

Indigenous Eye Health Newsletter December 2015

2015 Annual Update and 'Check Today, See Tomorrow'

Parliament House Launch, Canberra

Curious passers-by were intrigued by the enticing music blaring from one of the Committee Rooms in Parliament House on Monday 23 November. Inside was a great vibe showcasing some excellent progress in Indigenous Eye Health. Aunty Agnes Shea OAM, Senior Ngunnawal Elder provided the Welcome to Country, Minister for Rural Health Senator the Hon Fiona Nash launched the 2015 Annual Update and the '**Check Today, See Tomorrow**' Diabetes Eye Care Resources and Faye Clarke (Chair Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative, BADAC) spoke about regional implementation and the development of the '**Check Today, See Tomorrow**' from a community perspective. Professor Hugh Taylor was the MC and guests came from near and far to hear about progress and to see the new diabetes health promotion resources. Representatives from the Grampians in Vic, Looma in WA and Deception Bay in QLD who were partners in the development of the resources were special guests at the launch.

Professor Hugh Taylor with Minister for Rural Health the Hon Senator Fiona Nash and Faye Clark, Chair BADAC



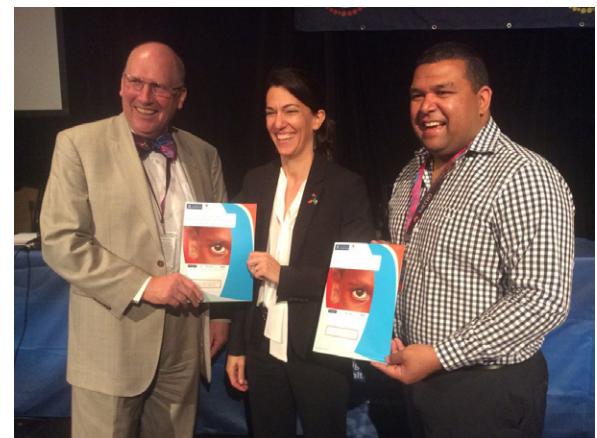
The great progress in 2015 included the \$6.63 million Federal funding boost announced by Minister Nash in September, significant progress on each of the 42 recommendations in the Roadmap and trachoma hotspots reduced to one-third. Multi-partisan support was evident in the turnout from a number of politicians and the ongoing support from all sides of politics was acknowledged. Professor Taylor highlighted the next steps to Close the Gap for Vision are to develop regional eye care services, ensure every person with diabetes gets an eye examination once a year and eliminate the remaining hot spots for trachoma.



IEH team and community partners involved in the 'Check Today, See Tomorrow' development at the launch.

NACCHO Launch, Terrigal

Professor Hugh Taylor received a warm welcome when he spoke at the NACCHO members conference in Terrigal NSW on the 2015 Annual Update on the Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision.



Professor Hugh Taylor, Bobbi Campbell, Department of Health and Matthew Cooke, Chair NACCHO.

Together with the newly launched diabetes eye care materials, Professor Taylor outlined how the gap in vision could be closed, with progress on each of the 42 Roadmap recommendations and the potential to eliminate diseases such as trachoma.

IEH hosted a conference booth, with strong interest from NACCHO member health services, particularly for the '**Check Today See Tomorrow**' Diabetes Eye Care Resources. Chair of NACCHO, Matthew Cooke, also expressed his thanks for the many years IEH have been working to improve Indigenous eye health.



Uma Jatkar and Jessie Motlik, IEH booth, NACCHO members meeting In Terrigal.

Diabetes Eye Care resources

An iterative, engaging, community-driven process was taken to develop eye health promotion messages and appropriate resources during 2015. The resources are designed to increase awareness about diabetes eye care and the need for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes to have a **YEARLY** eye check to help prevent vision loss and blindness.

The '**Check Today, See Tomorrow**' resources were created *by community, for community* using music, art and sharing personal stories as the backbone for community engagement and participation.



Community engagement allowed for key themes, slogans, language, design and imagery to be created for the overall *look and feel* of a suite of social marketing resources including a resource kit and supporting multimedia resources.



The Kit includes:

Brochures, Flipchart, Poster series, Key Messages/ Adult Eye Check Card, Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Card, Diabetic Retinopathy Grading Course Flyer and Social Media Guide.

The '**Check Today, See Tomorrow**' resource kit will be used to support regions that IEH are currently engaging under the guidance of the Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision.

The '**Check Today, See Tomorrow**' resource kit will provide a starting point for health services and communities to integrate key eye messages into chronic care plans, programs and existing social media platforms. IEH also encourage adaptations and modification of the resource kit components to support local needs.

To order a '**Check Today, See Tomorrow**' resource kit and the multimedia resources please visit www.iehu.unimelb.edu.au If you require more information or support please contact us via email Indigenous-EyeHealth@unimelb.edu.au or phone (03) 8344 9320.

IEH would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution and participation from health services and community members in Deception Bay in South East Queensland, The Grampians in Victoria and Looma community in the Kimberley, Western Australia.

'The Value of Indigenous Sight'

IEH and PwC released 'The value of Indigenous sight: An economic analysis' in September.

PwC and PwC's Indigenous Consulting (PIC) worked with IEH to estimate the economic benefits of implementing the Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision and so test the potential benefits against the additional funding required. In the next 10 years PwC estimates that over 34,000 Indigenous Australians will be affected by low vision and blindness and that full implementation of the Roadmap can provide prevention and treatment for 32,000 of these people in this period.

The analysis indicates \$550 million benefit at a cost of \$230 million, and so for every additional dollar invested in Roadmap recommendations, it is estimated that \$2.50 will be generated for the Australian economy.

The report was released through a series of meetings organised by PwC and IEH in Canberra, Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney, Darwin, Perth and Adelaide.

Significant media interest was generated with the launch of the report and meeting attendees included jurisdictional health departments, state Aboriginal community controlled affiliates, optometry and ophthalmology organisations, RHOF, VOS and MOICDP fundholders and non-government organisations.

The report and a summary document is available on the IEH website: www.iehu.unimelb.edu.au



Daniel Suggit, NACCHO, James van Smeerdijk, PwC, Martin Rocks, Office of Minister Nash, Maria Jolly Department of Health, Genevieve Quilty Optometry Australia and Professor Hugh Taylor in Canberra.

Funding boost for Indigenous Eye Health

On Wednesday 16th September during an eventful week in Parliament the then Assistant Minister Fiona Nash announced in the Senate the provision of an additional \$6.63 million over the next four years to improve and expand eye care services to Indigenous Australians. \$4.61 million is for the coordination of eye services at the state and territory level over four years and \$420,000 over three years is for the very important national oversight with data collection, analysis and reporting.



In addition there is \$800,000 a year for two years for IEH at the University of Melbourne to implement a series of trachoma health promotion activities. This commitment of new money goes a long way to further support implementation of the recommendations in the Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision. Vision 2020 Australia played a key role to bring the eye care sector together to advocate with a single voice for this Government commitment. IEH would particularly like to thank Minister Nash and the Government for this important next step of funding. We would also like to thank Vision 2020 Australia, our collaborators and partners and all involved in advocating for Indigenous eye health, including our donors and supporters - it is a team effort.

Ntaria Football Clinic Visit

Approximately 200 Ntaria School students along with 10-15 teachers and 30 adult community members came together to remember the importance of 'Clean Face, Strong Eyes' and enjoyed a kick of the footy with some of their favourite football players.



Milpa kicking the footy with some of the students from Ntaria School along with, Melbourne Football Clubs Jack Trengove and Christian Petracca at the Trachoma Footy Clinic in May.

Yamba and Milpa roadshows in APY Lands

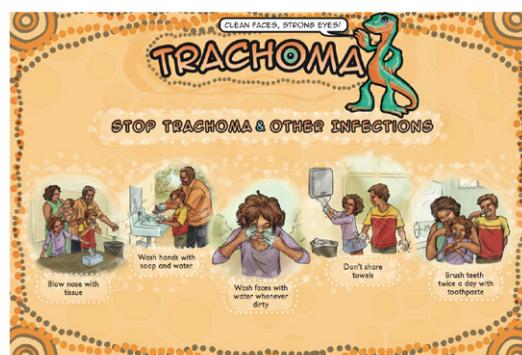
This year the Yamba and Milpa Roadshow went to 14 communities across Central Australia in the Northern Territory and the APY Lands in SA. An estimated 921 children under the age of nine attended the roadshows, along with parents and other family members. The engaging, interactive performance aimed at 0-9 year olds showcases healthy living and hygiene practices through song and dance. The children enjoyed the performances and joined in with actions and dancing in every community. There was positive feedback from teachers and children including Brother Dan from Santa Teresa who said that the healthy living and hygiene messages were very clear and asked Yamba and Milpa to return. Teachers from Ntaria commented that it was 'professional and wonderful'. Some of the children's comments included: 'I learnt about being healthy', Des, aged 8; 'I liked it when they sang about clean face, strong eyes', Russell, aged 8 and 'I like when we sing and dance', Jeremyus, aged 5.



Yamba (left), Milpa (middle) and Jacinta (right) perform for students at Santa Teresa School.

Education Update

We continue to work with schools in the NT, SA and WA on trachoma elimination. We aim to establish clean faces as the norm at school (and outside of), ensure there are safe and functional bathroom facilities, look at the provision of soap, paper towels, wipes, tissues, mirrors and bins, and ensure that face washing, part of standard hygiene practices in the curriculum is operationalised, encouraged and maintained. In 2016 we aim to increase opportunities to work with schools and early childhood settings to increase awareness and good hygiene practices that include face washing to reduce the spread of trachoma.



Roadmap regional implementation update

Regional implementation

Activity in regional implementation progresses across the country. IEH provides technical advice and support as required into some 15 identified regions and occasional advice to other regions and providers. An additional focus of the past few months has been to engage with jurisdictional fundholders in particular to support VOS needs assessment and planning for a new round of funds (RHOF and VOS) supporting Aboriginal eye care from mid 2016. The September Minister Nash announcement of coordination funds for jurisdictions raised another important issue of discussion.

Regional implementation highlights:

CABIEHS planning day

A regional eye care stakeholder group workshop was held in Alice Springs for the Central Australia and Barkly Integrated Eye Health Strategy (CABIEHS) in July. This forum provided opportunity to reflect on progress of initiatives since the last planning meeting in 2013. The group workshopped the key eye care priorities in the region for 2015-2018 and has subsequently made a funding bid to Department of Health to support some of this work.

Great South Coast region eye health networking dinner

The Barwon South West region ran a local practitioner networking dinner in August in Warrnambool. Local GPs and eye care practitioners were invited to learn about the regional project and share in cultural exchange and discuss improvements local eye care pathways.

Grampians region symposium

Over 60 people from the Grampians came together in Ballarat in October to learn about the Grampians region Aboriginal eye care project including many from mainstream eye care service providers. The very successful evening reflects the progress made in this region with ongoing practitioner and community engagement.

Prime Minister and Cabinet Update

Emma Stanford presented to the Prime Minister and Cabinet Community Development Programme (CDP) National Provider Business meeting In Perth in September. CDP is the Government's remote employment service and the presentation discussed trachoma and raised the potential for CDP participants to support trachoma elimination through practical hygiene activities as part of their participation requirements. Bunnings, Regional Anangu Services Aboriginal Corporation, Skillhire (CDP provider) and community members in APY lands have been involved in delivering and installing 24 large safety mirrors to schools early childhood and family centres.

IEH provided some trachoma hygiene materials as part of the information pack distributed to a School Attendance Supervisors meeting in Yulara in November.

Community Service Announcements

Neville Jetta from the Melbourne Football Club promoting the Victorian NAIDOC Footy and Netball Carnival with a diabetes message.



*View the video here:
www.iehu.unimelb.edu.au/news_media_events/videos*

Welcome and Goodbye

We would like to welcome Dr Carol Holden who joined IEH in September as a Senior Research Fellow working on regional implementation. Carol was previously the CEO, Andrology Australia (Australian Centre of Excellence in Male Reproductive Health) based at Monash University.

We are farewelling Liz Orr and Dr Kelly Jones. Liz worked with the regional implementation team and Kelly who finishes at the end of the year has been working on health promotion for diabetes and trachoma. Thank you to both for your contribution and best wishes for the future.

Thank You

Indigenous Eye Health would like to take this opportunity to thank the many community members, colleagues and stakeholders who have been part of and supported our work in 2015.

We would also like to acknowledge our generous donors and funders including: The Harold Mitchell Foundation, the Ian Potter Foundation, the BB & A Miller Foundation, CBM Australia, the Cybec Foundation, the Aspen Foundation, the Australian Government Department of Health and private donors.

We would also like to thank our Advisory Board for their leadership and guidance. In particular we would like to thank Jilpia Jones, Janet Hirst, the Hon Dr Barry Jones AC and Stephanie Copus-Campbell who are leaving the Board and who have all made a significant contribution to Indigenous Eye Health.

*We wish you all the best for the festive season
and look forward to working with you in 2016*

