollout will promote increased screening and billing by primary health care services.

'Check Today, See Tomorrow' Resource Adaptations

IEH has been working with Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-Operative, Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-Operative and Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation to develop localised adaptations of the Check Today, See Tomorrow campaign featuring local community members. Thank you to the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services for funding the development of these resources and thank you to the wonderful community members who are featured in these resources.

Regular eye checks have helped my eyes and I hope this helps me write my book
- June Murray, Shepparton VIC
Diabetes can cause blindness. Get your eyes checked YEARLY.
Ask your local clinic about making an appointment Today.

Community adapted versions:
(L) Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative, June Murray.
(lower L) Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation, Shane Smith.
(lower R) Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative, David Atkinson.

"I am a family man, and want to have healthy eyes, for my partner and kids"

"Without it I couldn't drive or work"

Diabetes can cause blindness. Get your eyes checked YEARLY.
Ask your local clinic about making an appointment Today.

VACSAL Statewide Aboriginal Football & Netball Carnival



Netball umpires wearing the 'Check Today, See Tomorrow' branded t-shirts

The VACSAL Aboriginal Football & Netball Carnival was held in Ballarat on the 12, 13 and 14 of October 2018 and was hosted by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations Ballarat & District Aboriginal Co-Operative and Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association. IEH worked with the carnival organising committee to develop a promotional video for the carnival featuring Indigenous Eye Health Ambassador Neville Jetta of the Melbourne Football Club. Neville was awarded the 2018 Jim Stynes Community Leadership Award in September.

On the day, IEH held a stall with stakeholders Diabetes Victoria, Vision Initiative and the Central Highlands Primary Care Partnership to provide information about eye health, including diabetes eye health and promote the importance of annual eye checks for Indigenous Australians who have diabetes. In addition, IEH worked with the carnival organising committee to provide CTST shirts for umpires to wear on the day and developed a social media photo prop to help spread the 'Check Today, See Tomorrow' message.

BHVI Consortium Update

The Provision of Eye Health Equipment and Training program continues to rollout across Australia. More than 45 sites (of a total of 155 sites) have received cameras and training. A workshop on 'Embedding Retinal photography in primary healthcare' was held 12-13 November to learn from practitioners on the ground how to improve uptake.

www.brienholdenvision.org/provision-of-eye-health-equipment-and-training.html

IEH Staff Update



IEH staff member Judith Carrigan will be retiring at the end of 2018. Judith has been with IEH since 2008 and working with Professor Hugh Taylor for 24 years. IEH would like to sincerely thank Judy for her hard work and contributions in her time with us and wish her all the very best for her new chapter in life.

We would also like to congratulate Judy on her award for Excellence in Academic Administration at the recent MSPGH awards.

IEH also farewelled our Trachoma Health Promotion Officer Lauren Jeffs, and wish her all the best up in Queensland.

IEH welcomes Allara Pearce to the team. Allara started with IEH in October and has taken over the role of Personal Assistant to Professor Taylor. Allara comes to IEH having most recently worked in Research Ethics and Integrity in Research Innovation and Commercialisation for the University.

Thank you

IEH would like to take this opportunity to thank the many community members, colleagues and stakeholders who are a part of and who support work to close the gap for vision.

We would like to acknowledge our generous donors and funders including: The BB & A Miller Foundation, The Minderoo Foundation, The Paul Ramsay Foundation, CBM Australia, The Cybec Foundation, The Aspen Foundation, Metal Manufacturers Limited, The Australian Government Department of Health and private donors.

We would also like to thank our Advisory Board and the University of Melbourne for their leadership and guidance.