

## Eye Doctor Mob at the Top End

*Presenter: Sanditha Wickramasinghe, Royal Darwin Hospital*

This abstract outlines the outreach ophthalmology services of the Top End of Northern Territory from 1st January 2018 to 30th November 2018, which covers visits to Katherine Regional Hospital (KRH), Gove District Hospital (GDH) and 26 other communities. Our work encompassed patient consultations, administering Intravitreal injections and performing surgeries (cataract and pterygium).

We have had approximately 1500 patient care episodes during this eleven month period. Nearly 400 of those were in the communities. About 90% of patients seen in communities were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders whereas in both Katherine and Gove it was around 55%. We have performed 93 cataract surgeries in KDH and GDH operating theatres. The number of intravitreal injections given was over 130 and was almost double the number compared with the previous year. The cohort of patients needing anti-VEGF injections for diabetic macular oedema was on the rise and those requiring repeat injections were occupying most of the clinic appointments. The number of new patients seen has been restricted due to these follow-up visits.

Non-attendance at clinics still remains a significant problem being around 25% of total bookings and we have observed that in certain clinics where the staff is enthusiastic this has been less of a problem.

The RDH outreach ophthalmology team has already spent 102 days out in different communities during this eleven month period, while four more trips are pending for the month of December. We have already planned to extend the services further by increasing both the number of clinic and theatre days in the coming year 2019; thereby continuing to improve patient care at the Top End.