



AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF
OPTOMETRY
CLINICAL SERVICES • RESEARCH • EDUCATION



NATIONAL VISION
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
OF AUSTRALIA

ANNUAL REPORTS 2020



WHO WE ARE

THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY (ACO)

is committed to improving the eye health and quality of life of communities through clinical optometry practice, research and education. We are involved in public health eye care service delivery, vision research and optometry education. The ACO serves a diverse community and wide range of stakeholders. Our focus is to meet the equally diverse expectations and needs of these communities and to show leadership through innovation and best practice in each area. The ACO is proud to be the only organisation in Australia specialising in each of the areas of public health optometry, vision research and optometry student and professional education, which together are enhancing improvements in eye health and the wellbeing of the community.

OUR HISTORY

From its humble beginnings:

As a teaching clinic on the 4th floor of Kurrajong House on Collins Street, Melbourne, the Australian College of Optometry (ACO) has continued to grow. Incorporated in 1940, the ACO was the first not for profit membership institution in Australia to teach a 4-year full time Optometry course, with its first students enrolled in 1941.

Clinical learning pathways:

Over the past 80 years the ACO has continued to build on its commitment to education, through provision of clinical training in a public health setting to pre-registration university optometry students across Australia, and through expansion and innovation of education delivery to meet the current and future needs of Members and the wider optometry profession.

Focus on the disadvantaged:

Our much valued and important work providing eye care services to disadvantaged communities began back in 1955 when we received our first grant for this purpose from the Victorian State Government. Fast forward 30 years to 1985, when the Victorian State Government made a key decision to establish an integrated, coordinated public health eye care program called the Victorian Eyecare Service (VES). We continue to work closely with the Victorian State Government to deliver the VES.

Victorian Eyecare Service:

The ACO has been responsible for administering this important initiative on behalf of the Victorian State Government for over 30 years, during this time more than 2 million Victorians experiencing disadvantage and most vulnerable have benefited from quality eye care consultations and services aimed at correcting refractive error and preventing eye disease. In 2020, the ACO in partnership with rural practices provided more than 54,000 consultations and dispensed close to 38,000 spectacles or other visual aids to almost 46,000 patients across the state.

Victoria and beyond:

Today our main clinic is in Carlton with a network of clinics in metropolitan Melbourne and a mobile eye care service. Outreach services began in 1998 for patients with disabilities that could not access mainstream services, and expanded in 2003 with services to indigenous Australians, homeless and other vulnerable Victorians. The ACO provides a coordinated network of clinics and outreach services across Victoria, including services for the aged and frail, indigenous Australian people, refugees and asylum seekers, children from disadvantaged schools, homeless and other high-risk groups. Going forward the ACO seeks to adapt and expand this important public health eye care model to benefit more Australian's experiencing disadvantage. We proudly opened our first permanent clinic outside of Victoria in 2019 in Elizabeth, South Australia. In 2020, we began discussions with the Victorian State Government to establish two new clinics in outer Melbourne.

High impact research:

Back in 1972 the ACO reached another milestone with the establishment of its research division, the National Vision Research Institute, to pursue research in vision and the disorders of vision. The NVRI was made possible through donations from the optometry community and later strengthened in 1979 and 2001 through a generous donation followed by an even more generous bequest from the Schultz Laubman Schultz Endowment Fund Trust. For just under 50 years, the NVRI has carried out basic, applied and clinical vision research, with current research priorities including neurotechnology, with a strong focus on the development of prosthetic vision devices (or bionic eyes), clinical optometry and public health, to improve the understanding of vision science, vision care and treatment.

CONTENTS

2	Vision and Mission	38	MEMBERSHIP
4	Council President and Chief Executive Officer's Report	39	Members – Year in Review
7	Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan	40	Cyril W Kett Optometry Museum and Archive
9	CLINICAL SERVICES	42	Nathan Library and Members Lounge
10	Director's Report	43	In Memoriam
11	Eye Care During COVID-19	45	ACO Members
12	ACO Patient Services	48	NVRI Members
12	Network of Clinics	49	CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE AND OUR SUPPORTERS
15	Outreach Services	50	Awards
16	Provision of Eye Health Equipment and Training Project	50	Research Awards
17	Paralympics Classification at the ACO	50	Staff Awards
18	Victorian Eyecare Service	52	Member Awards
19	VES Practices and Locations	54	NVRI Fellowship
20	Outreach and Aboriginal Services Sites	55	Funders, Supporters and Donors
21	Presentations and Publications	56	CORPORATE SERVICES
23	RESEARCH	57	Director's Report
24	Director's Report	60	Our People: Council, Committees and Staff
26	Neurotechnology	64	Organisation Chart
26	Evolutionary Perspectives	64	Affiliates, Partners and Collaborators
27	Communicating with the Brain	65	AUDITED CONCISE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
28	Visual Cortex	65	Concise Financial Statements
29	Clinical Research	65	Councillors' Report
30	Publications by NVRI Staff and Students	70	Responsible Persons' Declaration
32	EDUCATION	71	Discussion and Analysis of the Financial Statements
33	Director's Report	73	Independent Auditor's Report
34	ACO Seminar Series	80	Trust Funds' Financial Position
35	Certificate Course Highlights		
37	Clinical Teaching		



VISION

To achieve world leading eye health outcomes for all

MISSION

To improve the eye health and well being of communities through innovation, partnership and leadership in:



Clinical optometry services

providing high quality public health eye care for communities in need and leading best practice;



Research

undertaking high impact internationally recognised research to improve the understanding of vision science and eye care; and



Education

providing best practice clinical learning pathways for optometrists from pre-registration through to professional practice.

VALUES

We are led by the following values and principles:



We deeply **care** about eye health



Everything we do drives this **purpose**



Mutual **respect** guides our expectations



We foster excellence through **collaboration** with our patients, partners and teams



Our commitment to **innovation** pushes us to question and find better ways



We **deliver** what we promise to patients, partners and each other

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Clinical Optometry Services

providing high quality public eye care for communities in need and leading best practice and standards.

Research

undertaking high impact internationally recognised research to improve the understanding of vision science and eye care.

Education

providing best practice clinical learning pathways for optometrists from pre-registration through to professional practice.

Sustainable Organisation

Our culture is innovative and collaborative and our people strive for excellence in everything we do, facilitated by innovative and effective technology, systems and processes. Our members and supporters are key to our success.

Chief Executive Officer

Maureen O'Keefe

BSc (Hons) DipEd MBA WCLP CAICD

Director National Vision Research Institute

Professor Michael Ibbotson

BSc (Hons) PhD

Head of People and Culture

Chelsey Seamer

DipHRM DipBus

Director of Finance and Corporate Services

Renaldo Tomasiello

CPA

Director of Education, Membership and Marketing

Jane Trevaskis

GDipMgt BEd(Prim) CertHVTnrgAssmnt

Director of Clinical Services

Neville Turner

BScOptom PGDipAdvClinOptom PGCertOcTher FACO



ACO Executive Management Team (L-R): Neville Turner (Director of Clinical Services), Maureen O'Keefe (Chief Executive Officer), Prof Michael Ibbotson (Director National Vision Research Institute), Chelsey Seamer Head of People and Culture, Renaldo Tomasiello (Director of Finance and Corporate Services), Jane Trevaskis (Director of Education, Membership and Marketing)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

IT IS A PRIVILEGE to present this year's annual report which covers one of the most challenging 12 months in the ACO's history. The year ushered in a time of unexpected change and uncertainty as we came to grips with challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the dedication and skill of our staff and Council throughout COVID-19 we continued to provide care to those most in need in accordance with changing government restrictions.

There was an incredible sense of collaboration across all of the ACO teams as we realised that no one individual or team could manage this alone. The challenge of supporting our staff through a global crisis was new to all of us and we had to learn to adapt on the run, particularly in Victoria with a second wave and lock downs upon us by mid-year. Everyone faced a struggle at some point with mental health and wellbeing, anxiety and exhaustion, not just for themselves but also their families.

We are very proud that the ACO
was able to respond so quickly
at the start of the pandemic to
ensure the safety of staff, patients
and students.

We are very proud that the ACO was able to respond so quickly at the start of the pandemic to ensure the safety of staff, patients and students. With strong values-based leadership, the ACO team worked to overcome the many challenges it faced in 2020 and was well positioned as a result to ramp up services in 2021 as restrictions reduced. This was made possible by a strong partnership between the governance of the ACO and the management team, along with the commitment, strength and resilience of our incredible staff.

Building on our refreshed Council following the departure in 2020 of The Honourable Paul Lucas, Professor Konrad Pesudovs and Associate Professor Peter Keller, who we thank for their contributions, and the arrival of The Honourable John Chaney, we were able to move closer to our Vision of removing barriers to achieve world leading eye health outcomes for all, and our Mission to

improve eye health and well-being of communities through innovation, partnership and leadership in clinical optometry services, research into vision science and eye care and education. We have set expectations and standards that are values-driven for accountability and culture at governance and management levels that will guide us in everything we do, and we continue to be guided by the ACO's values for delivery of the following highlights in 2020:

- The ACO established outreach programs from its new clinic in Elizabeth, South Australia, with eyecare services provided in partnership with Watto Purrunga Aboriginal Health Service and Nunkawarrin Yunti of South Australia, improving the access to eyecare for Aboriginal people experiencing disadvantage.
- In the second half of 2020, ACO worked with the Victorian Government to secure funds for the establishment of two new clinics, improving access to public eyecare through the Victorian Eye Service, in areas of unmet need in outer eastern and outer western Melbourne growth corridors. Funding was secured and suitable facilities identified, the first of which will open in mid 2021.
- Education increased its reach to optometrists nationally and in rural communities through moving the traditional seminar series program to an online delivery, increasing participation by up to 300%. Our on-line certificate programs were well placed to support optometrists learning through 2020.
- The National Vision Research Institute, the ACO's research arm, had a successful year despite COVID-19. It kept one laboratory operational but spent much of its time analyzing existing data and applying for funds. Sixteen grant applications were submitted and six grants won, amounting to more than \$2.5M. 19 papers were published, several in very high impact journals, most noticeably Advanced Functional Materials, Biomaterials and Cerebral Cortex.
- In 2019 the NVRI established a new direction in clinical optometry research, using joint funding secured from the University of Melbourne and the NVRI Trust fund. Dr Cirous Deghani initiated the research but left in early 2020. Dr Marianne Coleman was recruited from the UK as the new head of clinical optometry research and arrived in Australia in the first half of the year to take up her position.

The ACO established outreach programs from its new clinic in Elizabeth, South Australia.

- Through our 2019-2021 Reconciliation Action Plan we are formalising our commitment to develop and strengthen our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and acknowledge the importance of these collaborations in our service delivery towards achieving equitable eye health outcomes.
- Our 2020 staff culture survey has provided valuable feedback and insights from our staff as to how the ACO can foster a high-performance workplace culture that is consistent with being an employer of choice.
- The ACO has achieved its goals of developing a national footprint to improve equality of access to public health eye care, improving health outcomes through clinical research, providing high quality clinical education and clinical placements for optometry and building financial sustainability and new funding streams, and a reputation for being a trusted partner and collaborator.
- The roll out of retinal cameras and slit lamps to remote and regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia and the provision of training in their use to health care workers continued but only intermittently throughout 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. The ACO, as part of a five-member consortium, was co-lead on a successful bid for \$7.48M for a major national contract awarded in January 2018 and due for completion at 31 December 2021. Over this period a total of 166 retinal cameras and over 100 slit lamps will have been installed, with the goal of improving eye health outcomes for Aboriginal people with diabetes.
- The ACO continues to provide more than 80,000 public health eye care services, in partnership with more than 80 private practices, 20 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, the Royal Flying Doctor Service and numerous community organisations, as well as providing mobile services for homeless people, the frail and aged in rural and remote areas.

From the President

As the current President of the ACO Council I would first like to acknowledge the contributions that have been made to the ACO by the current Council as well as Sarah Byrne, Mellissa Downing, Ben Hamlyn, Paul Lucas, Peter Keller, and Konrad Pesudovs - who I have worked with in my time on Council.

I would like to thank our CEO, Maureen O'Keefe for her assistance in my transition into the role of President. Her focus on the strategic goals of our organisation, business acumen, stakeholder management skills and adaptive management style has, in conjunction with the Council, led us through an exceptionally difficult period. The ACO has been challenged by the extraordinary transformational changes over the past year-and-a-bit as the world has entered into a "New Normal", and Maureen and her team have successfully managed these challenges. Maureen, her team, and the Council have prepared the ACO for a sustainable future in this "New Normal"

I also want to note that the year 2020 marked a milestone for the Australian College of Optometry (ACO), with 80 years of collaboration and service to the community and the Optometry profession through leadership in quality eye care, vision research, professional education and clinical placements. There are many people who have contributed to our 80 year history, there is no doubt the ACO becoming a pillar of the Optometry profession was facilitated by the engaging personality and the work of Professor Barry Cole AO. We honour the late Barry Cole AO for his leadership and vision in developing not only the ACO but also the wider optometry profession.



Rodney Hodge
President ACO Council

From the CEO

As CEO of the ACO for over eight years I can say with great pride that the ACO is a remarkable organisation.

When I was recruited to the role of CEO in 2013, my brief was to develop, with my senior leadership team, a new strategic plan with a mission to improve the eye

health and well being of communities through innovation, partnership and leadership in clinical optometry services, research and education. With input from Council and stakeholders, the goal was to strengthen and transform the ACO. I am now coming to the end of implementing my second 5-year strategic plan and feel that the time is right to handover to a new CEO who can take the ACO forward when I depart on 30 June 2021, following my resignation in December 2020.

I would like to thank the ACO President Rodney Hodge, the Chair of Finance & Risk Committee Denise Gronow, the ACO Council, sub-committees and the Company Secretary, Tracy Weimar, for their support over the past eight years; an extraordinary group of people I have had the privilege of reporting to, who serve selflessly and tirelessly to provide the strategic and fiduciary oversight that supports the ACO in its vision, mission, values and strategic direction.

I especially want to thank my Executive Management Team, Neville Turner, Jane Trevaskis, Renaldo Tomasiello, Chelsey Seamer and Professor Michael Ibbotson for their tremendous support, and the Senior Management Team and all 182 of the ACO and NVRI staff and students, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic for their commitment and hard work.

During my eight and a half years as the ACO CEO and Managing Director, I have been inspired by our work in science, practice and education and by the dedication of

our professional services teams. I am proud to be handing over the ACO well positioned to meet the opportunities and challenges ahead of it. The achievements and success of the current 2018-2022 Strategic Plan against its 4 strategic priority areas and 14 strategies has created a very strong platform and crucial springboard for moving the ACO forward to its next chapter.

With the ongoing support of the Commonwealth and State governments, our donors, ACO staff, Members of the ACO and NVRI, patients, and all the organisations we partner and collaborate with, the ACO is well positioned for ongoing success, and I wish you all the best for this next stage in the ACO's journey.

We hope you are as excited as we are about the future of the ACO and that you enjoy reading about the ACO's recent achievements in this 2020 Annual Report.



Maureen O'Keefe

Chief Executive Officer and
Managing Director
Australian College of Optometry
National Vision Research Institute



ACO Council meeting with Executive Management Team in attendance
Absent: Prof Linda Denehy

INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN 2019 – 2021

At the Australian College of Optometry, we are committed to the preservation of sight and the prevention of blindness for all people. We acknowledge the disparity in eye health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and we are committed to walking alongside First Nations People in achieving equitable eye health outcomes.

We are proud of the strong partnerships and relationships that we have with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, stakeholders and community members, and acknowledge the importance of these collaborations in delivering the work that we do.

The Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan formalises our commitment to reconciliation. Through this action plan we will continue to develop and strengthen our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we will engage staff and our stakeholders in our mission and implement innovative strategies that reflect the key values of the ACO; care, purpose, respect, collaboration, innovation and delivery.

Maureen O’Keefe, CEO

THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY launched its Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in May 2019. The Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan provides us with a roadmap for reconciliation through the setting of strategic goals that are realistic, achievable, appropriate and measurable.

The RAP further strengthens our strategic plan by reflecting the key values of the ACO – care, purpose, respect, collaboration, innovation and delivery. It promotes staff development and growth, through strengthening cultural competency and cultural safety in the organisation. It also guides the organisation and keeps the ACO accountable in the process. The RAP further enhances and strengthens the patient experience and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. It demonstrates a commitment to employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the ACO. Fundamentally the RAP demonstrates our respect to the First Nations Peoples of this country, and our commitment to closing the gap in eye health.

Our progress

The ACO are committed to a whole organisational approach to reconciliation; reconciliation is everybody’s business.

In 2020, the RAP Working Party have shown unwavering commitment, adaptability and innovation to respond to the challenges of implementation of our actions in the time of COVID -19. Partnerships have been key in the RAP implementation and what has been achieved since May 2019.

Fundamentally it demonstrates our respect to the First Nations Peoples of this country, and our commitment to closing the gap in eye health.

Progress to date is:

- Quarterly meetings with the RAP Working Party - consisting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health practitioners, stakeholders and community members
- Development of RAP actions plans for the areas of education and training, communications, human resources and procurement – to ensure a whole organisational approach to the RAP
- Provision of Aboriginal cultural safety training workshops for all our staff (140+), facilitated by the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- Development of online resources embedded into onboarding process to strengthen the cultural competency and safety of our organisation
 - » Cultural protocol document- inclusive of cultural safety training
 - » Ask the Question Modules
 - » Cultural resources repository



Kelvin Rogers *Journey Down the Murray* 2017 Acrylic on canvas

- Rollout of 'Asking the Question' modules for existing and new staff; rollout of 'Asking the Question' resources at our sites
- Development of an Aboriginal Employment Strategy
 - » Work Experience Pilot Program for Aboriginal students (Dec 2020) – to be implemented in 2021
 - » Continue to work with external stakeholders on pathways for employment, and undergraduate opportunities
- Strengthening relationships with the Wurundjeri Council; a Wurundjeri Elder is invited to provide a Welcome to Country at all ACO significant events
- Procurement of services for ACO events from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, in addition to the development of procurement guide for all staff
- Purchase of Aboriginal artwork from local artist to represent our RAP, which has been embedded in all future communications related to Aboriginal Services and the RAP
- Displaying Aboriginal artwork, posters and flags in the main clinic reception area
- Providing an Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of all meetings and events
- Strengthening of relationships with Aboriginal Services in South Australia, with the opening of ACO clinic in Elizabeth, SA
- Each year the ACO acknowledges significant dates and events.

National Reconciliation Week

2019 Launch of Innovate RAP. The event was held in National Reconciliation Week, with over 80 guests in attendance including Council members, staff, partners and community members. The event was opened by a Welcome to Country ceremony by Wurundjeri Elder Colin Hunter, followed by the Wurundjeri Djirri Djirri dancers who also welcomed guests through traditional dance and song.

2020 National Reconciliation Week. Developed a calendar of online events for all staff – inclusive of virtual cinema event 'In My Blood It Runs' promoted to all staff.

NAIDOC Week

2019 – Voice. Treaty. Truth. NAIDOC week was celebrated at the ACO, with staff encouraged to participate in external and internal events. A NAIDOC morning tea was held across all sites.

2020 – Always Was. Always Will Be. In partnership with Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne and Thorne Harbour Health – a calendar of virtual events was developed. The ACO directly supported The Torch Project, Murnong Mama's and NAIDOC events.

Launch of online RAP videos during NAIDOC Week. hosted on International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness platform.

- » RAP video – RAP advisors developed a resource speaking to the themes of culture, family, identity, community and connection.
- » Partnership's video – in collaboration with the RAP committee and local stakeholders, a video was developed to highlight the importance of relationships in achieving equitable eye health.

CLINICAL SERVICES

Quality, affordable eye care
for all communities



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

AS WE START 2021, it is an opportunity to reflect on 2020. It is not the year that was planned, but it was the year that was. When we started the year, no one could have foreseen the impact of COVID-19. However, out of adversity comes success, and 2020 allowed the strengths and resilience of our staff and systems to shine.

Clinical Services were hit hard due to the pandemic. There were significant restrictions on the provision of care, often with little or no notice, reducing activity to approximately 20% of normal levels. Clinic staff were stood down – working a week on/week off schedule at one location to create staffing bubbles, and adapting to the world of teleconferencing. At all times, through hours of triaging appointments, online meetings and ongoing workflow changes, the focus remained on providing urgent and essential care to patients while keeping staff and patients safe.

It is a credit to staff on their positive approach and success in providing care despite the challenges of continual mask wearing, use of PPE, increased hygiene requirements and social distancing, while managing the impact to their personal lives.

Our outreach services faced the most significant changes in service provision. Generally, this service provides care to aged care facilities, supported residential services and Aboriginal communities and these activities were paused for the bulk of 2020. Currently, our key focus remains on re-establishing services to these vulnerable groups.

While the number of services we provided in 2020 dropped to 38,000, we delivered our services to people

requiring urgent care during this challenging time, whose quality of life or future prognosis may have been worse if the service was not available.

The success of surviving 2020 has been achieved through the hard work of the entire clinic team which provided essential patient care. In addition the support across the ACO in supporting services and the collaborative approach across the eyecare sector. The challenge remains in 2021 to provide services to people whose care has been deferred, and to ensure the most vulnerable in our community receive the services they need.

Neville Turner

Director Clinical Services



Neville Turner
Director Clinical
Services

Clinic Management Team

Director of Clinical Services

Neville Turner

Heads

Piers Carozzi, VES and

Community Eye Care

Jennifer Caulfield, Clinic

Operations and Service

Improvement

Nellie Deen, Specialist Services

and Clinical Care

Lead Optometrists

Adrian Bruce, Contact Lenses

Mae Chong, Clinical Teaching

Lauren Gaskell-Kharsas,

Satellite Clinics and VES

Elisse Higginbotham,

Paediatrics

Iris Huang, Satellite Clinics and

VES (acting, from September)

Lisa Lombardi, Primary Care

Janelle Scully, Ocular Diseases

Optometrist Managers

Angeliki Arvanitis, East

Reservoir metropolitan clinic, Vic

Tristan Glover, Elizabeth Eye

Care metropolitan clinic, SA

Angela Hall, Clinical Research

Peregrine Horton,

Broadmeadows metropolitan

clinic, Vic

Iris Huang, Frankston

metropolitan clinic, Vic

Lauren Gaskell-Kharsas,

Dandenong metropolitan clinic, Vic

Nilmini John, Aboriginal

Services

Josephine Li, Community Eye

Care Services

Ho Wah Ng, Visual Functions

Karen Trinh, Frankston

metropolitan clinic, Vic

Michael Yen, Braybrook

metropolitan clinic, Vic

Danielle Zheng, Dandenong

metropolitan clinic (acting, from

September)

Managers

Colette Davis, Senior Project

Officer

Vicki McSweeney, Manager

Clinic Administration



Clinic Management Team (L-R): Nellie Deen, Piers
Carozzi, Jennifer Caulfield, Neville Turner



Staff Optometrist Scott Panozza in full PPE

EYE CARE DURING COVID-19

For much of 2020 it was mandatory for people across Victoria to wear a face mask when they were out of their home, unless they had a medical exemption. With ACO's diverse patient base, we wanted to ensure that we could continue to provide essential care to people with an exemption to wearing a mask. As such, we invited staff to opt in to seeing these patients and we provided additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other measures to ensure we could remain COVID safe in the provision of this care. A number of our staff were quick to put their hands up and a team was formed who would be called on to see unmasked patients. ACO Staff Optometrist Scott Panozza saw many of these patients at Carlton during the pandemic.

Q: What drove you to put your hand up for seeing these patients?

As a primary health care provider, I felt it was my role to not discriminate and provide care where it was needed. I considered the chance fairly low that an individual would be both exempt from mask wearing and also require emergency / essential eye care, so I wasn't overly concerned I would be dealing with these patients on a regular basis.

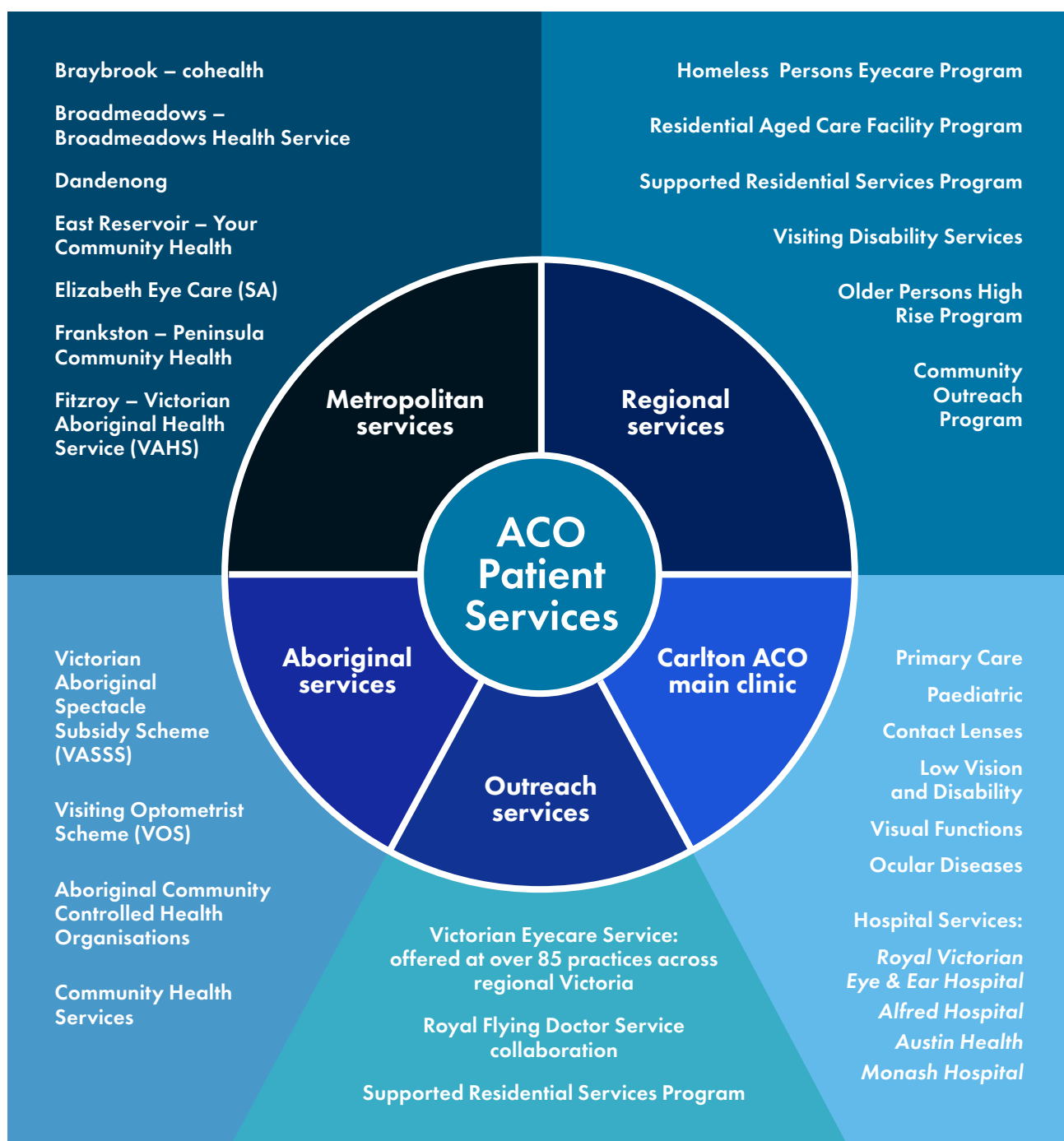
Q: What was your biggest concern?

My biggest concern related to the patients; if they were turned away from our clinic or did not present to public ophthalmology (e.g. RVEEH). Given the unpredictable nature of the level of the lockdown, sight threatening conditions could go untreated and cause long term harm which I felt outweighed the potential risk of accommodating these patients within the clinic.

Q: What was the action plan set in place for these patients?

Checking-in was handled by reception and our duty managers. Patients were then directed to a designated waiting area away from the main clinic and were seen in a dedicated consulting room. I was provided full PPE (gloves, gown, mask, goggles / shield) and kept in regular communication with duty managers. Only testing deemed essential for that particular visit was performed - if imaging was necessary I found most patients were able to wear a mask for the few moments it took to do this. There were only a few who required dispensing, and I handled this myself, most often by bringing selected frames back to the patient in the consulting room or some patients were able to wear a mask for the duration of frame selection in our frames area.

ACO PATIENT SERVICES



NETWORK OF CLINICS

Carlton Clinic

The ACO's largest clinic and hub is located in Carlton, with more than 25 consulting rooms and state-of-the-art equipment. In 2020, we provided more than 19,500 primary and advanced eye care services to Victorians at this location. The size of the facility and number of rooms

ensured the ability to continue to provide socially distant services during Melbourne's extended lockdown. The Carlton location also plays a key role in our provision of clinical placements for optometry students from around Australia.

Metropolitan Clinics

Our network of seven metropolitan clinics continue to play a key role in our provision of care to the community. In 2020, each clinic formed its own bubble, thriving in a collaborative small team approach, and continued to provide urgent and essential care to the local community.

Elizabeth Eye Care, South Australia which opened in 2019 has continued to increase its activity developing a solid foundation to expand services into the future. The clinic has established partnerships to provide optometry services at Watto Purrunga Aboriginal Primary Health Care Service and Nunkuwarrin Yunti, supporting access to quality eyecare in Aboriginal Health Services.

Most metropolitan clinics comprise of two to four consulting rooms which are fully equipped with the latest diagnostic and imaging equipment to ensure optimal care.

Victoria

Braybrook – cohealth Braybrook

Broadmeadows – Broadmeadows Health Service

Dandenong Eye Care

East Reservoir – Your Community Health

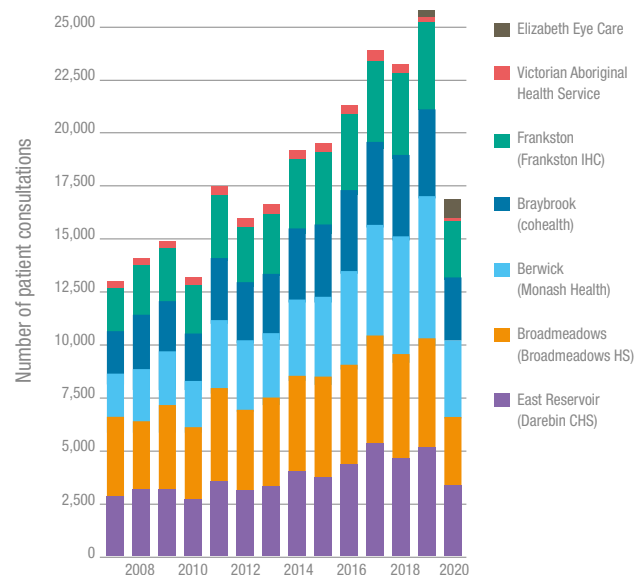
Frankston – Frankston Community Health

Fitzroy – Victorian Aboriginal Health Service

South Australia

Elizabeth Eye Care

Metropolitan Service Provision (2007 – 2020)



Paediatric Services

The ACO provides care to children in a range of settings, including schools, outreach and metro sites. The paediatric eye care service at Carlton offers comprehensive age-appropriate assessments for children aged 0-18. It also provides evidence-based myopia management and vision therapies for binocular vision and visual processing. Good vision and eye health are imperative in the education and development of children and the ACO collaborates with other optometrists, Maternal and Child Health Nurses, teachers, behavioural psychologists and the Royal Children's Hospital to support the eye care needs of children.

Contact Lens Services

At our Carlton location we offer a comprehensive contact lens service, ranging from daily soft lenses to more complex presentations requiring mini-scleral and prosthetic contact lenses. Optometrists work in partnership with the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital to provide contact lenses and care to patients with advanced corneal pathologies, post-surgical and therapeutic needs. A growing area is fitting contact lenses for myopia control and orthokeratology. We welcome and receive numerous referrals from optometry colleagues and ophthalmologists.



Elizabeth Eye Care's Tristan Glover gifted an artwork by one of his patients



Janelle Scully providing care in our children's clinic

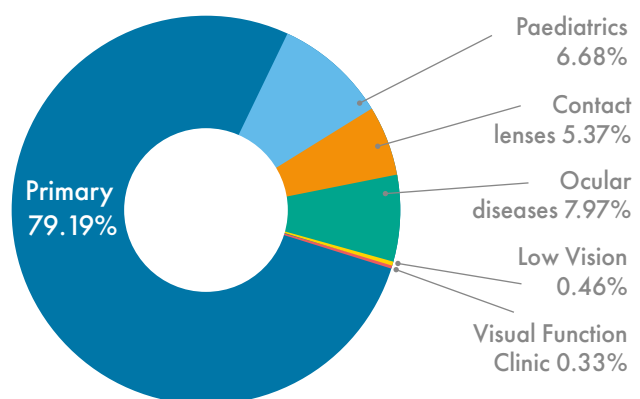
Low Vision and Disability Services

The ACO leads a holistic service for people with vision impairment with referral pathways to Guide Dogs Victoria and Vision Australia. Our low vision service at Carlton is supported by a comprehensive range of optical magnification devices, a full display of adaptive equipment and large variety of electronic magnifiers. Low vision rehabilitative care is provided alongside ocular healthcare. We also provide eye care services to people with other disabilities and work to maximise the patient's ability to perform their activities of daily living.

Ocular Diseases and Hospital Services

Our Carlton clinic offers services for retinal disease as well as glaucoma assessment and management. We work in partnership with the Alfred Hospital as a cataract surgery aftercare clinic, and with the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital as an ophthalmology-optometry Glaucoma Collaborative Clinic (GCC). ACO optometrists also provide onsite eye care services at the Austin Hospital diabetes clinics. In 2020, a new telehealth model was implemented for GCC to ensure patients could still access ophthalmology care while working within a COVID safe environment. Discussions were also held with many public ophthalmology departments regarding how ACO and its network of clinics could provide assistance in managing their patient load.

ACO services provided in 2020



Visual Functions Clinic

ACO's visual functions clinic provides advanced diagnostic colour vision and occupational testing for patients working in, or wishing to enter, a range of specialised professions (including, pilots, electricians, and defence force personnel). Our team works closely with various industries to provide specialist testing including Victoria Police, where we are the referral point for police applicants with abnormal colour or binocular vision. We also provide specialised testing for applicants for the railway industry and continue to provide pilot medical examinations for the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

Outreach Services

The ACO provides outreach services to members of the community who have difficulty accessing mainstream eye clinics, through a range of programs across metropolitan and regional Victoria. These programs are targeted at people experiencing significant disadvantage – through homelessness; people living in residential aged care, supported residential services or older persons high rise; people with a disability; refugee and asylum seekers. These programs are supported through funding from the Victorian state and Commonwealth governments. We continue to partner with Royal Flying Doctors (Vic) to provide eye care to an additional 6 remote locations, servicing 13 townships, across Victoria.

Services to Aboriginal Communities

The Aboriginal services team at the ACO continues to work towards closing the gap for vision in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The ACO has had a regular clinic at the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service in Fitzroy since 1998 and continues to work ensuring integrated care models. We also work in partnership with more than 20 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and a number of community health services in urban and regional Victoria, as well as in border regions in NSW and SA. The ACO's work in providing eye care to Aboriginal communities is supported by the Victorian Eyecare Service (funded by the Victorian state government), the Visiting Optometrists Scheme (administered by the Rural Workforce Agency Victoria on behalf of the Commonwealth government) and the Victorian Aboriginal Spectacles Subsidy Scheme (funded through the Victorian state government). In 2020, our work with Aboriginal communities was significantly reduced, with services to many sites only recommencing in late 2020 and early 2021.

Our South Australia team established partnerships with Watto Purrunga Aboriginal Primary Health Care Service and Nunkuwarrin Yunti, which plays a key part in our approach to working with Aboriginal communities to provide care together. It is expected both of these services will see an increase in activity in 2021.



Josephine Li, Manager of Community Eye Care Services

OUTREACH SERVICES

The Outreach and Aboriginal Services team saw significant changes in 2020. Most patients that we regularly provide care for through these services were the ones at extreme risk of COVID-19. Any environment where there are people experiencing disadvantage, living in close proximity to each other, represented a high risk of infection, if exposed to the virus. There were significant outbreaks seen in aged care facilities, disability homes, older persons high rises, and supported residential services – all regular communities who we provide care for. Aboriginal communities across the country were some of the first to shut down external health visits. This proved to be a very successful strategy to protect their communities.

In a normal year, the team visits over 230 sites (and many of these sites multiple times in a year). Our face to face care in outreach services essentially stopped in March 2020. Our focus quickly moved to communicating with these sites to provide support and pathways for urgent care. Telehealth was made available for people with eye problems and regular updates to the sites were provided as the situation changed.

We gradually resumed these services towards the end of the year, ensuring a COVID safe plan and appropriate PPE were in place. It was crucial to make sure that the sites were prepared to recommence services as well as our team feeling supported and being well equipped to conduct eye tests in a safe manner.

It was a challenging time as staff visited sites where there was minimal control of the environment in comparison to our fixed locations. Providing care for vulnerable people, who may not have had access to care throughout the lockdown, was a driving factor once the team resumed the services.

Our optometrists and support staff are to be commended for all their hardwork and commitment in providing eye care even during what may have been one of the most difficult years in the history of the ACO.

PROVISION OF EYE HEALTH EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING PROJECT

IT HAS BEEN A CHALLENGING year for the Provision of Eye Health Equipment and Training Project (PEHET), with the impact of the pandemic and reorientation of service delivery model. The ACO continues to work in partnership on the implementation of the PEHET, an Australian Government Department of Health funded initiative. A consortium of five organisations from across Australia continue to work together to deliver this project based on existing links and experience in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander eye care and discussion with local, regional stakeholders as well as service providers. The consortium members are: Brien Holden Foundation (contractor, co-lead), Australian College of Optometry (co-lead), Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia, Centre for Eye Health and Optometry Australia.

The project is responsible for the procurement and distribution of up to 165 retinal cameras and slit lamps to primary health care clinics, which provide care to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. The project incorporates training on the use of the camera to primary health care workers and general practitioners, with the aim to support increased primary-level access to retinal photography for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes. The project expansion to June 2021 involves the procurement and distribution of over 100 slit lamps to health services. The consortium is currently working in consultation with eye health stakeholders and health services to develop the plan for implementation

and evaluation of this initiative, which rolled out in January 2021.

PEHET Project ends 30 June 2021

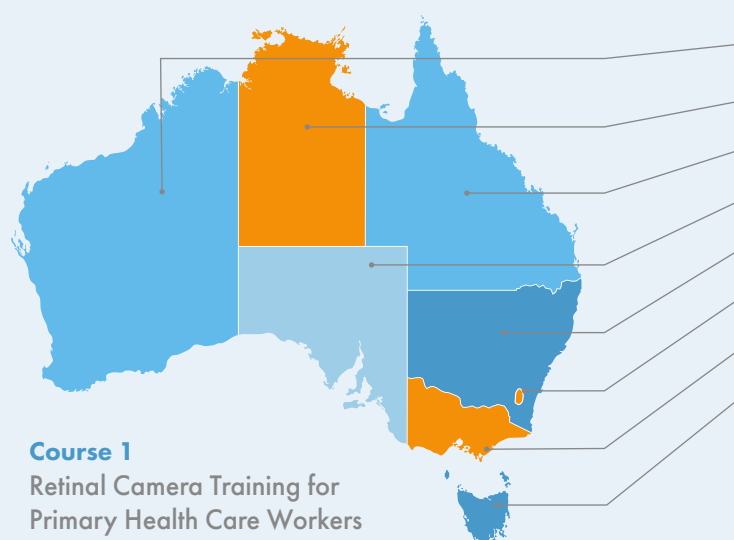
The PEHET project is currently scheduled to finish on 30 June 2021. We continue to support health services with:

- Training or mentoring to assist with embedding retinal photography in clinical processes
- Online retinal camera training modules
- Development of retinal camera promotional materials
- Any additional support in embedding the retinal camera into practice

The impact of COVID-19

We would like to commend all the stakeholders that we work with for their great efforts despite the trying circumstances during the pandemic. The project suspended all onsite training to protect communities, however the consortium continued to support health services with any training or embedding activity that could happen remotely. With the indefinite suspension of eye care services to many communities, the consortium promoted the retinal camera as a useful tool to triage those in need of urgent eye care. In June 2020, onsite training had resumed in some areas of WA, NT and QLD, where it was safe to do so, with the reintroduction of training in other states commencing later in the year.

Number of primary health care workers trained as of Dec 2020



WA	10 sites	38 trainees
NT	36 sites	265 trainees
QLD	37 sites	162 trainees
SA	9 sites	60 trainees
NSW	29 sites	174 trainees
ACT	1 site	6 trainees
VIC	21 sites	140 trainees
TAS	6 sites	26 trainees
Australia wide	149 sites	871 trainees




DO YOU HAVE DIABETES?

LET'S LOOK AT YOUR EYES...

 We can take a picture with our eye camera. Come in and see how!

 Everyone with diabetes should have an eye exam at least every year.

 Let's prevent blindness, together!




DO YOU HAVE DIABETES?

LET'S LOOK AT YOUR EYES...

 We can take a picture with our eye camera. Come in and see how!

 Everyone with diabetes should have an eye exam at least every year.

 Let's prevent blindness, together!

Retinal imaging promotional resources – courtesy of: (L) Mallee District Aboriginal Service - Swan Hill, Victoria and (R) Karadi Aboriginal Corporation – Goodwood, Tasmania

Progress to date

As of 31 December 2020:

- Canon CR-2 AF retinal cameras have been delivered and installed, with training on its use completed for 149 recipient locations;
- 871 primary health care workers have received retinal camera training via online modules plus face-to-face training. A range of primary health care staff were trained, including registered nurses (33%), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers/practitioners (26%), general practitioners (11%); diabetes educators (3%) and other (27%).
- 165 primary health care staff have completed the diabetic retinopathy assessment course; general practitioners (70%), registered nurses (13%), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers/practitioners (9%), diabetic educators (1%) and other (7%).
- Work up of a sustainability model beyond the life of the project for each state and territory.

PARALYMPICS CLASSIFICATION AT THE ACO

Classification is an integral part of Paralympic sport – to ensure as even a playing field as possible, and the inclusion of all disabled athletes.

All patients experiencing blindness are encouraged to participate in blind sports, and those who are legally blind are generally able to compete in Paralympic sports at an international level. Paralympic sports classes are determined by visual function (visual acuity and visual fields) which are assessed by a certified classifier (nationally) or panel of classifiers (internationally).

Athletes with vision impairment compete against others in the same impairment class, or in the case of team sports, in a team that is comprised of a set number of each impairment class. The fair, accurate and unbiased classification of athletes is important so those with extremely poor vision are thus not disadvantaged during competition.

The ACO has been proud to support Paralympics Australia in the classification of blind athletes. Our involvement has included hosting Swimming Australia's International Paralympic Committee (IPC) classification of athletes in 2019 and early 2020. These events were run in conjunction with World Para Swimming events which were held at the Melbourne Aquatic Centre. ACO optometrist Mae Chong is a certified national classifier for Paralympics Australia and was able to assist international classifiers at these events. The IPC classifier panels were able to utilise the resources of the ACO low vision clinic



Mae Chong, Lead Optometrist Clinical Teaching and Manager Low Vision Services with members of the International Paralympic Committee

and IPC recognised advanced ocular diagnostic equipment including OPDIII and Humphrey visual fields.

Mae provides national level classification for athletes with a vision impairment at our Carlton site. These athletes are generally newer to blind sports, and classification enables their involvement in school, regional, state and national competition. National classification is also a stepping stone to international classification, and informs team selection.

Classification continued in 2020 as required, ensuring participation in blind sports for all interested athletes in a very difficult year.

VICTORIAN EYECARE SERVICE

THE VICTORIAN EYECARE SERVICE (VES) is a key public optometry service in Victoria, ensuring access to eyecare and visual aids for Victorians experiencing disadvantage. This is funded by the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), now the Department of Health. The ACO is responsible for the administration and management of the VES, and through this scheme we are able to offer eye care services targeted towards Victorian people who are financially, socially or geographically most in need, with the aim of correcting refractive error and preventing eye disease.

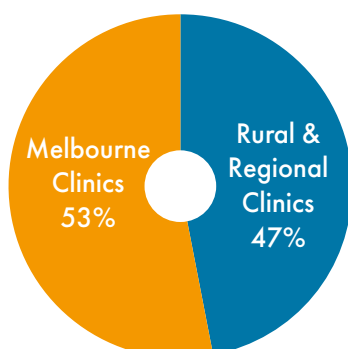
Since 1985 the VES has provided Victorians with a coordinated program of eye care and subsidised visual aids. People are eligible for VES benefits if they are permanent residents of Victoria and either: hold a Pensioner Concession Card; hold a current Health Care Card (and have done so for at least 6 months); are children in out-of-home care; or identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person.

The VES is delivered by ACO staff in the Melbourne metropolitan area and by more than 80 dedicated partner private practices in regional and rural areas across Victoria, supported by outreach services delivered by the ACO. Metropolitan services are provided through a network of clinics, consisting of our main clinic at Carlton, six smaller satellite clinics based in community health centres and mobile outreach clinics.

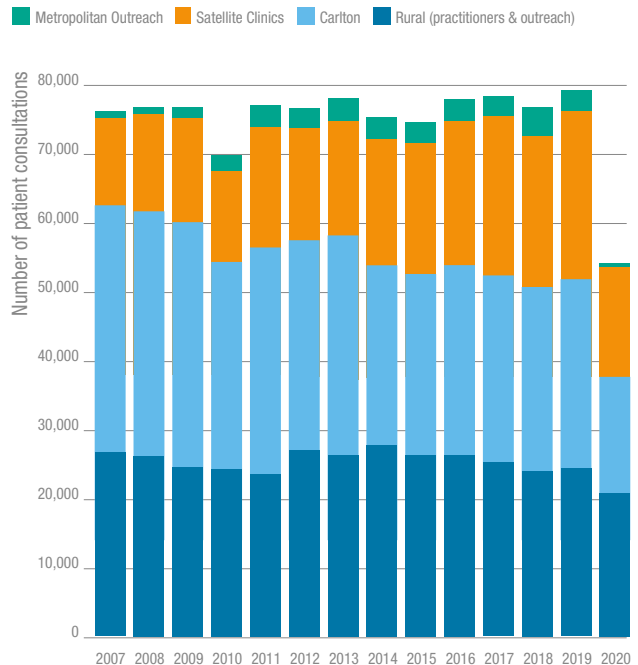
In 2020, more than 54,000 consultations and 37,761 visual aids were provided through the VES to 45,653 patients across the state.

COVID-19 had a significant impact on the delivery of VES services. The eligibility for VES was expanded to include all Health Care Card holders, waiving the normal 6-month requirement and assisting people who were disadvantaged during the pandemic. Services in rural Victoria were less impacted than those provided across metropolitan Melbourne as a result of the differences in restrictions.

VES Metropolitan and Rural Service Provision



VES Services



Senior Receptionists (L-R) Lyn Taylor, Danielle Raiti and Quyen Pham

VICTORIAN EYECARE SERVICE (VES) RURAL PRACTICES & VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL SPECTACLE SUBSIDY SCHEME (VASSS) PRACTICES*

The ACO acknowledges the ongoing care and commitment provided by our VES and VASSS partner practices.

* VES practices also offering VASSS

Ararat

Raymond Blizzard & Associates *

Bacchus Marsh

Darryl Wilson Optometrists by G&M Eyecare

Bairnsdale

Bairnsdale Optical Centre *
Eyecare Plus Bairnsdale *

Ballarat

GMHBA Eyecare – Ballarat *

Belmont

Robinson Family Optometrists *

Benalla

Focus on Laurimar

Bendigo

Cartwright & Associates *
Eyecare Plus Bendigo *

Bright

Eyes of Bright *

Bunyip

Bunyip Optical *

Camperdown

Penry Routson Optometrists *

Casterton

Glenn Howell Optometrist *

Castlemaine

Eyeworks Castlemaine

Cobram

Cobram Optical

Curlewis

Eyehub Optometrist *

Daylesford

Darryl Wilson Optometrists by G&M Eyecare

Dromana

Eyes on Dromana

Echuca

Horsfalls Optometrists *

Edenhope

Quinn & Co Eyecare *

Euroa

Graham Hill & Associates *

Foster

Foster Medical Clinic

Geelong

GMHBA Eyecare – Geelong *
Eye Gallery Geelong
New Vision Eyewear

Gisborne

J.C. Merrington Optometry
Simon Leong Optometrist

Hamilton

Glenn Howell Pty Ltd *

Healesville

Harris, Blake and Parsons

Hopetoun

Quinn & Co Eyecare *

Horsham

Quinn & Co Eyecare *

Kerang

Kerang Optical *

Kilmore

Ian Wood Optometrist by G & M Eyecare

Korumburra

South Gippsland Optical

Kyabram

Horsfalls Optometrists *

Lakes Entrance

East Gippsland Optical *

Lang Lang

Lang Lang Eyecare *

Lara

New Vision Eyewear Lara

Leongatha

Leongatha Optometrists Pty Ltd
McCartin Street Optometrists

Leopold

GMHBA Eye Care – Leopold *

Lorne

Deakin Optometry

Mallacoota

Dyson & Long Optometrists

Maryborough

D P Hare

Mildura

Mildura Optical
Eyecare Sunraysia – Plaza *
Eyecare Sunraysia *

Moe

Moe Optical *

Mooroopna

Graham Hill & Associates

Mornington

Main St Eyecare

Morwell

Latrobe Eyecare *

Murchison

Graham Hill & Associates

Myrtleford

Alpine Eyecare

Nathalia

Horsfalls
Optometrists- Echuca

Newcomb

Vogue Vision *

Nhill

Quinn & Co Eyecare *

North Geelong

Winks Eyecare *

Ocean Grove

Greg Sly Optometrist

Orbost

Eyecare Plus Bairnsdale *

Pakenham

Pakenham Optical

Portland

Portland Eyecare *

Robinvale

Vision Wise Optics

Rosebud

Eyes on Rosebud
Robert P Zent

Sale

B W Pettitt *

Seymour

Focus on Laurimar

Shepparton

Graham Hill & Associates *
Shepparton Optical Services

Somerville

Eyes on Dromana

Stawell

Raymond Blizzard & Associates *

Swan Hill

Swan Hill Optical *
Quinn & Co Eyecare Swan Hill

Torquay

GMHBA Eyecare- Geelong

Traralgon

Kay Street Eyecare

Wangaratta

Wangaratta Eyecare *

Warracknabeal

Quinn & Co Eyecare *

Warrnambool

Warrnambool Eyecare *
Penry Routson Optometrists *
Somer Toprak Optometrist

Waurin Ponds

GMHBA Eyecare – Waurin Ponds *

Wendouree

Darryl Wilson Optometrist by G&M Eyecare

Wodonga

Blue Star Eyecare *
Michael Smith Optometry
Peachey Optometry
Clinic **
Wodonga Eyecare

Wonthaggi

Akers Eyewear *

Yarram

B W Pettitt

Yarrawonga

Sandra Heaney
Optometrist *

OUTREACH AND ABORIGINAL SERVICES SITES

For most part of 2020, visits to most of our external sites were paused and our main focus was on communicating with them to provide support and teleconsultation for urgent cases. However, before the lockdowns, our teams were able to visit many of our partner sites to provide eye care.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program

Billabong BBQ, [Collingwood](#)
Melton Djerriwarrh, [Melton](#)
Worawa College, [Healesville](#)
Yappera Children's Service, [Thornbury](#)

Community Based Outreach

Campbellfield Primary, [Campbellfield](#)
Central Bayside Community Health, [Parkdale](#) | [Chelsea](#)
cohealth, [Niddrie](#)
Eastern Access Community Health (EACH), [Ringwood](#)
Inspiro Community Health, [Lilydale](#)
IPC, [Hoppers Crossing](#)
Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation, [Broadmeadows](#)
The Wellington, [Collingwood](#)

Homeless Persons Eyecare Program

cohealth First Response, [Footscray](#)
Cornerstone, [Dandenong](#)
Drill Hall, [Melbourne](#)
Flagstaff, [West Melbourne](#)
Frankston Community Support (City Life), [Frankston](#)
Hosier Lane, [Melbourne](#)
Launch Housing, [South Melbourne](#)
MOSS, [Northcote](#)
Ozanam Centre, [Flemington](#)
Sacred Heart Mission, [St Kilda](#)
Salvation Army, [The Basin](#)
Salvocare, [Rosebud](#)
St Kilda Drop In, [St Kilda](#)
St Mary's House of Welcome, [Fitzroy](#)

Older Person's High Rise Program

Floyd Lodge, [Williamstown](#)
Gordon St, [Footscray](#)

Residential Aged Care

Corpus Christi, [Greenvale](#)
Little Sisters of The Poor, [Northcote](#)
McGregor Gardens, [Pakenham](#)
Oak Towers, [Oakleigh](#)
San Carlo, [South Morang](#)

Royal Flying Doctor Service

Birchip
Donald
Gelantipy
Goroke
Jeparit
Kaniva
Ouyen
Rainbow
Sealake

Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV) / Visiting Optometry Scheme (VOS)

Aboriginal Community Elders Service (ACES), [Brunswick](#)
Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative, [Ballarat](#)
Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative, [Bendigo](#)
Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-operative, [Halls Gap](#)
Bunurong Health Services, [Dandenong](#)
DPV Health, [Epping](#)
Eastern Health, [Healesville](#)
Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Corporation (GEGAC), [Bairnsdale](#)
Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-Operative, [Horsham](#)
Gunditjara Aboriginal Co-operative, [Warrnambool](#)
IPC Health Care, [Wyndham Vale](#)
Lake Tyers Health and Children's Service, [Lakes Tyers](#)
Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association, [Lakes Entrance](#)
Moogji Aboriginal Council, [Orbost](#)
Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation, [Healesville](#)
Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation, [Sale](#)
Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, [Fitzroy](#)
Wathaurong Aboriginal Health Service, [Geelong](#)

Supported Residential Services

Aaron Lodge, [Dandenong](#)
Acacia Place, [Frankston](#)
Acland Grange, [St Kilda](#)
Arnica Lodge, [Alphington](#)
Belair Gardens, [Noble Park](#)
Berwick House, [Hallam](#)
Brown Lee Home, [Brown Hill](#)
Central Bayside Community Health, [Parkdale](#)
Chiron, [Kensington](#)
Cranhaven Lodge, [Cranbourne](#)
Crystal Manor, [Noble Park](#)
Eagle Manor, [Eagle Point](#)
Ferntree Manor, [Ferntree Gully](#)
Glenville Lodge, [Glenroy](#)
Glenwood Assisted Living, [Traralgon](#)
Greenhaven Lodge, [Footscray](#)
Hambleton House, [Albert Park](#)
Hampton House, [Hampton](#)
Harrier Manor, [Dandenong](#)
Heathmont Lodge, [Heathmont](#)
Kallara Care, [Golden Square](#)
Kooralbyn Retirement Lodge, [Bairnsdale](#)
Manalin House, [Clayton South](#)
Maroondah House, [Croydon North](#)
Merriwa Grove, [Cobram](#)
Reservoir Lodge, [Reservoir](#)
Sandy Lodge, [Aspendale](#)
Surfcoast Accommodation, [Grovedale](#)
Sydenham Grace, [Sydenham](#)
Themar Heights, [Warrnambool](#)

Visiting Disability Services

Reita Ave, [Wantirna South](#)

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Presentations by Clinic Staff: Academic and Teaching

Presenter(s)	Title	Details (organisation; event; type; date)
Chong M FA	Low Vision and Technology	University of Melbourne, online lecture (pre-recorded), 3rd Year OD students, 14 September
Chong M FA , Cochrane A L	Low Vision	University of Melbourne, webinar, 3rd Year OD students, 25 September

Presentations by ACO Staff: Professional Groups and Community Groups

Presenter(s)	Title	Details (organisation; event; type; date)
Deen N	Challenging Clinical Cases in Children	Optometry Australia, webinar, 25 February
Tran D	Getting an Eye Test and Services Available	Vision Initiative, Bicultural worker training for the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, webinar, 23 June
O'Keefe M	Diabetic Retinopathy Screening in Primary Care – Creating Pathways for Sustainable Eye Care (PEHET Project)	Eye Health in a Changing World International Virtual Conference, India Vision Institute, webinar, 4 October
Li CH J	Virtual Diabetes Recharge Group	cohealth, 28 October
Li CH J	The Importance of Eye Care	City of Melbourne Library, 4 November
Fakih Z , Morris M	Eye Health and Vision Care in Australia	Vision Initiative & City of Whittlesea, Arabic Speaking Support group, webinar, 26 November
Tieri N (presenter), John N (contributor)	VAHS/RVEEH/ACO (video) – VAHS Eyecare Clinic	Victorian Aboriginal Eye Health Regional Stakeholder Group, VAEHRS Forum, webinar, 26 November
Davis C (facilitator)	Breakout Group Discussion: Diabetic Retinopathy Screening in Primary Care – Pathways for Sustainable Eye Care	Victorian Aboriginal Eye Health Regional Stakeholder Group, VAEHRS Forum, webinar, 26 November
Turner N (facilitator), Prasad N (co-facilitator)	Breakout Group Discussion: Eye Health Data	Victorian Aboriginal Eye Health Regional Stakeholder Group, VAEHRS Forum, webinar, 26 November

Presentations by Clinic Staff: In House

Presenter(s)	Title	Details (organisation; event; type; date)
Lombardi L	Clinical Recall and Reminder Systems at the ACO	ACO, Staff Education Evening, webinar, 1 October
Sipos-Ori C	Diabetic Retinopathy Classification and Review	ACO, Staff Education Evening, webinar, 1 October
Panozza S	Dry Eye and Blepharitis	ACO, Staff Education Evening, webinar, 1 October
Wang A	Age-related Macular Degeneration	ACO, Staff Education Evening, webinar, 1 October
Burns L, Scully J	Glaucoma Clinic Tips for General Clinic Optometrists	ACO, Staff Education Evening, webinar, 1 October
Chong M FA	Low Vision and Technology: The Options are Out There	ACO, Online Seminar Series, webinar, 27 October
Serebrianik R , Thomas K, Joshi A, Huang-Lung J	Illuminate Series: Catching up with ACO Alumni	ACO, Online Seminar Series, webinar, 27 October

Publications by Clinic Staff

Author(s)	Title	Details (publication; date)
Dr Li CH J	Visiting Disability Services – Optometry and the Cognitively-Impaired	Pharma; June 2020
Carozzi P	Eye Care for the Homeless Population	Pharma; June 2020

Interviews featuring Clinic Staff

Author(s)	Title & Author	Details (publication; date)
Dr Li CH J, Chong M FA	Making the Difference for Patients with Disability by Melanie Kell	MiVision – The Ophthalmic Journal; 31 July 2020

RESEARCH

Leading innovation in research
through collaboration



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

THE YEAR 2020 WAS exceptional and unusual in many ways. My year started with me landing in Chennai, India, to attend a conference, just in time to welcome the New Year. When I arrived at the hotel at 12:10am I was greeted as their first guest for 2020 and showered with gifts. When I think back it is amazing the innocence with which they wished me a great year ahead. I was similarly blasé about the fact this would be my first of many hotel stays planned for the year... Little did we know that COVID-19 was already lurking in the shadows and those grand plans for 2020 would not eventuate.

Despite the impact of COVID-19 the NVRI has had a very productive year. One of the interesting things about science is that we madly rush along in the laboratory to make the next great discovery but we never have enough time to write up all of our prior findings. 2020 proved to be the 'experimental break' we hadn't realised we needed. NVRI staff and students maximised the opportunity to analyse and write up their findings in their newly discovered and productive home offices. The team produced 19 publications in 2020 with more already under review, to be published in 2021. You can read some of the scientific reports further in this section and can view the full list at the end of this report.

—
The team produced 19
publications in 2020
with more already under
review, to be published
in 2021.
—

While most staff were restricted to home offices, we were able to run one laboratory throughout the pandemic as we could maintain the necessary social distancing and still conduct in vitro experiments. As Australian Universities underwent total lockdowns, the advantage for the NVRI was that the Australian College of Optometry was deemed as an essential service, which allowed permitted workers to continue time critical experiments. This allowed several projects to meet their key performance indicators and a PhD student, James Begeng, to continue to meet his tight deadlines for completion. This PhD is in collaboration with

Swinburne University and it was a relief for James that he could keep doing experiments even though his home institution was locked down.

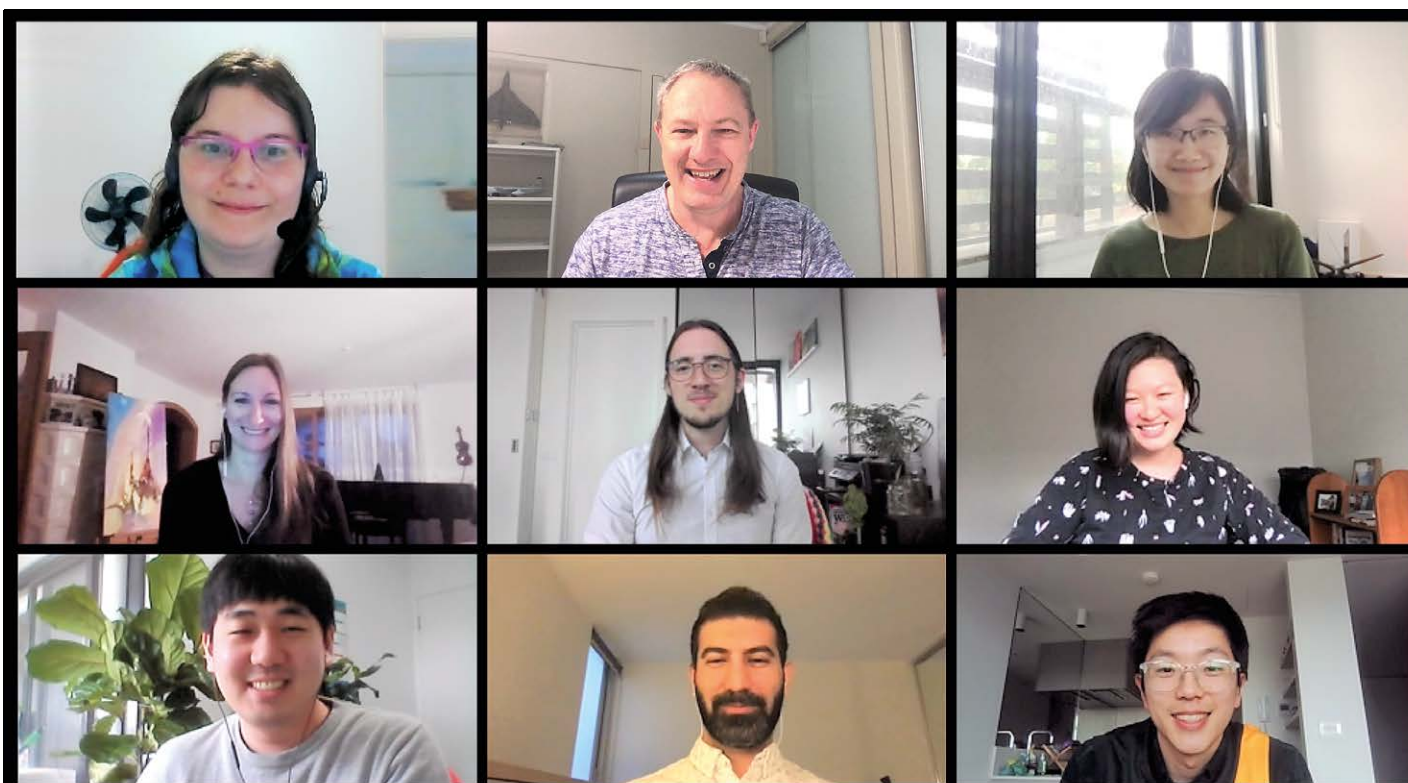
One of my major goals since becoming Director has been to establish a robust clinical research program. In 2019 we had Dr Cirous Dheghani commence the process by analysing the ACO clinical database. Cirous moved onto a job at the University of Canberra in early 2020 but we were able to rapidly recruit an extremely capable replacement in the form of Dr Marianne Coleman. Marianne was employed while we were discovering the implications of COVID-19 and, as she was based in the UK, this posed some major logistical issues as Australia started to lockdown its borders. As it turned out, we decided that Marianne could commence work while still in the UK and make her way to Australia when appropriate. She officially started on 1st April and spent her time further analysing the ACO database and writing the associated paper. She communicated with Dr Cirous Dheghani, Prof Allison McKendrick and I by Zoom, and had a completed manuscript before her arrival in Australia in July! Since arriving in Melbourne, Marianne has continued to reveal her exceptional work ethic by writing and winning grants, establishing collaborations and continuing to conduct research.

Another new arrival during lockdown was Jordan Siberras, who joined the team from The University of Queensland to commence a PhD on visual cortical processing. Jordan also found himself conducting the first few months of his PhD by Zoom but by November he commenced his experimental program onsite at the NVRI.

We have had great success with funding in 2020, winning a major Australian Research Council (ARC) grant in collaboration with Professor Steven Prawer to develop a new tool for investigating intracellular communications in the nervous system. We also won a major National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grant in collaboration with Dr Rachael Richardson from The Bionics Institute, which formalises a vital partnership with another Melbourne based biotechnology institute. This project is ground breaking in that it investigates hybrid electrical and optical stimulation of the nervous system. Both of these exciting projects will commence in 2021 and will employ new research staff at the NVRI.



Professor Michael
Ibbotson
Director NVRI



2020 Meetings (L-R): Dr Marianne Coleman, Professor Michael Ibbotson, Dr Wei Tong, Dr Melanie Stamp, Jordan Sibberas, Dr Molis Yunzab, Dr Young Jun (Jason) Jung, Dr Ali Almasi, Dr Shi Hai (Scott) Sun

Cementing our long and productive relationship with Lions International, I was able to secure a new three-year funding commitment from The Lions Clubs of Victoria to create a new fellowship position called the Lions NVRI Fellow to commence in 2021. We thank the members of Lions for their steadfast support of our activities.

The NVRI is now in partnership with a company called Carbon Cybernetics which has provided funds for an exciting new research project to develop implantable brain technologies. This project is in collaboration with the University of Melbourne and RMIT through our close links with Professor Steven Prawer and Dr David Garrett. The work is innovative for two reasons. First, the research project aims to provide carbon based instead of metal-based devices for human brain implantation. Second, this project provides a great opportunity for the NVRI to expand our reach into the industry. It is important to note that this industry partner could have chosen a number of organisations to work with but through the reputation we have built in recent years, the NVRI was the natural best fit.

Despite the travel restrictions imposed by COVID-19, the NVRI has presented 13 oral and poster presentations

at both national and international conferences. It was fascinating to watch conferences evolve and embrace the digital world. Research dissemination is vital to the scientific system and even a pandemic was unable to stop this occurring in 2020.

I would like to thank all those that support the NVRI. First and foremost, I must thank the NVRI staff, students and close collaborators for making the year successful in the face of such adversity. Thanks also to the NVRI Board, ACO Council and many Members and friends of the NVRI that kindly donate money and time to the Institute.

Professor Michael Ibbotson

Director National Vision Research Institute

NEUROTECHNOLOGY

THE NVRI WORKS simultaneously on several different fields. This gives us strength in diversity because we have a wide skill base and the ability to attract funds from multiple sources. A major theme has always been fundamental processing in visual brain. Another major theme, under the leadership of Professor Ibbotson, has been the development of technologies that allow communication with the nervous system, whether it be the retina or the brain itself. The final theme of interest at the NVRI has an evolutionary focus and therefore links back to the interests of some of the NVRI founding leaders such as Professors Pettigrew and Hughes.

EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVES

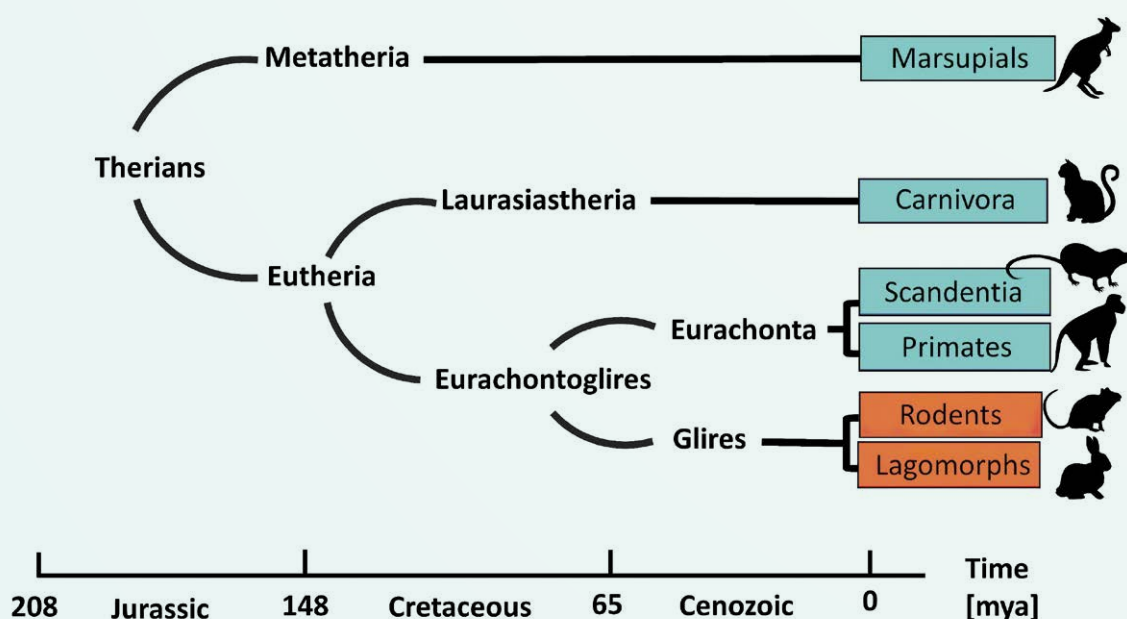
Mammals consist of a large collection of species. Two primary phylogenetic branches occurred within the mammals, with the split occurring 130-180million years ago. One line led to eutherians, amongst which we count ourselves. The eutherians are often incorrectly referred to as placental mammals, however, in fact all female mammals have a placenta. The other mammalian line was of course the marsupials. Early taxonomists when first describing marsupials thought they represented a primitive mammalian line. We were interested to know if the marsupial brain is primitive, or has equivalent features to eutherian brains. Jason Jung completed his PhD on this topic in 2020, and found that the wallaby visual cortex is in fact extremely similar in design to that of well-known eutherian mammals

such as cats and primates. Interestingly, eutherian rodents and rabbits have a far more primitive visual cortex than wallabies, cats and primates. It appears that it is rodents and rabbits that are unusual amongst mammals in having this primitive design, and that marsupials do not deserve the negative press they received in early scientific accounts.

Jason's PhD thesis provides a wonderful summary of these findings and the results papers are in production. A review of this field with our ground breaking theory of cortical evolution was published in 2020.

Reference:

1. Ibbotson M, & Jung YJ. (2020). Origins of functional organisation in the visual cortex. *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience*. 14;10.

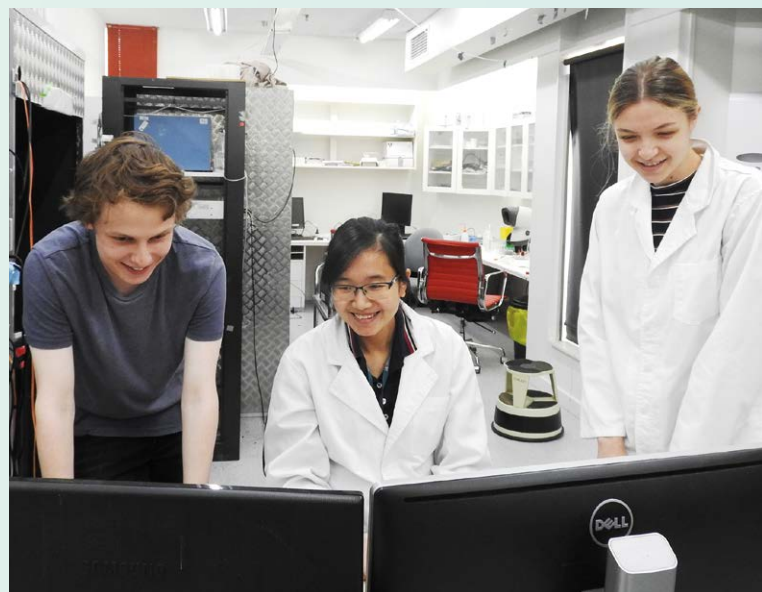


Mammalian phylogenetic tree. Blue shows mammals with sophisticated cortical structure and red shows those with a more primitive design.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE BRAIN

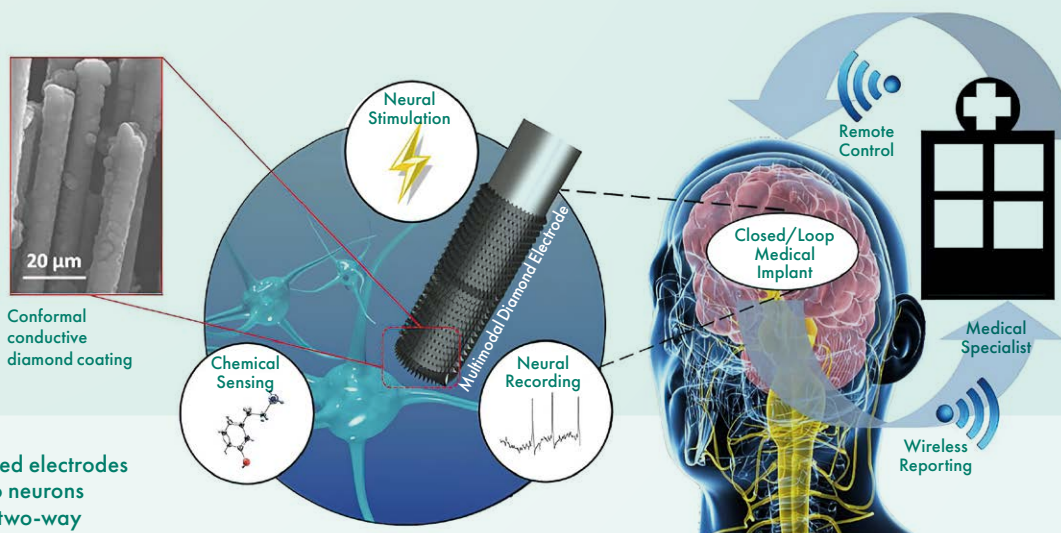
We have for many years been involved in developing devices that allow us to stimulate the retina using electricity. Led by Dr Wei Tong, this work continues but has also combined with our cortical work, so that we are now also involved in developing devices that can stimulate and record from the visual cortex and other brain areas. The idea behind all of these devices is to develop the genuine ability for two-way communication with the brain, which is the next great frontier in human development. A limitation of most existing devices is that they use metal electrodes and metal does not interact well with nervous systems. In collaboration with an industry partner and materials scientists, we are developing carbon-based electrodes that are soft, flexible and able to survive when implanted in the nervous system for very long periods. Hand-in-hand with this type of materials research is the need for new methods of communicating with the brain. We are involved in developing hybrid electro-optical recording and stimulation devices. The combination of optical and electrical technologies offers the opportunity to greatly reduce the negative features of electrical stimulation. For example, optical stimulation can be used to reduce the amount of electricity required to activate nerve cells.

Regarding the electro-optical stimulation, we published a review paper in 2020 to bring the field up-to-date. This



(L-R): James Begeng, Dr Wei Tong, Ekaterina Petrova

was published in collaboration with The Bionics Institute. With respect to developments in materials, we published several very high impact publications, most notably in the journals *Advanced Functional Materials* and *Biomaterials*, which are amongst the top three leading journals in this field.



Graphic showing carbon-based electrodes (left) which are placed next to neurons in the brain (middle) to allow two-way communication with the brain (right).

References:

1. Hejazi MA, Tong W, Stacey A, Soto-Breceda A, Ibbotson MR, Yunzab M, Maturana MI, Almasi A, Jung YJ, Sun S, Meffin H, Fang J, Stamp MEM, Ganesan K, Fox K, Rifai A, Nadarajah A, Falahatdoost S, Prawer S, Apollo NV, Garrett DJ (2020). Hybrid diamond carbon fiber microelectrodes enable multimodal electrical/chemical neural interfacing. *Biomaterials* 230:119648
2. Hejazi, M.A., Tong, W., Stacey, A., Sun, S.H., Yunzab, M., Almasi, A., Jung, Y.J., Meffin, H., Fox, M., Edalati, K., Nadarajah, A., Prawer, S., Ibbotson, M.R. and Garrett, D.J., 2020. High fidelity, bidirectional neural interfacing with carbon fiber microelectrodes coated with boron-doped carbon nanowalls: an acute study. *Advanced Functional Materials* 2020 2006101
3. Richardson RT, Ibbotson MR, Thompson AC, Wise AK, Fallon JB (2020). Optical stimulation of neural tissue. *Healthcare Tech Letters* (accepted, 1 May, 2020).
4. Tong, W, Hejazi M, Garrett DJ, Esler T, Prawer S, Meffin H, Ibbotson MR (2020). Minimizing axon bundle activation of retinal ganglion cells with oriented rectangular electrodes. *J Neural Eng.* Jun 29; 17(3):036016
5. Tong W, Stamp M, Apollo NV, Ganesan K, Meffin H, Prawer S, Garrett DJ, Ibbotson MR (2020). Improved visual acuity using a retinal implant and an optimized stimulation strategy. *Journal of Neural Engineering*, 17(1), p.016018.

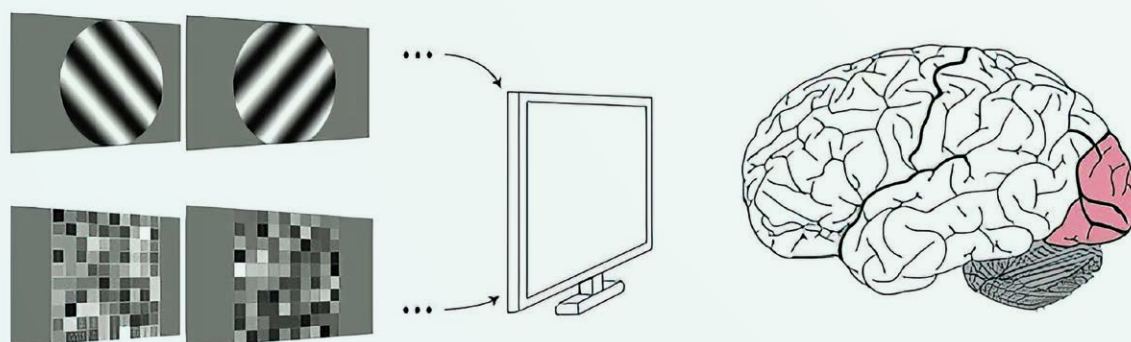
VISUAL CORTEX

While the retina does some basic visual processing, it is the visual brain that transforms the detection of light into the detection of meaningful features in the visual image. Understanding how this transformation occurs is one of the greatest challenges in the field of vision science. We understand the front end of the system very well (the retina and primary visual cortex), and the final stages of the system, which reside in the very high-level cortex. In these higher cortical areas, we have found brain regions that specialise in complex feature detection such as face identification. However, the processing steps in between remain largely hidden. The reason it has taken so long to understand these intermediate stages in visual processing is that the process is highly nonlinear. It is fiendishly difficult to decipher nonlinear coding. The team at the NVRI, especially Dr's Hamish Meffin and Ali Almasi, in collaboration with the world leader in the

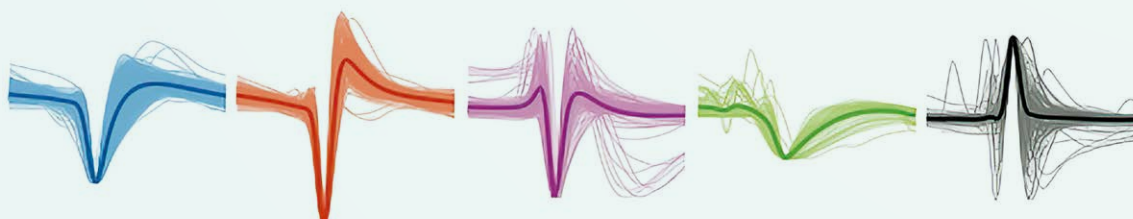
field from the Salk Institute, Professor Tanya Sharpee, have made great strides. We are all working closely together to develop mathematical techniques that make it possible to study the intermediate stages in visual processing for the first time. This work requires intensive experimental research in combination with mathematical modelling.

References:

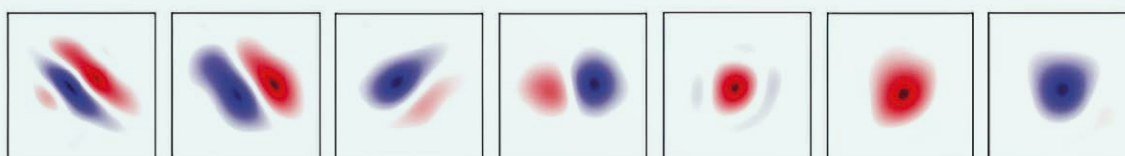
1. Almasi A, Meffin H, Cloherty SL, Wong Y, Yunzab M, Ibbotson MR (2020). Mechanisms of Feature Selectivity and Invariance in Primary Visual Cortex. Cerebral Cortex 9th February, BioRxiv
2. Eskikand PZ, Kameneva T, Burkitt AN, Grayden DB, Ibbotson MR (2020). Adaptive surround modulation of MT neurons: A computational model. Frontiers in Neural Circuits 26 October 2020.
3. Sun SH, Almasi A, Yunzab M, Zehra S, Hicks DG, Kameneva T, Ibbotson MR, Meffin H (2021). Analysis of extracellular spike waveforms and associated receptive fields of neurons in cat primary cortex. Journal of Physiology. (Accepted 12 Jan 2021)



Drifting sinusoidal gratings and white Gaussian noise stimulation of primary visual cortex (as highlighted in pink: top row).



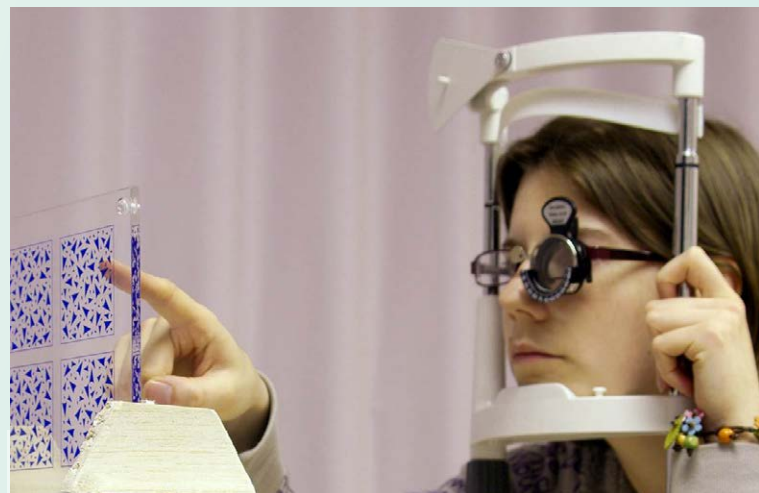
This generates distinct extracellular spike waveform classes (middle row).



Which correlate to spatial receptive field properties (bottom row).

CLINICAL RESEARCH

Considerable work was undertaken in collaboration with the University of Melbourne to explore the development of data infrastructure to support clinical research and audit using ACO clinical records. A new opt-out system has been developed to provide greater autonomy to ACO service users, regarding the use of their de-identified clinical data for use in clinical research. As time goes on, the size of the data cohort will increase as new patients and returning patients are provided the opt-out option as part of their attendance. Taking advantage of the new opportunities to use the vast amount of ACO patient data, a paper presenting the clinical and sociodemographic profile of large sample of ACO users is currently under review. The findings have been disseminated to ACO clinicians to foster links between the research and clinical teams. Despite less than a year in the job, Dr Marianne Coleman (Piano) published three papers in 2020 under the NVRI banner relating to vision and dementia.



Subject performing a binocular test.

References:

1. Piano M, Nilforooshan R, Evans S (2020). Binocular Vision, Visual Function, and Pupil Dynamics in People Living With Dementia and Their Relation to the Rate of Cognitive Decline and Structural Changes Within the Brain: Protocol for an Observational Study JMIR Res Protoc 9(8):e16089
2. Piano M (2020). How dementia affects sight and visual processing. J Dementia Care 28(5):36-39
3. Piano M (2020). How to maximise vision for the best quality of life J Dementia Care 28(6):24-26



NVRI Team (L-R): Dr Young Jun (Jason) Jung, Dr Marianne Coleman, James Begeng, Professor Michael Ibbotson, Jordan Sibberas, Dr Ali Almasi, Anna Brzostowska
Absent: Dr Hamish Meffin, Dr Wei Tong, Dr Molis Yunzab, Dr Melanie Stamp, Tenille Ryan, Elaina Kotzialampas, Dr Shi Hai (Scott) Sun, Hermine Lup, Georgia Rees, Samira Falahatdoost, Maryam Hejazi, Simon Higham

PUBLICATIONS BY NVRI STAFF AND STUDENTS

Neurotechnology Publications

Hejazi MA, Tong W, Stacey A, Soto-Breceda A, Ibbotson MR, Yunzab M, Maturana MI, Almasi A, Jung YJ, Sun S, Meffin H, Fang J, Stamp MEM, Ganesan K, Fox K, Rifai A, Nadarajah A, Falahatdoost S, Prawer S, Apollo NV, Garrett DJ (2020). Hybrid diamond carbon fiber microelectrodes enable multimodal electrical/chemical neural interfacing. *Biomaterials* 230:119648 doi:10.1016/j.biomaterials.2019.119648 (ePub Nov 2019)

Stamp M, Tong W, Ganesan K, Prawer S, Ibbotson MR, Garrett D (2020). 3D diamond electrode array for high acuity stimulation in neural tissue. *ACS Applied Bio Materials* doi: 10.1021/acsabm.9b01165

Ibbotson M, & Jung YJ. (2020). Origins of functional organisation in the visual cortex. *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience*. doi: 10.3389/fnsys.2020.00010

Almasi A, Meffin H, Cloherty SL, Wong Y, Yunzab M, Ibbotson MR (2020). Mechanisms of Feature Selectivity and Invariance in Primary Visual Cortex. *Cerebral Cortex* 9th February, BioRxiv: doi: 10.1101/2020.02.08.940270

Tong W, Meffin H, Garrett DJ, Ibbotson MR (2020). Stimulation strategies for improving the resolution of retinal prostheses. *Front Neurosci*. Mar 26;14:262 doi: 10.3389/fnins.2020.00262 eCollection 2020

Richardson RT, Ibbotson MR, Thompson AC, Wise AK, Fallon JB (2020). Optical stimulation of neural tissue. *Healthcare Tech Letters* (accepted, 1 May, 2020).

Ibbotson MR, Meffin H (2020). Visual Information Processing. The Senses. 2nd Editor: Paul Martin. doi: 10.1016/B978-0-12-809324-5.24225-9

Tong, W, Hejazi M, Garrett DJ, Esler T, Prawer S, Meffin H, Ibbotson MR (2020). Minimizing axon bundle activation of retinal ganglion cells with oriented rectangular electrodes. *J Neural Eng*. Jun 29;17(3):036016 doi: 10.1088/1741-2552/ab909e

Tong W, Stamp M, Apollo NV, Ganesan K, Meffin H, Prawer S, Garrett DJ, Ibbotson MR (2020). Improved visual acuity using a retinal implant and an optimized stimulation strategy. *Journal of Neural Engineering*, 17(1), p.016018. doi: 10.1088/1741-2552/ab5299

Aldaoud A, Lui S, Keng KS, Moshfegh S, Soto-Breceda A, Tong W, Redoute JM, Garrett DJ, Wong YT, Prawer S (2020). Wide dipole antennas for wireless powering of miniaturised bioelectronic devices. *Sensing and Bio-Sensing Research*. 27, p.100311

Hejazi, M.A., Tong, W., Stacey, A., Sun, S.H., Yunzab, M., Almasi, A., Jung, Y.J., Meffin, H., Fox, M., Edalati, K., Nadarajah, A., Prawer, S., Ibbotson, M.R. and Garrett, D.J., 2020. High fidelity, bidirectional neural interfacing with carbon fiber microelectrodes coated with boron-doped carbon nanowalls: an acute study. *Advanced Functional Materials* 2020 2006101 doi: 10.1002/adfm.202006101

Sikder, K.U., Tong, W., Pingle, H., Kingshott, P., Needham, K., Shivdasani, M.N., Fallon, J.B., Seligman, P., Ibbotson, M.R., Prawer, S. and Garrett, D.J., 2020. Laminin coated diamond electrodes for neural stimulation. *Materials Science and Engineering: C*, p.111454. doi: 10.1016/j.msec.2020.111454

Eskikand PZ, Kameneva T, Burkitt AN, Grayden DB, Ibbotson MR (2020). Adaptive surround modulation of MT neurons: A computational model. *Frontiers in Neural Circuits* 26 October 2020. doi: 10.3389/fncir.2020.529345

Lemaire W, Benhouria M, Koua K, Tong W, Martin-Hardy G, Stamp M, Ganesan K, Gauthier L, Besrour M, Ahnood A, Garrett DJ, Roy S, Ibbotson MR, Prawer S, Fontaine R (2020). Retinal ganglion cell stimulation with an optically powered retinal prosthesis. arXiv preprint doi: arXiv:2010.12600

Monfared O, Tayayori B, Freestone D, Nesic D, Grayden DB, Meffin H (2020). Determination of the electrical impedance of neural tissue from its microscopic cellular constituents. *J Neural Eng*. Jan 24;17(1):016037 doi: 10.1088/1741-2552/ab560a

Clinical Research Publications

Piano M, Nilforooshan R, Evans S. (2020) Binocular Vision, Visual Function, and Pupil Dynamics in People Living with Dementia and Their Relation to the Rate of Cognitive Decline and Structural Changes Within the Brain: Protocol for an Observational Study. *JMIR Res Protoc* 9(8):e16089

Fricke TR, Brand C, Lovett L, Turner NW, Anjou MD, Bentley SA (2020) Lessons learned from a subsidized spectacles scheme aiming to improve eye health in Aboriginal people in Victoria, Australia. *Australian Health Review* doi: 10.1071/AH20023

Piano M (2020) How dementia affects sight and visual processing. *J Dementia Care* 28(5):36-39

Piano M (2020) How to maximise vision for the best quality of life *J Dementia Care* 28(6):24-26

Presentations by NVRI Staff and Students

Machine Intelligence and Brain Research Winter Course/Workshop on Computational Brain Research at IIT Madras. 2-10 January 2020, Chennai, India. Ibbotson MR, Early visual pathway. (lecture)

Systems & Computational Neuroscience Down Under (SCiNDU), 29-31 January 2020, Brisbane, Australia. Almasi A, Sun S, Yunzab M, Ibbotson MR, Meffin H. How do stimulus statistics change the receptive fields of cells in primary visual cortex? (oral)

British Congress of Optometry and Vision Science 2020. [Online conference]. Piano M, Edwards J, Veerhuis N, Traynor V, Carey N. Driving in the Senior Years: Views and Experiences of UK and Australian Eye Professionals. (poster)

CNS 2020. 21 July 2020. [Online conference].

Sun SH, Almasi A, Yunzab M, Wong YT, Cloherty SL, Ibbotson MR, Meffin H. Extracellular positive spikes in cat primary visual cortex may correspond from the axons of cells originating in the Thalamus. (poster)

Eskikand P, Grayden D, Kameneva T, Burkitt AN, Ibbotson MR (2020). A computational neural mode of pattern motion selectivity of MT neurons. 29th Annual Computational Neuroscience Online Meeting, 18-22 July 2020, Melbourne, Australia.

Meffin H, Almasi A, Ibbotson MR (2020). Contrast invariant tuning in primary visual cortex. 29th Annual Computational Neuroscience Online Meeting, 18-22 July 2020, Melbourne, Australia.

Tong W, Ibbotson MR, Meffin H (2020). Preventing retinal ganglion cell axon bundle activation with oriented rectangular electrodes. 29th Annual Computational Neuroscience Online Meeting, 18-22 July 2020, Melbourne, Australia.

Almasi A, Meffin H, Sun S, Ibbotson MR (2020). How stimulus affect the receptive fields of cells in primary visual cortex. 29th Annual Computational Neuroscience Online Meeting, 18-22 July 2020, Melbourne, Australia. (oral)

Begeng J, Tong W, Ibbotson MR, Stoddart P, Kameneva T (2020). Modelling the responses of ON and OFF retinal ganglion cells to infrared neural stimulation. 29th Annual Computational Neuroscience Online Meeting, 18-22 July 2020, Melbourne, Australia.

Jung YJ, Almasi A, Sun S, Cloherty SL, Meffin H, Ibbotson MR, Yunzab M, Bauquier S, Renfree M (2020). Optically imaged map of orientation preferences in visual cortex of an Australian marsupial, the Tammar Wallaby *Macropus eugenii*. 29th Annual Computational Neuroscience Online Meeting, 18-22 July 2020, Melbourne, Australia.

ACO Clinic Leads Meeting. 6 October 2020. Coleman M. Clinical Research at the ACO. (oral)

MDHS ECR Network Symposium, UoM, 29 October 2020. Coleman M. Binocular vision, visual function and pupil dynamics in people living with dementia: exploring their relationships to rate of cognitive decline. (oral)

ACO Metro Managers Meeting. 12 November 2020. Coleman M. Key findings from an analysis of ACO metropolitan Melbourne clinic service users. (oral)

EDUCATION

Expanding our education



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I WAS DELIGHTED to take up the role as Director of Education, Membership and Marketing at the beginning of 2020. After 10 years working as part of ACO's clinic management team, this role presented a great opportunity to challenge myself and use my skills and experience from the ACO and my previous roles in education and professional associations.

Early in the year we set about creating a new team to help deliver the broader suite of services to both the profession and to the organisation. I barely had my feet under the desk when we started to feel the impact of COVID-19. It was a period of great uncertainty and I held a level of anxiety as to how it would affect our area of the organisation and whether we could remain sustainable. As we all packed up to work from home in late March we said our goodbyes along with "see you in a few weeks". Little did we know what was in store.

Between late March and November the team worked predominately from home. There were plenty of Zoom meetings to stay in touch but we all missed the opportunity to work alongside each other. Some of the team were juggling home schooling along with their work and I take my hat off to them. The only real distraction I had at home were my cats thinking my keyboard was a great place to sit. I am so proud of how my team stepped up to the challenges throughout 2020 and delivered well beyond my expectations.



Everyone tuned in to Dan Andrew's daily press conference

If COVID-19 has taught us anything it is that we need to be nimble, and we need to make quick decisions. It also taught us to appreciate the simple things – catching up with colleagues in the morning over a cup of coffee or the corridor chats that are so vital to knowing what is going on in the organisation.

We were quick to move our seminar series online and we were overwhelmed with the positive response to this. This was an event that needed to be revitalised – it was tired and only attracted a small number of loyal Members. Our move to online was very well received and we saw our Members young and old, and from all over the country jump online to attend. We also extended our webinar program to be free of charge to our Members to help them get access to continuing professional development throughout the year.

All face to face events were cancelled. We chose not to run our conference as a virtual event. This was a difficult decision but we felt that an all-day online event is not an optimum learning environment and it is difficult for participants to step away from day to day distractions. It also lacks one of the key reasons people attend conferences – to catch up with colleagues.

We were very fortunate that our certificate programs were developed as online programs but we did feel the impact with the clinical placement component of the certificates becoming very difficult to organise. Course candidates needed a higher level of support and flexibility to help them to complete their certificates – something the team handled effectively.

So what does the future hold for ACO Education in 2021 without having a crystal ball? Our seminar series will continue as an on-line event allowing us to have a far greater reach to our Members. We have permanently combined this with the webinar series meaning that our Members can access 10 lectures throughout the year at no additional fee. We are hoping to start planning some small face-to-face events for the second half of 2021.

I want to sincerely thank all those that supported our education program throughout the year – our speakers, lecturers, examiners and committee members. It is through your dedication and willingness to give both your time and your expertise, that it is possible to run our programs and we are forever grateful. And to everyone that enrolled in one of our certificate programs or logged onto a webinar, thank you for being part of our community of learning.

Jane Trevaskis

Director Education, Membership and Marketing



Jane Trevaskis
Director Education,
Membership and
Marketing



Education, Membership and Marketing Team (L- R): (Standing) Rhea Sharma, Julia Pledger, Colette Davis, Michelle Waugh, Shazia Tahseen, (Sitting): Jane Trevaskis, Madeleine Butler Absent: Robyn Bradley

ACO SEMINAR SERIES

THE ADVENT OF COVID-19 necessitated a pivot to offering our Members and staff online access to our seminars where we were able to learn from leaders in the field such as Dr Michael Kalloniatis, who spoke on “Colour Vision: basic concepts and cutting-edge clinical techniques applied to clinical practice”, ACO staff such as Mae Chong presented on, “Low Vision and Technology – The options are out there” and Tim Fricke spoke to, “Public health eye care vignettes”. Dr Elaine Chong the current Director of Ophthalmology Services at the Royal Melbourne Hospital gave a lively lecture on “When cataract surgery is not as routine as anticipated, what can we do to predict problems and how to manage them”. We also held our first on-line panel discussion where we spoke with a diverse range of ACO alumni: Roman Serebrianik (Senior Policy Advisor at Vision 2020), Anagha Joshi (Senior Policy Officer at the Australian Institute of Family Studies) Ken Thomas (Optometrist at L&F Eyecare in Warragul, Victoria) and Jessica Huang-Lung (Research Fellow at UNSW) on topics covering public health, clinical teaching and policy.

Overall, we were delighted to find that the online medium by virtue of being live to all Members in all states, enabled a much higher participation rate than we would have otherwise experienced. Other benefits included live chatting and more convenient participant feedback access. Overall, it was such a success that a switch to mostly online delivery on a more permanent basis only makes the best of sense for seminar series going forwards.

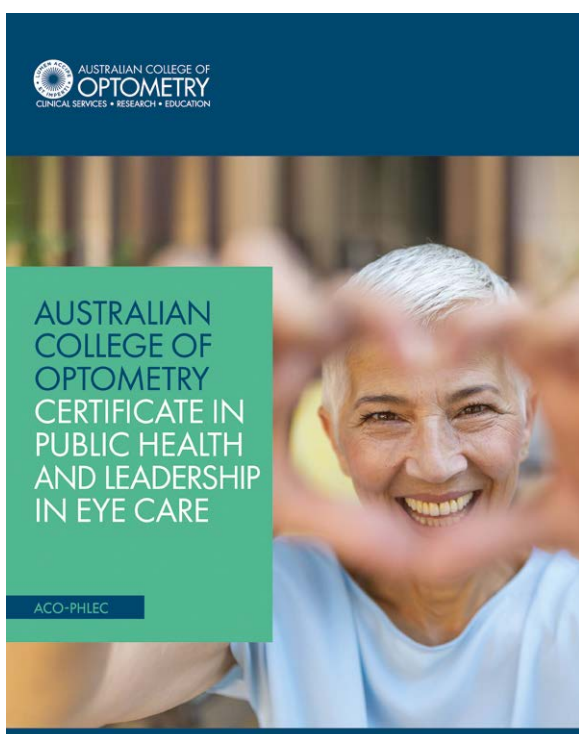
Seminar Series: Catching up with ACO Alumni (T-B) Michelle Waugh, Ken Thomas, Anagha Joshi, Jessica Huang-Lung and Roman Serebrianik



CERTIFICATE COURSE HIGHLIGHTS

IN 2020 WE CONTINUED TO DELIVER our suite of five certificate courses. These online courses form the centrepiece of our education program.

- Advanced Certificate in Children's Vision
- Advanced Certificate in Glaucoma
- Certificate in Advanced Contact Lenses
- Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics
- Certificate in Public Health and Leadership in Eye Care



Certificate in Public Health and Leadership in Eye Care (ACO-PHLEC)

For the first time since the commencement of our certificate courses we had course participants who are not optometrists join our cohort for our public health offering. This makes sense since PHLEC is designed for eyecare workers interested in public health and leadership. One of these candidates is an ophthalmic nurse who works at the Alfred Hospital, another is a retinal grader who works at Singapore National Eye Centre and the third is a Program Leader who works at the Weenthunga Health Network Inc supporting and enabling young women to enter health professions. The rest of the candidates were an even split of independent and corporate optometrists in Australia or New Zealand. The cross pollination of different work and world views certainly enhanced the candidate experience with most of the cohort indicating we exceeded their expectations in 2020. We are particularly proud of

this certificate because it offers refreshing, unique value in the milieu of optometric education that resonates strongly with the ACO's mission as it pertains to education which is to "improve the eye health and wellbeing of communities through innovation, partnership and leadership in education".

"ACO-PHLEC was an excellent course that assisted in solidifying important concepts regarding public health and optometry both from the global and Australian context."

A special thanks to the Course Advisory Committee who work closely with our course director, Dr Michelle Waugh, to ensure we have continuous quality improvement processes for this unique certificate.

Mitchell Anjou AM MScOptom BScOptom FACO

Mae Chong BOptom, PGDipAdvClinOptom, PGCertOcTher, FACO

Kerryn Hart BOptom, PostGradDipAdvClinOptom, PostGrad-CertOcTher, MPH, GCHETL, FACO

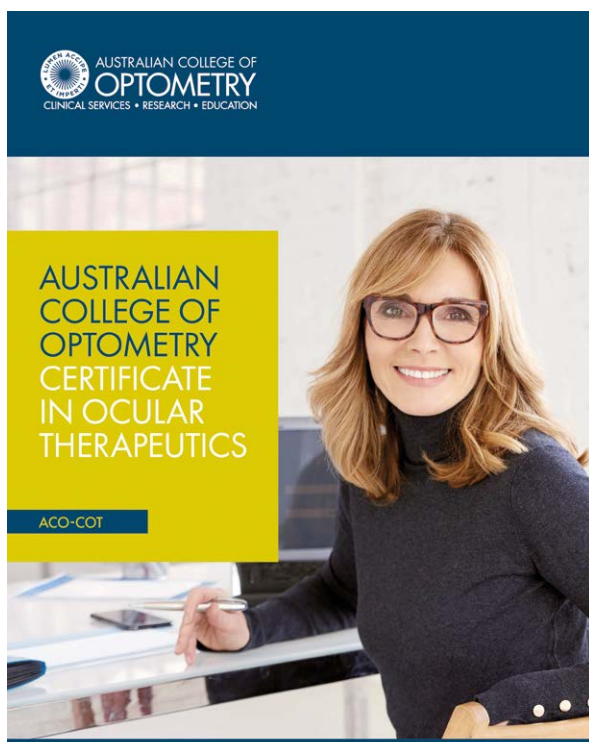
Dr Suit May Ho PhD BScOptom GCertOcTher GCertSocSci (Int Devel) FACO

Dr Josephine Li PhD BScOptom FACO

Lien Trinh BOptom MOptom MScPH

Dr Mandy Truong PhD MPH BOptom

"The course is extremely relevant to all workers in the health industry. It serves as a reminder of why we ventured into health care in the first place."



Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics

The Certificate of Therapeutics continues to provide the opportunity for optometrists registered in Australia and New Zealand to gain the rights to practice in ocular therapeutics. The course attracts a mix of more experienced practitioners that studied in Australia or New Zealand before therapeutics was incorporated into pre-registration training, to those candidates from all over the globe who have recently completed the OCANZ Competency in Optometry Examination, allowing them the right to take up conditional registration in Australia and New Zealand.

This course is by far, the most rigorous of our Certificate programs and we commend our candidates for their dedication and commitment to their study throughout 2020. A special mention must go to our COT Course Co-ordinator, Shazia Tasheen, who provided exemplary service and support to all of our candidates through this very challenging period. As the year progressed we continued to modify and adjust to the new demands that COVID-19 presented us. As an accredited program we needed to ensure that any changes did not compromise the integrity of the course and that OCANZ were kept abreast of any anticipated or actual changes.

We also missed the opportunity to hold our annual graduation ceremony. This is an event that the team look forward to and it gives our candidates the opportunity to all meet face to face.

This program would not be possible without the ongoing commitment of the ACO Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics Curriculum Committee:

A/Prof Ian Gutteridge MScOptom LOSc FAAO FACO
PGCertOcTher

Prof James Armitage MOptom PhD FACO

Prof Bang Bui B.Optom M.Optom PhD PGCOT

A/Prof Colin Chan MBBS(HONS) FRANZCO

Prof Erica Fletcher PhD MScOptom FACO

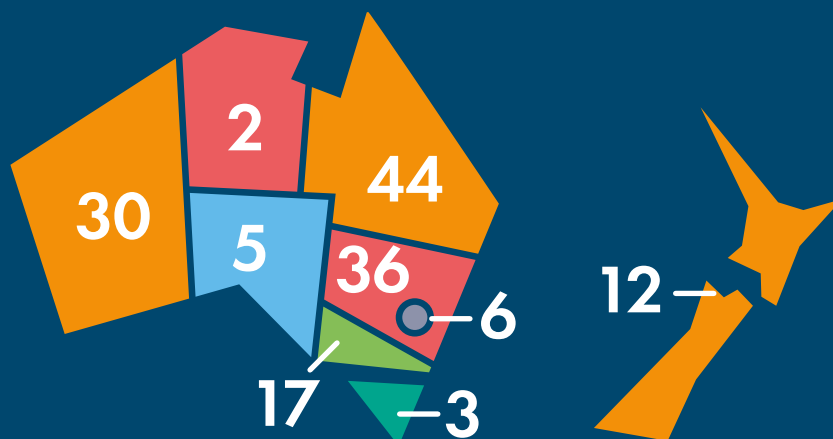
Maureen O'Keefe BSc(Hons) MBA DipEd GAICD WCLP

Dr Graham Wilson MB ChB 1990 Otago FRANZCO

Dr Heathcote Wright PhD FRANZCO

An interesting thing about COT and all of our certificate programs is how broad our reach is. Historically, the ACO was known as a Victorian centric organisation but an analysis of our COT candidates over the last 3 years shows we are anything but with only 11% of candidates from Victoria.

Candidate Breakdown by Location (2018-2020)



CLINICAL TEACHING

THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY has a proud history of providing clinical teaching placements to many generations of optometry students. A team of over 60 clinical educators provide clinical supervision, skills advice and mentoring to over 300 students each year. With varying clinical interests and styles of communication, this dedicated and diverse team provides a great example for students; with a common focus of preparing the next generation of optometrists to provide best practice, evidenced based, patient centric care.

The clinical teaching program provides regular placements throughout the year to students from Deakin University, the University of Melbourne, UNSW Sydney and a short placement for selected students attending Flinders University.

"I am very passionate about clinical teaching. My style is to establish a healthy trusting relationship with the student. I enjoy passing on my years of clinical knowledge and wisdom and feel satisfied to see the development and growth in the students knowledge and abilities."

Davut Ulusoy, Clinical Educator

In 2020, all placement programs were significantly impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. With all of our teaching clinics located in Melbourne, our ability to incorporate students into our model of care was significantly impacted by the stage 4 restrictions. This meant that for much of 2020 we did not have students in our clinics. When we thought it was possible to reintroduce clinical teaching, we needed to assess the timing, schedule and focus of ACO placements to determine how essential the placement was for each institution and year level.

The ACO was committed to working with University partners to ensure that final year students were able to achieve an appropriate level of patient experience prior to graduation in a COVIDsafe way. Open and clear communications aided active discussions about safety, behaviour



Clinical Educator Masumi Kobayashi in a teaching session with Deakin Optometry students

and program adjustment to enable teaching to resume as soon as safely possible.

Additional infection control, personal protective equipment and social distancing measures were implemented in teaching clinics to comply with the ACO's COVIDsafe plan. A program of active observation was implemented to enable less experienced students to have some patient contact and focus on specific key clinical skills in this time.

Additional non-clinical time during pandemic enabled the creation of resources to complement clinical teaching including diagnostic equipment instruction information snapshots and videos, updated clinic placement and electronic medical record (EMR) instruction videos.



(L-R) Nellie Deen (Head of Specialist Services and Clinical Care) and Mae Chong (Lead Optometrist Clinical Teaching)

MEMBERSHIP

Building membership value



MEMBERS – YEAR IN REVIEW

A community of like-minded professionals supporting public eye care

ACO MEMBERS are an integral part of our community of innovative and collaborative professionals looking to support and improve eye care for every member of the society. The continued support of our Members enables us to develop and strengthen the services we provide to them and our communities. Members can access a range of services and events including education programs, ACO Awards, travel grants and library resources.

In 2020 our Member numbers remained steady and we focused on ways to advance engagement through regular newsletters and surveys. The year brought with it many unknowns about what the future could look like, but we continually worked towards providing flexible ways for Members to access our services. The ACO Seminar Series was moved online, which was a great success as Members from across the country continue to attend from the comfort of their homes. Members are also given access to the education portal where they can upskill with a range of educational material.

The ACO Fellowship was awarded to long-standing Members, Elisse Higginbotham and Kerryn Hart for their significant contributions towards the optometry profession and the community. Unfortunately due to the pandemic there were no Travel Grants presented in 2020. We hope to recommence this grant for domestic travel in 2021.

The Membership Review Steering Committee (MRSC), chaired by Professor Linda Denehy had the opportunity of

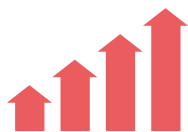
“The ACO imbued in me a lifelong love of learning about vision and a passion for public health.”

meeting twice in 2020. The Committee comprises of ACO Council members, ACO staff and members of the optometry profession. The MRSC is focused on helping enhance the

ACO Membership Benefits

Continuing education

Our continuing education program offers flexible, innovative education for optometrists across a broad range of clinical areas.



Fellowship

ACO Fellowship recognises Members who have made a significant contribution to the practice and profession of optometry and to the community.

ACO Awards

ACO Awards recognise outstanding achievements by those in the optometry community.



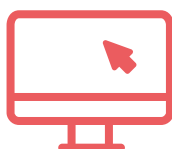
Travel grants

Travel grants give Members the opportunity to gain knowledge of international best practice or to contribute their time and skills to a disadvantaged community (either in remote Australia or overseas).



Online membership newsletters and publications

Members stay up to date with the ACO via online e-newsletters and other ACO publications.



Library resources

Members have access to a specialist collection of books, journal articles and other optometry, ophthalmology and vision science resources from the Nathan Library and ACO's online resources centre.



Voting rights

ACO financial Members have voting rights at our Annual General Meeting.



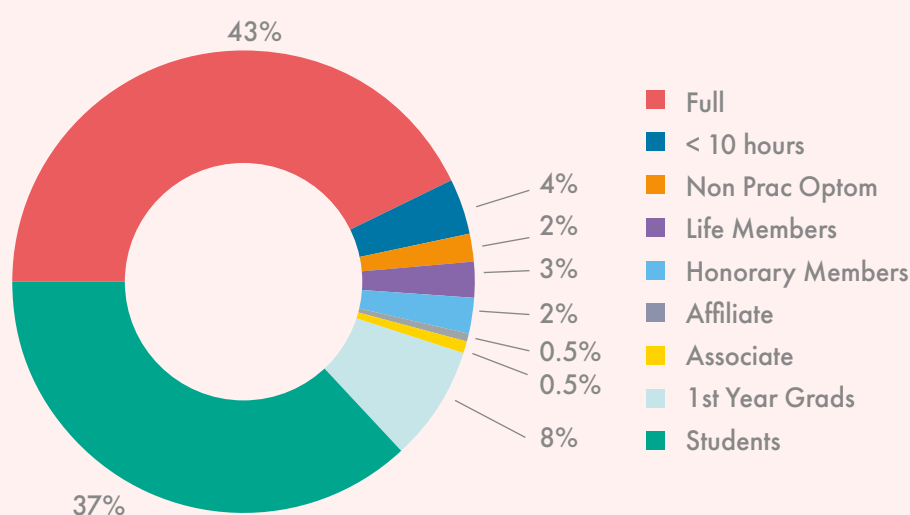
membership model to ensure that it is sustainable and engaging. As one of the first actions from these meetings, ACO Members participated in an online survey to provide their feedback on their membership. Results from these surveys have been imperative in assisting the further development of the ACO membership value proposition to meet the needs of the Members and community.

The NVRI continues to garner great support by a dedicated group of Members, Governors and Donors. Over the years they have made generous contributions to help support the NVRI team, who focus on advancing and improving eye care through their world class research.

"I believe in the value, purpose and contributions that the ACO can deliver"

We would like to thank all our Members for their continued support through 2020 and playing a key role in supporting ACO's public eye health endeavours.

Member type 2020



CYRIL W KETT OPTOMETRY MUSEUM AND ARCHIVE

THE CYRIL W KETT Optometry Museum and Archive acquires and preserves items of importance in the history of optometry. These include books, ophthalmic equipment, spectacles and lenses, photographs and videos, archival papers, works of art and ephemera.

The Kett Museum was established in 1970. It has its foundation in the gift of an ophthalmic collection belonging to Melbourne optometrist, Cyril W Kett FBOA FSMC FVOA (1890-1970) who was one of the founders of the ACO in 1940 and was Chair of the Council from 1944 to 1947.

Honorary archivists:

Michael Aitken *LOSc*

Colin Bates *BScOptom LOSc*

Joseph Chakman AM *BSc*

Kate Doherty *BScOptom LOsc*

Pamela Sutton *BScOptom FACO*

STATISTICS	2020	2019
Total catalogued items	4041	3794
Items catalogued	247	117
Acquisitions	147	237
No. of donors	20	22



Honorary Archivists (L-R Standing): Michael Aitken, Colin Bates, Joseph Chakman;
(L-R Sitting): Pamela Sutton, Kate Doherty

Partnerships

The Museum values its partnership with the National Library of Australia (NLA) and is a contributor to the NLA's aggregator, TROVE, which is an online service that brings together content from libraries, museums, archives, repositories and other research and collecting organisations around Australia.

There has been strong support and significant donations from optometry organisations across Australia, in particular Optometry Australia and Optometry NSW&ACT. We now preserve much of their historical material.

Museum Donors

There were 20 donors this year, some are regulars and others new, and some just cleaning out the back room or offering us great-granny's spectacles. We thank them all.

Donors are not always optometrists. The Museum receives material from members of the general public, often the descendants of optometrists or sometimes just collectors.

A notable addition to the Museum in 2020 was the 1960s Subjective Optometer or auto refractor (Catalogue Number 4008). It is an important example of a subjective optometer from the time when these instruments were rare. The instrument is marked with a US Patent No 3067647, granted on December 11 1962 to Kichiro Sato, its Japanese designer. Today auto refractors are increasingly common in optometry practice.



Catalogue Number 4008: A 1960s Subjective Optometer or auto refractor

Displays

COVID-19 prevented any significant change to the exhibitions around the ACO that are part of the Museum's program of public presentation of its collection. Minor changes were made to the displays in the Nathan Library and the two displays in the Schultz foyer of the ACO, "Chinese Optometry Past and Present" and Optometric Ephemeria", remained in place.

The Museum Exhibition Gallery

The pride of the museum is the Aitken Gallery. Opened in May 2019, the gallery is named in honour of Michael Aitken who has been an archivist for the museum since its inception, and has been a generous donor of artefacts and funds. Mr Aitken was also a part-time lecturer at the ACO in subjective refraction and history of optometry, and a teaching clinician from mid 1960s into the 1970s.

The gallery presents a large variety of items demonstrating the technological and clinical advancement of optometry from its earliest days to the present. On show are a variety of instruments in the various stages of their development, including perimeters, ophthalmoscopes and tonometers, slit lamps spectacles, contact lenses, low vision aids and many other treasures. A highlight of the gallery is a detailed and fully equipped 1930s consulting room.

The Aitken Gallery is open Monday to Friday during ACO opening hours and is designed for self-guided tours. A guided tour can be organised by appointment. Email: acomuseum@aco.org.au.

Historical research

The honorary archivists research the provenance and origins of material catalogued for the Museum, the results of which are recorded in the "Historical Significance" field of the catalogue record. Occasionally this leads to a more detailed investigation, the results of which are published.

Published research

Colin Bates and Barry Cole published a paper on early optometric registrations in Victoria:

Bates CB, Cole BL. A profile of optometrists in Victoria registered in 1937 after five decades of unregulated practice of optometry. *Clin Exp Optom* 2020;103 (3); 368-375

Other previous papers were produced by Michael Aitken and Barry Cole:

Aitken MJ. How an Optometric Collector became an Optometrist Archivist. *Hindsight* 2019; 50:78

Cole BL. The Challenge of Preserving the Artifacts of Optometric History. *Hindsight* 2019; 50:66

Joseph Chakman wrote an extensively researched and comprehensive book entitled *Achieving Optometric Legislation in New South Wales*, published by Optometry NSW / ACT. This book details all the major figures and actions involved over many years in achieving optometric registration in 1930. (Copies of this book are available online from Optometry NSW / ACT).

Friends of the Kett Optometry Museum

To promote the work of the Museum and its contents, the Friends of the Kett Museum group has over 120 members, mostly optometrists but also academics, members of the wholesale trade, dispensers and ophthalmologists, from all around Australia and overseas. An electronic newsletter is regularly published and back copies can be read at the Friends section of the Museum website museum.aco.org.au/friends/newsletters.

NATHAN LIBRARY AND MEMBERS LOUNGE



THE NATHAN LIBRARY houses a collection of resources in the fields of optometry, ophthalmology, vision science and optics. The Library started with a small collection of books given to the ACO by the Victorian Optical Association (now Optometry VIC/SA) in the 1940s. Over the years the Library has been strengthened further and now comprises of a multitude resources both online and offline. Dating back to the 1960s and earlier, we are proud to hold some of the oldest vision and ophthalmic journals, which may not be available anywhere or on the internet. In addition to this, the library is renowned for two of its significant archival collections, the Aitken Rare Book and Hewett collection. These can be accessed through the Library's catalogue or

through the Kett Museum and Archive's own catalogue. In 2020, the Nathan Library online resources were popular among our Members and students. There was a large demand for online access to books and articles especially from those enrolled into the ACO certificate courses. With our wide range of library material we are able to service most of these requirements. However, if we are unable to source certain requests, our long association with Gratisnet and the Association of Vision Science Libraries, makes it possible to source additional reading material from a wide network of libraries. In return, the Nathan Library has supported these associations with article requests that are not available anywhere else.

IN MEMORIAM

Emeritus Professor Barry Cole AO

31 March 1934 - 27 January 2021

Professor Barry Cole AO will always be considered one of the great men of optometry. John Nathan once wrote of Barry Cole, 'To summarise his achievements could not do him justice, to attempt to recount them in detail would take many pages.'

Barry was a charismatic leader, an innovator, a gifted scientist and a person of great drive. His contribution to the profession of optometry and to the eye health of the community, not just in Australia but all over the world, cannot be overestimated.

Professor Cole followed in his father's footsteps and obtained his LOSc in 1955 from the Australian College of Optometry (ACO), which was established in 1939. He went on to receive a Bachelor of Science in 1956, a Master of Applied Science in 1965 and a Doctor of Philosophy in 1971, all from the University of Melbourne. He was also a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry and the Australian College of Optometry.

Professor Cole was appointed as the ACO's first full-time lecturer in 1959. Within three years, Barry had helped to establish the degree course in the Faculty of Applied Science, University of Melbourne (1961). In 1962 the ACO became affiliated with the University and Professor Cole was appointed Director of Studies in 1965.

In 1973, the University established a Department of Optometry and Professor Cole was appointed as Chairman. There was a close synergy between the ACO and the Department of Optometry: both were accommodated in the one building with the clinic being run by the ACO and providing access for clinical teaching, and together they carried out collaborative research. During this period Professor Cole continued as Director of the ACO as well as serving as the Head of Department.

Barry was instrumental in the establishment of the National Vision Research Institute (NVRI) in 1972, supported by Dr David Cockburn and Jean Colledge. He was the acting Director until the appointment of a full-time Director in 1977.

As joint Chairman of the Department of Optometry and Director of the ACO, one of Barry's aims was to encourage the growth of the ACO clinic. An approach from the Victorian Government in 1985 enabled the establishment of a public health eye care program for people experiencing disadvantage across Victoria. This public health vision remains central to the ACO to this day. It also provided a rich learning environment for teaching and research.

Professor Cole and Gerard Crock, who was the University of Melbourne's foundation Ringland Anderson



Emeritus Professor Barry Cole AO

Professor of Ophthalmology, established the world-famous Low Vision Clinic at Kooyong for the Association for the Blind (now Vision Australia).

Professor Cole inspired his students and taught many of the great minds and leaders of optometry over four decades including, but not limited to, Professors Tony Adams, Ian Bailey, Brian Brown, Brien Holden, Leon Garner, Donald Mitchell, Robert Hess and Dr Rodney Watkins in the world of academia. Many others became leaders of the profession working with optometric associations and regulatory bodies.

Professor Cole had a particular interest in vision standards and was involved in developing many Government standards such as colour vision, driver's vision, lighting, pilot's vision and occupational vision. His reach in these fields was world-wide. His interests extended to standards of behaviour and he fought for high ethical behaviour among optometrists. Professor Cole served on the

Victorian Optometric Registration Board, the authority that regulated optometry in Victoria for many years.

In recognition of his service to the profession, Professor Cole was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1987. In 1990, he was awarded the Honorary Life Membership of the ACO for his distinguished and meritorious service.

After a highly regarded career, Professor Cole retired in 1999. In his retirement he embarked on another ambitious project – authoring a book titled “A History of Australian Optometry”. The book was published in 2015 and makes for compelling reading for students, optometrists and others. He also served as Chair of the Editorial Board of Clinical and Experimental Optometry.

Another of his retirement ventures was working in the ACO’s Cyril Kett Optometry Museum and Archive. Professor Cole spent several days each week deep in the archives of the museum, ensuring that the history of optometry was kept alive and well for future generations. He worked together with the other honorary archivists to help develop the Aitken Gallery which displays an extensive collection of artefacts and was opened in 2019.

To say that the Australian College of Optometry would not be what it is today without Professor Barry Cole is an understatement. He was part of the ACO’s fabric and we are deeply grateful for all his contributions.

Dr Genevieve Napper FACO

29 May 1968 - 26 June 2020

Dr Genevieve Napper made a significant contribution to the profession of optometry, to the Australian College of Optometry and to the eye health of vulnerable members of the community, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Genevieve held a long standing connection to the Australian College of Optometry. She joined as a Member upon graduation – a membership she held until her passing. She was made a Fellow of the ACO, in recognition of her significant contribution to the profession.

She was a greatly valued ACO staff member for more than 25 years, and was closely aligned to the ethos of the ACO. During this time, Genevieve held a number of senior positions, in Ocular Diseases (2007 to 2012), and Low Vision (2004 to 2007). She contributed greatly to the development and growth of ACO’s Aboriginal eye care services, going on to lead the service from 2012 until leaving the ACO in 2018.

Genevieve was an integral part of the ACO’s clinical teaching program as an educator, particularly in Ocular Diseases, helping to shape the future of the profession. She was also a great mentor to younger staff, taking them under her wings in their early career.

Her passion for serving the community was supplemented by her involvement in voluntary work with the Vanuatu National Eyecare Program, often encouraging colleagues to get involved with the program. She was also a long-standing member of Optometry Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health advisory group and sat on both Vision 2020 Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander committee and its Project Management Group for the National Subsidised Spectacle Scheme. Genevieve served as a Board Director of Optometry Victoria for just under 20 years, and she was a member of Optometry Victoria/South Australia’s CPD committee.



Dr Genevieve Napper

In 2019, the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) presented her with an award to commemorate her work with the Victorian Aboriginal communities. The same year Genevieve was given the Department of Vision Science Alumnus award in recognition of her sustained contributions to public health optometry.

Genevieve’s passion and commitment to improving eye health services and outcomes for all Australians, but in particular, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and her contributions to the broader optometry profession, will not be forgotten.

ACO MEMBERS

Life Members

1954 Cyril W Kett	1968 Geoffrey H Henry	2011 Graham O Hill OAM, FACO	2016 Assoc Prof Rodney D Watkins AM
1955 George H Giles OBE	1970 Arthur BP Amies CMG	2012 Ross Harris, FACO	2018 Emer Prof Nathan Efron AC, FACO
1960 Ernest H Jabara	1975 Dr David M Cockburn OAM, FACO	2012 Prof Hugh Taylor AC	2018 Margaret Banks OAM, FACO
1960 William F Johns	1976 Bruce K Besley, FACO	2013 Wolfgang Gartner, FACO	2019 Emer Prof Leo Carney
1960 Josef Lederer	1980 Donald H Schultz	2013 Anthony Gibson OAM, FACO	2019 Dr Damien Smith, FACO, FAAO
1960 Bertram Nathan	1981 J Lloyd Hewett OAM	2013 Assoc Prof Ian Gutteridge, FACO	2020 Bryan Fuller FACO
1960 Leslie RC Werner	1981 Emer Prof H Barry Collin AM, FACO	2013 Dr Anthony Hanks OAM	
1961 Lady Meriel Wilmot-Wright	1990 Prof Barry L Cole AO, FACO	2014 Prof Ian Bailey	
1962 Alan Isaacs AM	1994 Jean S Colledge PSM	2014 Prof Janette E Lovie-Kitchin	
1963 J Neill Greenwood	2007 John L Pettit, FACO	2015 Kenneth Bowman AM	
1963 William D Wright			
1964 Dr Jonathon Nathan OAM, FACO			

ACO Fellows

Dr Carla Abbott FACO	Dr Paris Deliyannis FACO	Dr Carol Lakkis FACO	Pamela Sutton FACO
Hans-Peter Abel FACO	Rachel Denham FACO	Dr Graham Lakkis FACO	Kenneth Thomas FACO
Mitchell Anjou AM FACO	Paul Donaldson FACO	Sam Lauriola FACO	Neville Turner FACO
Prof James Armitage FACO	Ian Douglas FACO	David Lawry FACO	Dr Stephen Vincent FACO
Max Astri FACO	Anthony Dowling FACO	Nicole Leong FACO	Leonidas Vlahakis FACO
Dimitrios Athanasakis FACO	Dr Laura Downie FACO	Mark Letts FACO	A/Prof Richard Vojlay FACO
Dr Lauren Ayton FACO	Sally Doyle FACO	Dr Josephine Li FACO	Jean Walters FACO
Nicole Baines FACO	Jane Duffy FACO	Ka-Yee Lian FACO	John Warren FACO
Rod Baker FACO	John Farmer FACO	Richard Lindsay FACO	Carolyn West FACO
Kristina Barnhill FACO	Prof Erica Fletcher FACO	Peter Martin FACO	David West FACO
Prof Sharon Bentley FACO	Timothy Fricke FACO	Andrew Maver FACO	David Wilson FACO
Terence Blake FACO	Prof Alexander Gentle FACO	Ross McDowell FACO	Rosemary Wilson FACO
Ian Bluntish FACO	Malcolm Gin FACO	Kurt Mechkaroff FACO	Darryl Wilson FACO
Antony Bolton FACO	Kenneth Gregory FACO	Dr Alan Kwok Hei Mok FACO	Eva Wong FACO
Dr Adrian Bruce FACO	Michael Hare FACO	Paula Monaco FACO	Dr Yota Yoshimitsu FACO
Susan Callahan FACO	David Hare FACO	Dr Genevieve Napper FACO	Konstantinos Zagoritis FACO
Giorgio Campanella FACO	Kerryn Hart FACO	Leanne Nguyen FACO	Robert Zent FACO
Dr Kathryn Case FACO	Andrew Harris FACO	Bao Nguyen FACO	
Jennifer Caulfield FACO	A/Prof Leo Hartley FACO	Peter Nixon FACO	
Kuong Chang FACO	Tania Hartung FACO	Russell Oldham FACO	
Jessica Chi FACO	Elizabeth Hatfield FACO	Brett Parsons FACO	
Jeffrey Chibert FACO	Dr Charlotte Hazel FACO	Sonia Pellizzer FACO	
Joseph Choi FACO	Elisse Higginbotham FACO	Prof Konrad Pesudovs FACO	
Christopher Chong FACO	Dr Charlotte Hazel FACO	Francoise Rateau FACO	
Mae Chong FACO	Dr Suit May Ho FACO	Helen Robbins FACO	
Luke Xiang-Yu Chong FACO	Glenn Howell FACO	A/Prof Mark Roth OAM FACO	
Dr Gillian Cochrane FACO	Dr Edwin Howell FACO	Anne Russell FACO	
A/Prof Heather Connor FACO	Petra Hurleston FACO	Norman Russo FACO	
Jenny Cooke FACO	A/Prof Robert Jacobs FACO	George Sahely FACO	
Darren Couch FACO	Dr Alan Johnston AM FACO	Janelle Scully FACO	
Sandra Coulson FACO	Stephen Jones FACO	Roman Serebrianik FACO	
Jeffrey Coulson FACO	Susan Kalff FACO	Kent Snibson FACO	
Paul Croucher FACO	Chris Katopodis FACO	Jenni Sorraghan FACO	
Jennifer Currie FACO	A/Prof Peter Keller FACO	Dr Margaret Squires FACO	
	John Kingshott FACO	Susanne Strachan FACO	
	Dr Bradley Kirkwood FACO	Gregory Strachan FACO	

Honorary Members

Michael Aitken
 Rev Douglas Allen FACO
 Ronda Beer
 Miriam Bergman
 Raymond Blizzard
 Brian Carney FACO
 Dr Barry Clark
 Norman Corbett FACO
 Clifton Egarr FACO
 Michael Frith
 Anne Gibson FACO
 Donald Jessop FACO
 Francis Keogh
 Geoffrey Leunig FACO
 Robert Loutit FACO

Prof Ted Maddess
 Prof Geoffrey McColl
 John McGibbony
 Dawn Odgers
 Donald Owen FACO
 Dr Gad Trevaks AM
 Peter Turner FACO
 Duncan Waite
 Dr George Woo FACO
 Ronald Wrigley

ACO Members

Stuart Aamodt
 Fady Abraham
 Mohammed Al-Ameri
 Sally Aldayeh
 Amani Alghanem
 Hodan Ali
 Claude Allen
 Hamdy Amrizal
 Susan Anastasiadis
 David Anderson
 Mary Andreou
 Dianne Andrews
 Cassandra Ang
 Carole Anjou
 David Antonios
 Johanna Arendsen
 Dr Benjamin Ashby
 Con Athanasiou
 Constantine Atzemakis
 Kirsty Banfield
 Colin Bates
 Deborah Baxter
 Harpreet Bedi
 Michelle Bell
 Dylan Bentley
 Louisa Betlehem
 Pooja Bhindi
 Dean Binns
 Dominique Birbeck
 Natalie Bogaert
 Mario Borazio
 Shuvagata Bose
 Kirily Bowen
 David Box
 Rachel Briony Boylan
 Riona Brennan
 Matthew Buckis
 John Buckley
 Debra Bunting
 Deborah Burgess

Wesley Butler
 Karyn Campion
 Clare Campitelli
 Dario Canale
 Joanne Cerruti
 Hoi Him Chan
 Kwok Yan Chan
 Pak Di Chan
 Phillipa Charteris
 Kimberly Chee
 Joanna Chen
 Po Chen
 Lili Chen
 Daniel Chew
 Chan-Mi Cho
 Kai Liang Chong
 Raelene Christ
 Graham Chuck
 Karen Chung
 Simon Clark
 Janelle Coates
 Kristin Coffey
 Rashelle Cohen
 Emma Colquhoun
 Jennie Cooke
 Louise Combe
 Katherine Corrigan
 Daniel Corti
 Robyn Cottier
 Gemma Cowan
 John Crimmings
 John Cronin
 Dr Isaac Curkpatrick
 Bill Cutler
 Alyse D'Agostini
 Wayne D'Agostini
 Jefferson Daniel
 Samantha Day
 Bianca De Bellis
 Bethany De Jong
 Lisa Deacon
 Simon Della Vedova
 Mark DePaola
 Salvatore Di Falco
 Carla Dinardo
 Carolyn Dingle
 Lucy Diritto
 Belinda Do
 Lawrance Dove
 Cameron Dyson
 Andrew Eastaugh
 John Evans

Haroula Fantaoutsakis
 Michael Farrell
 Daniel Farrugia
 Lauren Field
 Gregory Fielder
 Lauren Finlay
 John Fitzgerald
 Michelle Foo
 Anton Frank
 Gemma Gaggini
 Carolyn Galloway
 Ani Galoyan
 Lauren Gaskell-Kharsas
 Lori Gaterell
 Melissa Genovesi
 Patrick Gerry
 Maria Ghaly
 Stephen Giacon
 Mirella Giorlando
 Adam Gloury
 Rodney Gordon
 Rory Gordon
 Alan Greenhill
 Anne Greeves
 Matthew Gregory
 Peter Grimmer
 Nuriye Gunler
 Deborah-Anne Hackett
 Carmin Hall
 Benjamin Hamlyn
 Clodia Hanna
 Jacob Hansen
 Sandra Heaney
 Suzanne Heaps
 Simone Hibbert
 Amy Higginbotham
 Cayden Hill
 Stephen Hill
 Richard Ho
 Sam Hobbs
 Rodney Hodge
 Mark Hoffman
 Xia (Sarshia) Hua
 Madeline Hutchinson
 Anna Hua
 Emily Hutton
 Anh Huynh
 Mandy Huynh
 Annie Hwong
 Serena Istayfan
 Leesa Jagers
 John Jalowicki

Monique Jankovski
 Paul Johnstone
 Madeleine Jones
 Julia Kabov
 Prof Michael Kalloniatis
 Chris Karanasio
 Manleen Kaur
 Sonal Kaushik
 Phillip Kearney
 Hana Khoo
 Zahn Kidson
 Kylie Killoran
 Lisa Kingshott
 Gordon Kirk
 Andrew Knight
 Daniel Yu- Heng Ko
 Katrina Koeing
 Sophie Koh
 Vivian Kong
 Sirianne Koo
 Madeleine Kua
 Catherine Kubale
 Rahul Kumar
 Andre Kupfer
 Jin Jane Kwon
 Isabella La Rocca
 Dr Christopher Law
 Heather Law
 William Law
 Yien Law
 Vivien Lay
 Rebecca Le
 Anna Lee
 Helen Lee
 Jin Woo Lee
 Jong Hung Lee
 Soo Fun Lee
 Julianne Lehmann
 David Leong
 Simon Leong
 Clare Leung
 Adam Li
 Christopher Li
 Jing Li
 Kevin Li
 Li Li
 Xinghao Li
 Yawen Li
 Yi Li
 Amy Lim
 Alissa Limpus
 Dr Alyssa Lin

James Lin
Yuqi Liu
Anthony Lord
Alicia Lou
Michael Loughlin
Michelle Lucas
Hue Ly
Tuyet Quan-Sharon Ly
Graeme Mackenzie
Ashley Madeira
Shahd Mahmoud
Julia Mainstone
Son Ian Mak
Karen Makin
Eve Makrai
Mario Marchionna
Theo Markos
Jordan Marr
Jennifer Martin
Timothy Martin
Michelle McCambridge
Paul McCann
Stewart McConnell
Margaret McCreath
Robert McIlroy
Allyson McIvor
Jeanine McKenzie
Kenneth McLaren
Anna Melrose
Juliet Menakaya
Dr James Merrington
Peter Merrington
Paula Mildenhall
Jean Anne Crawford Mill
Ish Minhas
Adrian Moore
Christopher Mouser
Paula Ann Mudie
Felicity Mullette
Nelly Munckhof
Timothy Murphy
Dr Krysta Murray
Rachel Muyco
Murray Nagle
Victoria Nankervis
Nihaama Narayanan
Sarah Nersessian
Richard Newson
Clifton Ng
Jia Hao Ng
Quyen Ngo
Van Phuong Kim Ngo

Chan Nguyen
Huy Nguyen
Lisa Nguyen
Ronald Nguyen
Annie Nguyen-Duc
Neville Noller
Brendan Norden
Kevin O'Brien
Malcolm Omrod
Sabine Ostrowski
Ambhruni Padhye
Moleshri Paliwal
Lisa Pang
Dr Scott Panozza
Jim Papas
Michael Peter
Michael Petraitis
Danh Thanh Phan
Elise Pocknee
Timothy Powell
Rajneil Prasad
George Prassinis
Jackelyn Prentice
Vivienne Price
Lilly Psomadellis
Andrew Purser
Peter Quach
Kriti Rana
Martin Rattle
Anneke Richards
Stephen Robertson
Jennifer Robinson
Martha Robinson
Christopher Rodgers
Katelyn Rose
Dr Gennaro Rosella
Ian Rosser
Peter Roth
Simon Routson
Linda Rozitis
Josephine Sabeti
Frank Salsone
Adam Samuels
Daniela Scalora
Alan Schmedje
Paul Schoneveld
Kristina Sechenova
Sameer Shah
Naomi Shannon
Clarissa Sheehan
Alan Sher
Katherine Shih

May Shin
Alek Sims
Karina Sinclair
Colleen Skiffington
Rachel Smeal
Murray Smith
Alison Soon
David Southgate
Jennifer Spicer
Prema Sriram
George Stamatelatos
Karina Stephens
Dr Ruth Stewart
Kyra Stretton
Kevin Sun
Karina Sutanto
Richard Sutton
Pasquale Tascone
Dr Samantha Tay
Elizabeth Siok Khim Taylor
Mandy Thai
Wendy Thompson
Nigel Thrush
Timothy Thurn
Teng Yong Tiong
Melinda Toomey
Cynthia To
Bao Han Tran
Jacqueline Tran
Joanne Tran
Lynda Tran
Mary Tran
Minh Tran
Anna Tran- Nguyen
Vicky Tranis
Bonnie Tsang
Dina Tsirigotis
Sao Mai Tyler
Anthony Van Aalst
Caleb Van Cooten
Barry Van Der Vyver
Catherine Van Paassen
Elizabeth Vidor
Michael Vian
Prajna Vidyasagar
Wrania Vlahos
Rosalyn Voullaire
Alan Vu
Stephen Wakeling
Po-chun Wang
Zhan Wang
Jayson Ward

Sarah Warlow
Sharon Warwick
Andrew Watkins
Natalie Watt
Maxwell Webb
Pei Hsien Grace Wee
Matthew Wells
Sophie Wellington
Gaynor Whitehead
John Williams
Trevor Williams
Wendy Wiltshire
Menaka Wimalaratna
Louise Winkler
Stephen Witt
Bryant Wong
Ellin Wong
Yee Sum Phoebe Wong
Thomas Wong
Sophie Woodburn
Dr Zhichao Wu
Ian Wynn
Rocky Shi Yan
Eve Sze- Yi Yeh
Hui Yap
Dr William Yip
Michael Young
Catherine Young
Mina You
Michael Zammit
Zoe Zhang
Estelle Zhao

Associate Members

Denise Gronow
Bhavani Kulantayan
Hon Paul Lucas
Deirdre Myers
Dr Millie Nakatsuka
Maureen O'Keefe

Affiliate Members

Dr Ranjay Chakraborty
Koon Ching Ip
Lian King Keu
Catherine Smallbone
Clara Vitali

NVRI MEMBERS

NVRI Fellows

Prof Robert Augusteyn
 Prof Ian Bailey
 Emer Prof Peter Bishop AO
 Dr David Cockburn OAM FACO
 Prof Barry Cole AO FACO
 Edmund Coote
 Dr Geoffrey Henry
 Prof Abbie Hughes
 Prof William Levick
 Prof Paul Martin
 Prof Donald Mitchell
 Prof John Pettigrew
 Prof Jan Provis
 Prof Allan Snyder
 Emer Prof David Vaney
 A/Prof Rodney Watkins AM FACO
 Prof Robert Weale
 Dr Gerald Westheimer
 Prof Rachel Wong
 A/Prof Ulrike Grünert

Honorary Life Members

Jean Colledge PSM

Principal Governors

Margaret Banks OAM FACO
 John Nicola

Governors

John Cartwright FACO
 John Kingshott FACO
 Dawn Odgers

NVRI Life Members

Max Astri FACO
 Richard Bennett
 Terence Blake FACO
 Ewen Clemens
 John Clemens
 F B Cockburn
 Prof Barry Cole AO FACO
 Dr David Crewther
 Prof Sheila Crewther
 Eugene Dovgan
 Peter Dwyer OAM
 Ronald Fieldhouse
 Wolfgang Gartner FACO
 A/Prof Ian Gutteridge FACO
 Nicholas Hansen
 Ross Harris FACO
 Prof Abbie Hughes
 John Bennings
 Liang Kang
 Theodore Kannis
 Frank Kindler
 Henry Kruszewski
 Michael McCabe FACO
 Peter Milhinch
 Dr Jonathan Nathan OAM FACO
 Prof John Pettigrew
 John Pettit FACO
 Robert Sigmont
 Gavin Smyth
 Penrhyn Thomas
 Gwynfor Williams

NVRI Members

Rod Baker FACO
 Janice Bastiaan
 Colin Bates
 Antony Bolton FACO
 Kirily Bowen
 John Buckley
 Susan Callahan FACO
 Christopher Chong FACO
 Emer Prof Barry Collin AM FACO
 Jenny Cooke FACO
 Jennie Cooke
 Bill Cutler
 Rachel Denham FACO
 Lawrance Dove
 John Farmer FACO
 Daniel Farrugia
 Malcolm Gin FACO
 A/Prof Ulrike Grünert
 Tania Hartung FACO
 Elizabeth Hatfield FACO
 Sandra Heaney
 Glenn Howell FACO
 A/Prof Robert Jacobs FACO
 Josef Krusche
 Dr Graham Lakkis FACO
 Sam Lauriola FACO
 Yien Law
 Mark Letts FACO
 Richard Lindsay FACO
 Ashley Madeira
 Julia Mainstone
 Ian McBeath
 John McGibbony
 Robert McIlroy
 Bruce Mellick
 Peter Mildren
 Prof Konrad Pesudovs FACO
 Elise Pocknee
 David Pye
 Loan Quach
 Anne Russell FACO
 Peter Russell
 Stephen Ryan
 Jenni Sorraghan FACO
 David Southgate
 Jennifer Spicer
 Dr Margaret Squires FACO
 Murray Stanley
 Gregory Strachan FACO
 Susanne Strachan FACO
 Pamela Sutton FACO
 Andrew Thomas
 Christopher Thomson
 Anthony Van Aalst
 A/Prof Richard Voijlay FACO
 Rosalyn Voullaire
 Stephen Wakeling
 A/Prof Rodney Watkins AM FACO
 Richard Watt
 Robert Webster
 Carolyn West FACO
 David West FACO
 Thomas Wong
 Dr Yen Yap
 Dr Steve Zantos

AWARDS

Celebrating our people and
valued supporters



AWARDS

AS WITH MOST EVENTS in 2020, the ACO moved its Annual General Meeting in July to an on-line format. ACO and NVRI Members, supporters, stakeholders and staff joined in from across the country (and the Tasman) to help celebrate the award winners and supporters.

RESEARCH AWARDS

Nicola Family Fund 2020 Travel Grant Award

The Nicola Family Fund is a capital fund that exists in perpetuity to be a permanent reminder of the family's support of vision research to support young researchers as they begin their career in vision research.

AWARDEE:

Dr Young Jun (Jason) Jung

Jason is the first person to ever investigate the properties of the marsupial visual cortex with intrinsic optical imaging and has a published article on this work. Due to COVID-19 Jason was unable to use this grant to travel internationally.

He aims to use this travel grant to share his discoveries with the research community at a national scientific conference in the near future.



Dr Young Jun (Jason) Jung

STAFF AWARDS

Each year our Staff Awards recognise either an individual or a team that has gone above and beyond their roles to demonstrate a strong commitment to each of the ACO's six core values. At the end of 2020, in recognition of the significant effort, all staff received a thank you letter

and gift card for going above and beyond during the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, we did continue to deliver our Living the ACO Values awards throughout the year, with over 25 staff receiving this peer nominated commendation.



Staff Service Awards

Ricardo D'Cruz (30 years)
Dispensary Services Assistant

Dr Adrian Bruce (25 years)
Lead Optometrist Contact Lenses

Angeliki Arvanitis (25 years)
East Reservoir Site Manager

Diane Leaf (25 years)
Administrative Assistant

Outstanding Graduate Award for ACO Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics 2019

The ACO Outstanding Graduate Award for Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics is granted in recognition of the candidate who has achieved the highest score across all assessments for their graduating year.

The award is usually presented at the ACO Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics graduation night. However due to the restrictions in place, the ceremony was unable to be held and it was instead presented at the virtual 2020 Annual General Meeting.

Awardee:

Kenneth McLaren

Kenneth graduated from the School of Optometry at Queensland University of Technology in 1996. He commenced work in an independent private practice in Mackay before returning to South East Queensland. Kenneth has worked as a clinical optometrist in various locations in metropolitan Queensland and has also undertaken clinical supervising role at the QUT optometry clinic. He currently practices at Specsavers on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland.

Kenneth completed the ACO for Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics in 2019. He credits the course for allowing him to provide eyecare services to a wide array of patients especially in the COVID-19 era.

(L-R) Ricardo D'Cruz, Adrian Bruce, Maureen O' Keefe (CEO), Diane Leaf, Angeliki Arvanitis

Living the ACO Values Award Winners: (L-R) Chelsey Seamer, Quyen Pham, Nicholas Butler, Kirsty Lowe, Lisa Lombardi, Mae Chong, Joseph Waterman, Elizabeth Montgomery, Joanne Leong, Clare Escott, Eric Cheng, Janelle Scully, Shazia Tahseen, Jordan Carozzi, Kimberley Chung, Kervin Callanan





Kenneth McLaren

ACO Outstanding University Graduate Award

Each year the ACO invites all Australian Optometry schools to nominate one outstanding graduate from their University. The selection criteria for these awards is based on a combined evaluation of academic excellence and professional commitment. It consists of a plaque to commemorate the achievement, a two year complimentary ACO membership and \$250 in prize money. The ACO is delighted to recognise the dedication and commitment of the following Outstanding Graduates of 2020:

Jingyi Chen Deakin University
Alexandra Coffey Flinders University
Bronte Rolls Queensland University of Technology
Ilham Aden University of Melbourne
Sophia Dillon UNSW Sydney

MEMBER AWARDS

Honorary Life Membership Award

The Honorary Life Membership is awarded to either Members or non-members who have provided distinguished and meritorious service to the ACO or to the profession. The award recipients are influential in the community and have earned the respect and acknowledgment of their colleagues. Honorary Life Membership is the ACO's highest and most prestigious award. In 2020, the Honorary Life Membership was awarded to Bryan Fuller FACO.

AWARDEE:

Bryan Fuller FACO

Bryan Fuller graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1979 with a degree in Optometry. With a keen interest in children's vision, he completed a Fellowship in Behavioural Optometry in 2000. Bryan has had a highly successful career and is the owner of Horsfalls Optometrists in Echuca and Kyabram, Northern Victoria, where he has practiced for over 30 years. It is one of the largest rural optometry practices in Victoria.

Bryan has always been actively involved in the optometry profession at both a state and national level. He is a member of Optometry Australia, the Cornea and Contact Lens Society of Australia and the Australasian College of Behavioural Optometrists, where he is also



(L-R) Jingyi Chen, Alexandra Coffey, Bronte Rolls, Ilham Aden
 Absent: Sophia Dillon



Bryan Fuller FACO

a fellow and a former vice-president. A long-standing Member and an ACO Fellow, Bryan served on the ACO Council for many years, including as Honorary Treasurer from 2012 to 2013. He also served on various ACO committees from 2009, including the ACO Clinical Services Committee and chairing the ACO Finance and Risk Committee in 2011 and 2012.

ACO Member Award for Outstanding Service

The Australian College of Optometry Member Award for Outstanding Services recognises the valuable contribution of Members towards the ACO. This may be through the governance of the ACO, either on a Committee and/or Council or consistently and generously providing support, time and advice beyond the expectations of a Committee/Council. The award recipient should uphold and promote the principles and practices of the ACO in a positive and beneficial light and be highly regarded by peers. In 2020, the ACO Member Award for Outstanding Services was awarded to Rod Baker FACO.

AWARDEE:

Rod Baker FACO

Rod graduated from the University of Melbourne in 1988 and he went on to become the Head of Paediatric Services at the ACO in 1994. He established his own practice, Sunbury Optical in 2005, which specialises in children's vision. Rod was a clinical teacher at the University of



Rod Baker FACO

Melbourne for 10 years and has served as the President of Optometry Victoria.

An ACO Fellow, Rod served on the ACO Council for several years, as well as chairing the ACO Clinical Services Committee. He was instrumental in the development of the ACO Advanced Certificate in Children's Vision. From 2012 to 2017 Rod worked to support the establishment of the optometry course at Flinders University in Adelaide.

Rod has contributed significantly in advancing and advocating the role of optometry as a profession in the broader health system.

ACO Fellowship 2020

The ACO Fellowship is presented to Members who have made a significant contribution to the practice and profession of optometry and to the community. Our Fellowship program recognises outstanding individuals who are held in high esteem within the profession.

AWARDEES:

Kerryn Hart and Elisse Higginbotham

Kerryn Hart

Kerryn completed her Bachelor of Optometry and a Postgraduate Diploma in Advanced Clinical Optometry from the University of Melbourne. In 2009 she completed a Postgraduate Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics to further her clinical expertise and become therapeutically endorsed. She has since pursued a Master of Public Health and a Graduate Certificate of Higher Education to supplement



(L-R) ACO Fellows 2020: Elisse Higginbotham, Maureen O'Keefe (CEO), Kerry Hart

the professional work she was undertaking. At present Kerry is a Teaching Scholar at Deakin University and the Standards and Policy Advisor at Optometry Australia. With over 15 years of experience in clinical teaching, Kerry has worked with various institutions including the ACO, Brien Holden Vision Institute and Deakin University to help train the next generation of optometrists. She has been extensively involved in various international programs showcasing great leadership in promoting and training eye care professionals in order to help facilitate access to eye care among disadvantaged communities. This includes work in Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Cambodia.

Elisse Higginbotham

Elisse graduated from the University of Melbourne, and soon after undertook a Masters of Optometry at the University of New South Wales. She went on to complete her therapeutics qualification in 2006. Elisse has worked in an array of sectors including public, private and corporate optometry and in the university sector with a particular interest in paediatrics and myopia control. Over the years, Elisse has actively been involved in clinical teaching primarily at the ACO and delivered various lectures and workshops focused on myopia control and children's vision. During her time on the ACO Council, Elisse made valuable contributions serving as Council Vice President and Chair for two committees. She is currently the Lead Optometrist of Paediatric Services at the ACO, striving to further clinical excellence, collaboration and research.

NVRI FELLOWSHIP

The NVRI Fellowship is awarded to researchers who have made a significant contribution in the field of vision science and research and are held in high esteem by their peers.

AWARDEE:

Associate Professor Ulrike Grünert

Associate Professor Ulrike Grünert currently holds an appointment as Associate Professor in Ophthalmology and Visual Science at the University of Sydney. Ulrike's expertise is in the area of functional neuroanatomy of the mammalian retina with special focus on the primate retina. She received her PhD in Biology at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany in 1985. Following postdoctoral work at the University of Florida in the US she became a group leader at the Max-Planck Institute for Brain Research in Frankfurt, Germany. In 1994 she was awarded her Habilitation from the Goethe University in Frankfurt. Associate Professor Grünert won a Feodor Lynen fellowship of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation to join the Department of Physiology at the University of Sydney in 1994.

In 2003 she was awarded a Lions Vision Research Fellowship at the NVRI, and in 2006 was appointed as an Honorary Principal Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne. Ulrike has had 94 original research papers plus 7 review articles published in international refereed journals. She has been the first author or senior/corresponding author on 65 papers and her articles have been cited over 5000 times.



Associate Professor Ulrike Grünert

FUNDERS, SUPPORTERS AND DONORS

THE AUSTRALIAN College of Optometry and National Vision Research Institute are extremely grateful to all of our funders, donors and supporters. Their support allows us to continue the work that we do across clinical services, research and education.

CLINICAL SERVICES



The
Department
of Health



RESEARCH- NVRI



optiqueline



Schultz Laubman Schultz
Endowment Fund



The Nicola
Family Fund

Beresford
Cambridge Fund

NVRI Governors
Endowment Fund

DONORS

Michael Aitken
Hamdy Amrizal
Margaret Banks OAM
Janice Bastiaan
Colin Bates
Susan Callahan
Assoc Prof Heather Connor

Jennie Cooke
Keith Crowle
Rachel Denham
APS Foundation
Timothy Fricke
Malcolm Gin
Assoc Prof Ulrike Grünert

Dr Alex Hui
Ural Jarkan
Graham Lakkis
Optique Line
Peter Mildren
Maureen O'Keefe
Loan Quach

Peter Roth
Anne Russell
Stephen Ryan
Dr Simon Skalicky
Robert Webster
Dr Zhichao Wu
Eve Sze-Yi Yeh

CORPORATE SERVICES

A strong, effective and
sustainable organisation



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

CORPORATE SERVICES PROVIDES support services across the ACO, delivered by a team of dedicated staff. The services provided by the team include the provision of strategic, technical, and administrative support along with partnering advice across the many functions including:

- Business systems and development
- Facilities and infrastructure
- Finance and payroll
- Governance and risk
- People and culture
- Information and communications technology
- Project management

The year 2020 was a challenging year not just for the ACO but also for the Corporate Services team. The COVID-19 pandemic not only brought with it health and safety concerns for all staff and patients but also the administrative and operational challenges required to support the organisation through this period of uncertainty. The added support in the facilities, business development and risk functions coupled with the ongoing expertise across the people and culture and finance teams provided a solid foundation of support to the ACO during what was

a challenging time for the entire organisation.

In early 2020, the Corporate Services team farewelled its previous Executive General Manager, Clare Escott. Clare did an amazing job leading the Corporate Services function across the ACO for just over 9 years. Several key staff have joined the Corporate Services team over the year with the entire team all making an outstanding contribution. In my role as the new Director of Finance and Corporate Services I hope to help support continued change and improvement across the many shared support service functions.



Renaldo Tomasiello
Director
of Finance &
Corporate Services

Renaldo Tomasiello

Director of Finance and Corporate Services



Corporate Services Team (L-R): Addie Jiang, Pat Huen, Jessica Sloan, Joshua Bernardo, Melinda Heap, Tenille Ryan, Renaldo Tomasiello, Thomas Hobson, Chelsey Seamer
Absent: Maria Carlos, Kervin Callanan, Tim Vong, Peta Coats, Will Oliver, (Issa) Christia Quijano, Chloe Turner

Year highlights

➤ The ACO risk management framework and mitigation practices supported through the Corporate Services function was able to provide a robust pathway for the organisation as it worked through the ever-changing complexities of the COVID-19 pandemic response.

➤ The team was able to respond to the pandemic quickly and effectively by establishing access to the IT platform to support the work from home needs of staff as a response to the risk mitigation controls that were implemented.

➤ The team's operational response also provided support and advice to all areas of the ACO. We also lead the procurement and risk responses to maintain effective controls around social distancing, supply of PPE and updating of maintenance protocols as appropriate, all whilst subject to the ever-evolving guidelines by government.

➤ The Corporate Services team structure was settled in response to the 2019 restructure. The pandemic response vindicated the decision to invest in the added support in this area. A change in staffing in 2020 also across the Corporate Services team ensured that a greater diversity mix was represented.

➤ A line of credit was approved and now provides the ACO with an extra line of defence in terms of access to liquidity.

➤ A new centralised contract management system was also rolled out helping maintain and administer more effectively the ACO suite of contracts.

The team was able to respond to the pandemic quickly and effectively by establishing access to the IT platform to support the work from home needs of staff.

➤ The People and Culture department expanded, with additional resources available to assist with the increased workload directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Including but not limited to, the issuing of worker permits, employee communication and JobKeeper updates.

➤ People and Culture led, in consultation with Executive Management, the first Culture Survey in four years. The survey was conducted to understand the perceptions of ACO employees and the type of culture existing across the various areas, covering five interlocking elements of organisational culture — engaging people, identity and direction, values, leadership, and organisational change. A response rate of 72% was received, with 13,473 pieces of quantitative data and 2,384 pieces of narrative. Throughout 2021 and beyond, these insights will help to identify the needs for strengthening the ACO.

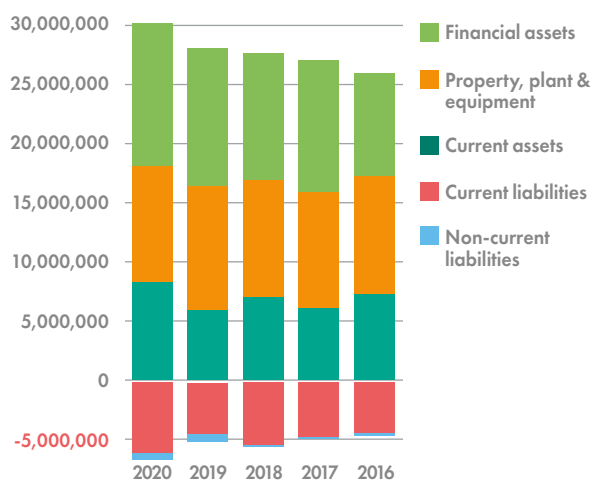


People and Culture Team (L-R): Chelsey Seamer (Head of People and Culture), Melinda Heap (People and Culture Coordinator)

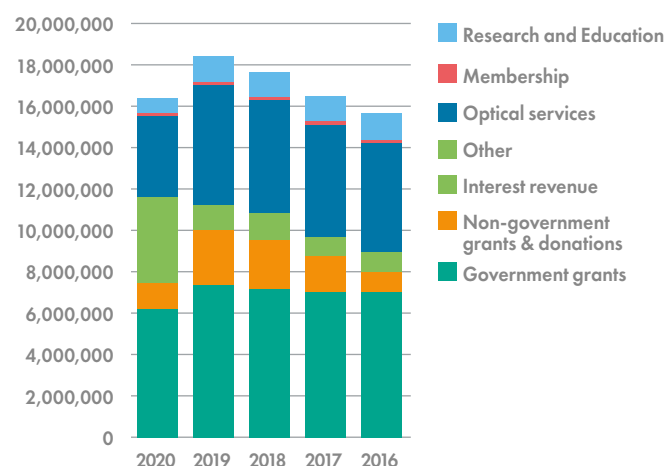
Results for the year

	CONSOLIDATED GROUP		ACO	
	2020	2019	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	\$
NET RESULTS FOR THE YEAR	709,038	(84,890)	469,355	(151,086)
COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	(10,953)	877,373	(26,057)	55,808
COMPREHENSIVE RESULTS	698,085	792,483	443,298	(95,278)

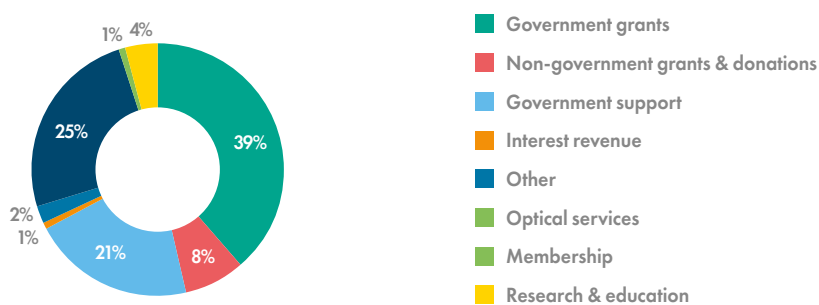
Balance Sheet Breakdown \$
(2016 – 2020) CONSOLIDATED GROUP



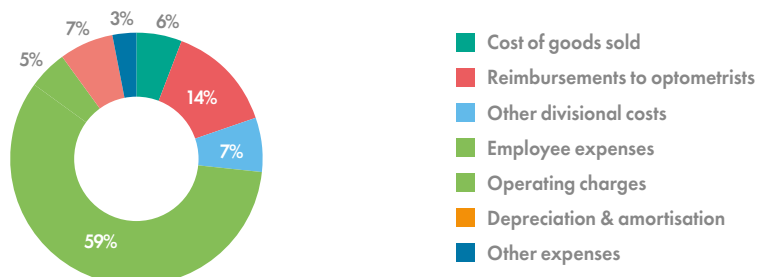
Income from Operating Activities \$
(2016 – 2020) CONSOLIDATED GROUP



Income from Operating Activities
(2020) ACO



Expenses
(2020) ACO



OUR PEOPLE: COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND STAFF

The ACO acknowledges the dedication and commitment of our Councillors, committee members, staff and research students in 2020.

Council

Rodney A. Hodge *President*
 Prof Konrad Pesudovs *(until September 2020)*
 Mitchell Anjou AM
 Hon John Chaney *(from May 2020)*
 Prof Linda Denehy
 Denise Gronow
 Assoc Prof Peter Keller *(until September 2020)*
 Sophie Koh
 Hon Paul Lucas *(until April 2020)*
 Maureen O'Keefe
 Tim Powell
 Clare Escott *Company Secretary (until February 2020)*
 Tracy Weimar *Company Secretary (from February 2020)*

NVRI Board of Administration

Denise Gronow *Chair*
 Sandra Calvert
 Rodney Hodge *(from August 2020)*
 Prof Michael Ibbotson
 Maureen O'Keefe
 Prof Konrad Pesudovs *(until August 2020)*
 Tracy Weimar *Secretary (from February 2020)*
 Clare Escott *Secretary (until February 2020)*

NVRI Scientific Advisory Committee**

Prof Linda Denehy *Chair*
 Prof Paul Baird
 Prof Erica Fletcher
 Prof David Grayden
 Prof Michael Ibbotson
 Maureen O'Keefe
 Prof Marcelo Rosa

**This committee did not meet in 2020 and is not currently active.*

Finance and Risk Committee

Denise Gronow *Chair*
 Mitchell Anjou AM *(until August 2020)*
 John Delinaoum
 Rodney Hodge *(from August 2020)*
 Maureen O'Keefe
 Prof Konrad Pesudovs *(until August 2020)*
 Tim Powell *(from August 2020)*
 Ian Thompson

Human Resource Ethics Committee**

Assoc Prof Peter Keller *Chair*
 Mary Archibald
 Leigh Berrell
 Maureen O'Keefe
 Dr Cheryl Read
 Kerry Risely *(until January 2020)*
 Jenny Wilkins
 Paola Fernandez, *Secretary*
 **The Human Research Ethics Committee closed on the 30/09/2020. The responsibility for monitoring of all active research projects and ethics approval of any new project is now undertaken by the University of Melbourne Psychology Health and Applied Sciences Human Ethics Sub-Committee (E00246).

Membership Review Steering Committee

Prof Linda Denehy *Chair*
 Thomas Ford
 Elisse Higginbotham
 Rodney Hodge
 Sophie Koh
 Michael Li
 Maureen O'Keefe
 Rhea Sharma
 Kevin Sun
 Jane Trevaskis
 Dr Michelle Waugh

Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group

Maureen O'Keefe *Chair*
 Anne-Marie Banfield
 Robyn Bradley
 Colette Davis
 Melinda Heap
 Nilmini John
 Levi Lovett
 Tess Mihailou
 Colin Mitchell
 Kate Pecar *(until July 2020)*
 Joseph Waterman

Executive Management Team

Maureen O'Keefe
 Professor Michael Ibbotson
 Chelsey Seamer
 Renaldo Tomasiello
 Jane Trevaskis
 Neville Turner

Senior Management Team

Maureen O'Keefe *Chair*
 Piers Carozzi
 Jennifer Caulfield
 Dr Nellie Deen
 Colette Davis
 Clare Escott *(until February 2020)*
 Paola Fernandez
 Thomas Hobson
 Prof Michael Ibbotson
 Tenille Ryan
 Chelsey Seamer
 Roman Serebrianik *(until January 2020)*
 Renaldo Tomasiello
 Jane Trevaskis
 Neville Turner
 Dr Michelle Waugh



ACO Senior Management Team (L-R Standing): Prof Michael Ibbotson (Director, NVRI), Maureen O'Keefe (CEO), Colette Davis (Senior Project Officer), Thomas Hobson (Business Improvement and Risk Manager), Michelle Waugh (Head of Education), Jane Trevaskis (Director, Education, Membership and Marketing), Nellie Deen (Head of Specialist Services and Clinical Care), Piers Carozzi (Head of VES and Community Eye Care), Tenille Ryan (Facilities Project Manager) (L-R Sitting): Renaldo Tomasiello (Director, Finance and Corporate Services), Chelsey Seamer (Head of People and Culture), Neville Turner (Director, Clinical Services)
Absent: Jennifer Caulfield (Head of Clinic Operations and Service Improvement), Paola Fernandez (Business Improvement and Risk Manager)

Staff

Maureen O'Keefe *Chief Executive Officer*

Clinical Services

Neville Turner *Director of Clinical Services*

Piers Carozzi *Head of VES & Community Eye Care*

Jennifer Caulfield *Head of Clinic Operations & Service Improvement*

Dr Nellie Deen *Head of Specialist Services & Clinical Care*

Roman Serebrianik *Head of Primary & Specialist Eye Care Services (until January 2020)*

Dr Adrian Bruce *Lead Optometrist Contact Lens Services*

Mae Chong *Lead Optometrist Clinical Education, Manager Low Vision Services*

Lauren Gaskell-Kharsas *Lead Optometrist Satellite Clinics and VES, Dandenong Site Manager*

Elisse Higginbotham *Lead Optometrist Paediatric Services*

Iris Huang *Frankston Site Manager, Acting Lead Optometrist Satellite Clinics and VES*

Lisa Lombardi *Lead Optometrist Primary Care*

Janelle Scully *Lead Optometrist Ocular Disease Services*

Carla Abbott *Sessional Optometrist*

Emily Alessi *Customer Service*

Yiota Anastasopoulos *Customer Service*

Nicole Anders *Customer Service*

Anna Angelodemou *Administration Assistant*

Judd Aravena *Dispensing Technician*

Angeliki Arvanitis *East Reservoir Site Manager*

Sandra Au *Sessional Optometrist*

Erica Barclay *Staff Optometrist*

Carol Bramich *Customer Service*

Luke Burns *Staff Optometrist*

Nicholas Butler *Customer Service*

Jillian Campbell *Sessional Optometrist*

Jordan Carozzi *Customer Service*

Kathryn Case *Sessional Optometrist*
 Mabel Ceballos *Customer Service*
 Margaret Chan *Customer Service*
 Kuong Chang *Sessional Optometrist*
 Eric Cheng *Staff Optometrist*
 Helen Cho *Staff Optometrist, Acting Manager of Daily Operations*
 Joseph Choi *Sessional Optometrist*
 Lee Yin Chong *Executive Assistant to the Director of Clinical Services (until March 2020)*
 Kimberley Chung *Customer Service*
 Hazel Corry *Administration Assistant*
 Lynn Cupido *Customer Service*
 Ricardo D'Cruz *Dispensary Services Assistant*
 Albert D'Souza *Sessional Optometrist*
 Lesley Dacion *Staff Optometrist*
 Dilani Dewage Dona *Sessional Optometrist*
 Carla Dinardo *Sessional Optometrist*
 Kim Doake *Customer Service*
 Bozana Dusanovic *Customer Service*
 Michelle Ee *Ophthalmic Assistant*
 Zeinab Fakih *Staff Optometrist*
 Angela Fornaro *Administration Assistant*
 Johanna Fraser *Ophthalmic Assistant*
 Lee Fu *Sessional Optometrist*
 Gemma Gaggini *Staff Optometrist*
 Kalaivarny Ganesalingam *Staff Optometrist*
 Angeline George *Customer Service*
 Tristan Glover *Elizabeth Eye Care Site Manager*
 Abbie Guy *Customer Service*
 Michelle Haddrell *Customer Service*
 Rosemary Haikal *Staff Optometrist*
 Angela Hall *Manager of Clinical Research*
 Kerry Hart *Sessional Optometrist*
 Karla Herrera *Customer Service*
 Nicholas Hockley *Sessional Optometrist*
 Alena Hodzic *Customer Service*
 Li Ting Hoo *Sessional Optometrist*
 Peregrine Horton *Broadmeadows Site Manager*
 Vianh Huynh *Sessional Optometrist*

Chelsea Jamieson *Administration Assistant*
 Nilmini John *Manager of Aboriginal Services*
 Katrina Kalff *Sessional Optometrist*
 Masumi Kobayashi *Sessional Optometrist*
 Can Komser *Staff Optometrist*
 Vivian Kong *Staff Optometrist*
 Chelsea Kwan *Customer Service*
 Rachael Kwok *Staff Optometrist*
 King Li Lay *Customer Service*
 Diane Leaf *Administration Assistant*
 Jasmine Lichtenstein *Sessional Optometrist*
 Ling Lee *Sessional Optometrist*
 David Leeming *Optical Technician*
 Joanne Leong *Staff Optometrist*
 Dr Josephine Li *Manager of Community Outreach Services*
 Michael Li *Staff Optometrist*
 Steffanie Liang *Sessional Optometrist*
 Natasha Lieschke *Executive Assistant to the Director of Clinical Services*
 Linda Lim *Customer Service (until January 2020)*
 Shuli Liu *Staff Optometrist*
 Jivan Lotay *Sessional Optometrist*
 Kirsty Lowe *Staff Optometrist*
 Sharon Ly *Sessional Optometrist*
 Marie Marchand *Staff Optometrist*
 Theo Markos *Sessional Optometrist*
 Kirsty McIntyre *Customer Service*
 Subahsinee McKenzie *Sessional Optometrist*
 Alice McLennan *Staff Optometrist*
 Vicki McSweeney *Manager of Clinic Administration*
 Tessa Mihailou *Optical Technician*
 Elizabeth Montgomery *Customer Service*
 Loyal Naji *Staff Optometrist (until July 2020)*
 Ho Wah Ng *Manager of Visual Functions Clinic*
 Dung Nguyen *Staff Optometrist*
 Hawa Nour *Customer Service*
 Dianne Nulty *Customer Service*
 Scott Panozza *Staff Optometrist*

Kate Pecar *Staff Optometrist (until August 2020)*
 Lisa Perri *Dispensary Services Assistant*
 Quyen Pham *Senior Receptionist*
 Larissa Rae *Administration Assistant (until August 2020)*
 Danielle Raiti *Senior Receptionist*
 Kay Read *Customer Service*
 Sandy Rezk *Sessional Optometrist*
 Sonia Rossin *Customer Service*
 Julie Rozman *Customer Service*
 Heidrun Saheed *Customer Service*
 Tracy-Leigh Saxon *Customer Service*
 Paloma Scherer *Senior Optical Dispenser*
 Kristina Sechenova *Staff Optometrist*
 Roman Serebrianik *Sessional Optometrist*
 Stella Shin *Staff Optometrist*
 Christa Sipos-Ori *Staff Optometrist*
 John Sweeney *Sessional Optometrist*
 Vanessa Tang *Sessional Optometrist*
 Catherine Tay *Sessional Optometrist*
 Jonathan Tay *Sessional Optometrist*
 Lynette Taylor *Senior Receptionist*
 Angela Thomson *Customer Service*
 Linda Toban *Sessional Optometrist*
 Dzung Tran *Staff Optometrist*
 Tracy Tran *Staff Optometrist*
 Tram Tran *Customer Service*
 Mary Travis *Sessional Optometrist*
 Lien Trinh *Sessional Optometrist (until December 2020)*
 Karen Trinh *Staff Optometrist*
 An Truong *Sessional Optometrist*
 Courtney Turner *Customer Service*
 Davut Ulusoy *Sessional Optometrist*
 Leonidas Vlahakis *Sessional Optometrist*
 Kevin Vo *Sessional Optometrist*
 Jean Walters *Sessional Optometrist*
 Amanda Wang *Staff Optometrist*
 Joseph Waterman *Staff Optometrist*
 Natalie Watt *Sessional Optometrist*
 Adine Wield *Staff Optometrist*
 Katrina Wong *Manager of Daily Operations*
 Ching Yi Wu *Staff Optometrist (until June 2020)*
 Jianing Yan *Staff Optometrist*

Vin-Lin Yang *Sessional Optometrist*
 Michael Yen *Braybrook Site Manager*
 Hee Wei Yii *Staff Optometrist*
 Mina You *Staff Optometrist*
 Alexis Zhang *Sessional Optometrist*
 Danielle Zheng *Acting Dandenong Site Manager*

National Vision Research Institute

Prof Michael Ibbotson *Director of National Vision Research Institute*

Dr Ali Almasi *Lions NVRI Research Fellow*
 James Begeng *PhD Student*
 Anna Brzostowska *Bioresource and Administration Coordinator*
 Dr Marianne Coleman *Clinical Vision Research Fellow*
 Samira Falahatdoost *PhD Student*
 Marcela Gomez-Escudero *Bioresource Facility Attendant (until July 2020)*
 Maryam Hejazi *PhD Student*
 Simon Higham *PhD Student*
 Dr Young Jun (Jason) Jung *PhD Student*
 Elaina Kotzialampas *Bioresource Facility Attendant*
 Hermine Lup *Bioresource Facility Attendant*
 Dr Hamish Meffin *Honorary Senior Research Fellow*
 Kevin Meng *Research Assistant (until November 2020)*
 Georgia Rees *Bioresource Facility Attendant*
 Tenille Ryan *Brain Function CoE Node Administrator*
 Jordan Sibberas *PhD Student*
 Dr Melanie Stamp *Honorary Research Fellow*
 Dr Shi Hai (Scott) Sun *Post-doctoral Fellow*
 Dr Wei Tong *Research Fellow*
 Dr Molis Yunzab *Post-doctoral Fellow*

Education, Membership and Marketing

Jane Trevaskis *Director of Education, Membership & Marketing*

Madeleine Butler *Marketing Coordinator*
 Colette Davis *Senior Project Officer*
 Timothy Hall *Marketing Coordinator (until April 2020)*

Andrew Hannemann *Membership Coordinator (until June 2020)*

Angela Kvasha *Administration Assistant (until July 2020)*

Julia Pledger *Administration Assistant*

Ryan Rosario *Clinical Education Coordinator (until February 2020)*

Rhea Sharma *Membership & Engagement Coordinator*

Shazia Tahseen *Course Administration Coordinator*

Dr Michelle Waugh *Head of Education*

Honorary Archivists

Michael Aitken *Honorary Archivist*
 Colin Bates *Honorary Archivist*
 Joseph Chakman AM *Honorary Archivist*
 Kathleen (Kate) Doherty *Honorary Archivist*
 Pamela Sutton *Honorary Archivist*

Corporate Services

Renaldo Tomasiello *Director of Finance & Corporate Services*

Chelsey Seamer *Head of People & Culture*

Clare Escott *Executive General Manager Finance & Corporate Services (until February 2020)*

Joshua Bernardo *Technical Intern – IT & Equipment*

Kervin Callanan *Building Support Officer*
 Kristine Carlos *Casual Administration Assistant (until June 2020)*

Maria Carlos *Finance Officer*

Peta Coats *Administration Officer*

Natalia Dusanovic *Casual Administration Assistant*

Sage Escott *Casual Administration Assistant*

Paola Fernandez *Business Improvement & Risk Manager*

Melinda Heap *People & Culture Coordinator*

Pat Huen *Finance Manager*

Addie Jiang *Management & Project Accountant*

Bradley Mills *Administration Assistant (until April 2020)*

Will Oliver *Junior Accounts Clerk*

(Issa) Christia Quijano *Procurement & Risk Officer*

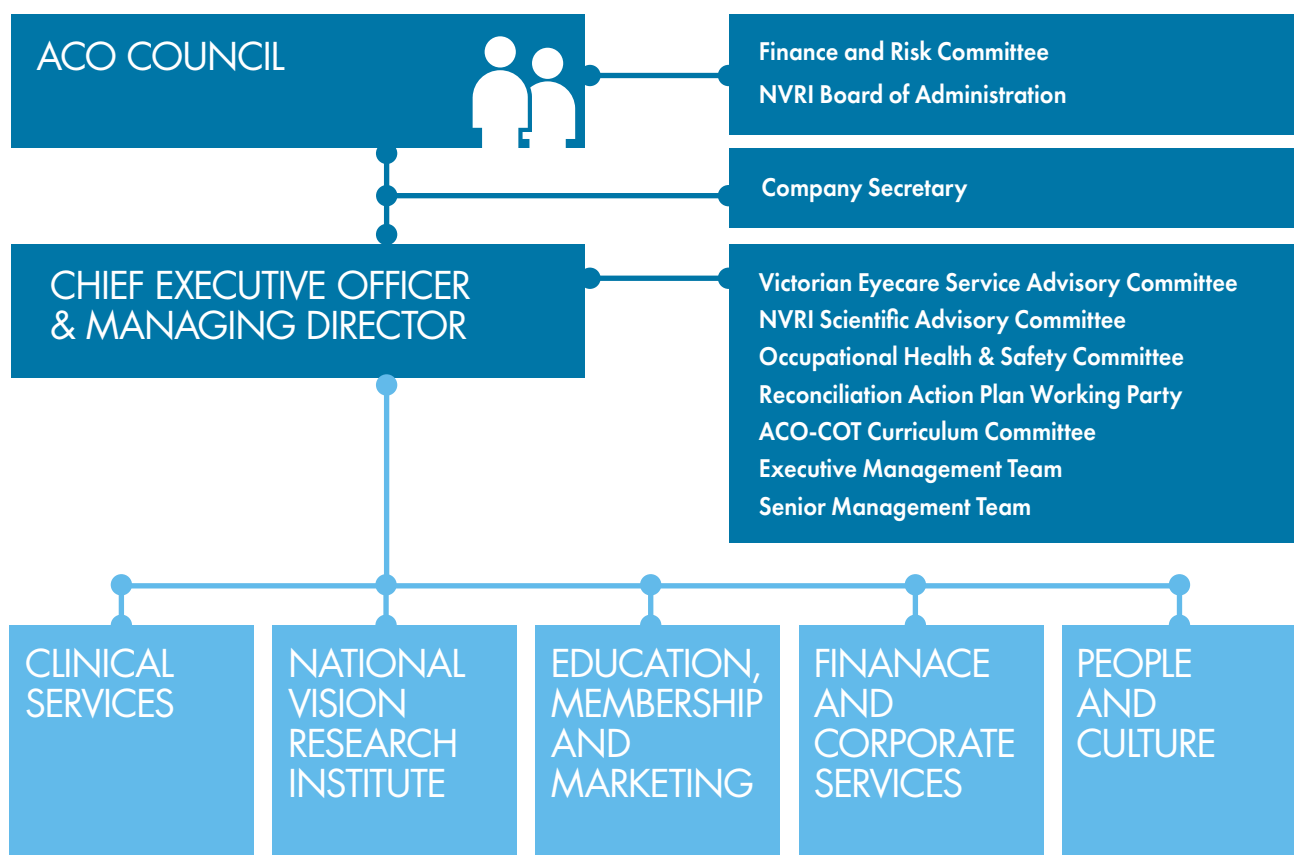
Tenille Ryan *Facilities Project Manager*

Jessica Sloan *Accounts Clerk*

Chloe Turner *Casual Administration Assistant*

Timothy Vong *Casual IT & Facilities Assistant*

ORGANISATION CHART



AFFILIATIONS

University of Melbourne
Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia
Alfred Hospital
ARC Centre of Excellence for Integrative Brain Function
Austin Health
Australian National University
Australian Research Council
BioMelbourne Network
Bionics Institute
Bionic Vision Australia
Bionic Vision Technologies
Brien Holden Foundation
Brien Holden Vision Institute
Broadmeadows Health Service
Carbon Cybernetics
Centre Eye Research Australia
Centre for Eye Health
cohealth

Commonwealth Government
Deakin University
Department of Health (Commonwealth)
Department of Health (Victoria)
Eastern Access Community Health
Flinders University
iBionics
Indigenous Eye Health, University of Melbourne
International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness
Monash Health
Monash University
National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
National Health & Medical Research Council
Northern Health
Nunkawarrin Yunti of South Australia Inc
Optometry Australia
Optometry Victoria South Australia
Optometry Council of Australia & New Zealand

Peninsula Health
Reconciliation Australia
RMIT University
Royal Flying Doctor Service
Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital
Rural Doctors Workforce Agency
Rural Workforce Agency Victoria
Swinburne University of Technology
The University of Auckland
The University of Melbourne
University of Canberra
UNSW Sydney
Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
Victorian Aboriginal Health Service
Victorian Lions Foundation
Victorian State Government
Vision 2020 Australia
Vision Australia
Vision Initiative
Watto Purrunga Aboriginal Primary Health Care Service
Your Community Health

CONCISE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 December 2020

COUNCILLORS' REPORT

The Responsible Persons (the Councillors) present their report on the Australian College of Optometry (ACO) and its controlled entities (collectively the consolidated group) for the financial year ended 31 December 2020.

Councillors

The names of the Councillors of ACO in office at any time during, or since the end of the financial year are:—

R Hodge
M Anjou
J Chaney (*from 21 May 2020*)
L Denehy
D Gronow
P Keller (*until 30 September 2020*)
S Koh
P Lucas (*until 27 April 2020*)
M O'Keefe
K Pesudovs (*until 4 September 2020*)
T Powell

The Councillors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

Consolidated Group

The Australian College of Optometry is appointed as Trustee to the Schultz Laubman Schultz Endowment Fund Trust and the NVRI Governors Endowment Fund Trust. The Councillors of ACO are appointed as Trustees to the Beresford Cambridge Bequest Trust.

The Councillors of ACO consider it is a reporting entity as defined by AASB 1053 and the general purpose financial statements of the Australian College of Optometry have been prepared under Section 60-95 of the ACNC Act. In preparing these financial statements, ACO has included controlled entities (the Trust Funds) that are part of the 'ACNC reporting group' consolidated in these financial statements as follows:

- The Trustee for Schultz Laubman Schultz Endowment Fund Trust;
- The Trustee for NVRI Governors Endowment Fund Trust; and
- The Trustee for the Beresford Cambridge Bequest Trust.

ACO holds Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status.

Principal Activities

The objective of ACO is to undertake public charitable activities primarily in Australia to promote the prevention and / or the control of disease in human beings.

The principal activities of the consolidated group in the course of the year have been the provision of affordable eyecare services, principally to communities experiencing disadvantage; the advancement of eye and vision care through research; and to support the education of current and new generations of optometrists.

There were no significant changes in the nature of the consolidated group's principal activities during the financial year. In addition, the operations of ACO remained essentially unchanged in 2020.

The income and property of ACO must be used and applied solely in promotion of its objects and no portion will be dismantled, paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or by way of profit to Members. The assets and income of the Trust Funds must be used solely for the furtherance of its' objectives and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Funds.

Short-term and Long-term Objectives

ACO Council has approved ACO's strategic plan for 2018 - 2022.

The entity's short-term objectives are to:

- continue to strengthen our clinical governance framework;
- continue to be a respected leader in the sector;
- identify opportunities to address unmet need in public health eye care;
- deliver high impact, internationally recognised research;
- build research capability and increase the translation of research to deliver outcomes that benefit the community;
- develop best practice clinical learning pathways;
- build membership and supporters;
- foster a culture of leadership, innovation, development and partner engagement;
- improve digital capability and maximise the benefit returned to the community through the investment of resources.

The entity's medium to long-term objectives are to:

- **Clinical Optometry Services:** provide high quality public health eye care for communities in need and to lead best practice and standards;
- **Research:** undertake high impact internationally recognised research to improve the understanding of vision science and eye care;

- **Education:** provide best practice clinical learning pathways for optometrists from pre-registration through to professional practice;
- **Sustainable Organisation:** develop an innovative and collaborative culture with our people striving for excellence in everything we do, facilitated by innovative and effective technology, systems and processes and with our Members and supporters key to our success.

Strategies

Business plans and operational budgets for each Division are in place which set out the specific strategies adopted to support the achievement of the overall short-term and long-term objectives.

Key Performance Measures

ACO measures its own performance through the use of both quantitative and qualitative benchmarks, including benchmarks relating to patient numbers, clinic occupancy and productivity, membership and key financial indicators. The benchmarks are used by management and the Council to assess the financial sustainability of ACO and whether ACO's short-term and long-term objectives have been achieved. The Council has not identified any additional actions that need to be taken arising from this process.

This work continues to be supported by a range of management committees, with oversight of risk and financial performance issues by the Finance and Risk Committee which is scheduled to meet at least four times during each year.

Operating Results and Review of Operations

The results for the year for ACO and the Consolidated Group are set out on page 74.

The consolidated group result for the year was surplus \$709,038 (2019: deficit \$84,890) and the comprehensive result for the year was surplus \$678,143 (2019: surplus \$792,483).

The net assets of the consolidated group at 31 December 2020 were \$24,026,435 (2019: \$23,348,292).

The COVID-19 global pandemic negatively impacted the operations of ACO during the 2020 financial year, the most significant being a fall in clinical services revenue of 31.6% (\$1,820,412). In response to COVID-19, ACO successfully applied for and received Federal government support including predominately Jobkeeper funding with \$3,253,000 received during the 2020 financial year. The Councillors in recognition of the COVID-19 threat took various other actions to mitigate the risk including establishing a line of credit and cost minimisation strategies.

ACO is exempt from income tax and therefore no provision for income tax has been made.

Significant Changes in the State of Affairs

There were no significant changes in the consolidated group's state of affairs during the financial year. The key significant event was the impact of COVID-19 in 2020 as illustrated under Operating Results and Review of Operations.

Events Subsequent to the End of the Reporting Period

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the consolidated group, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the consolidated group in future financial years.

Likely Events and Expected Results of Operations

Likely developments in the operations of the consolidated group and the expected results of those operations in future financial years have not been included as the inclusion of such information is likely to result in unreasonable prejudice to the consolidated group.

Environmental Regulation

The operations of the consolidated group are not subject to any significant environmental regulation under the laws of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territories.

Information on Councillors

Rodney A. Hodge

B.Sc. Optom

President (from August 2020)
Executive Committee Chair (from August 2020)
Member of Finance & Risk Committee
(from August 2020)
Member of the NVRI Board of Administration
(from August 2020)
Elected Member of Council since 2018



Rodney is an experienced optometrist who has worked in private practice, corporate practice and public health. He worked part time for over 20 years with North Metropolitan Health Services in Western Australia whilst running a private optometry practice. He has had a variety of experience in management and governance roles, including nine years on the WA division of the Council of Optometry. Rodney has an active interest in continuing education for optometrists. He has also served the community through local government (Councillor, City of Subiaco, 13 years) and a number of planning and land use committees in Perth. Rodney is now semi-retired, undertaking some locum optometry work mostly in rural and remote locations providing him with a greater understanding of the challenges of working in those regions.

Mitchell Anjou AM
BScOptom MScOptom FACO

Member of Finance & Risk Committee
(until August 2020)
Elected member of Council 2015 - 2018 and
from 2019



Mitchell has a long-standing connection to ACO. A Member since 1982, Mitchell served as the Clinic Director for nearly 20 years until 2010. He is currently employed at The University of Melbourne as an Academic Specialist and Associate Professor and is the Deputy Director of Indigenous Eye Health in the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health. Mitchell is co-author of The Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision, the policy framework nationally adopted to achieve equitable vision and eye care outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. He continues to publish, present, advise, advocate and support efforts towards this goal. Mitchell was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia for contributions to optometry and public health in 2013 and an ACO Member Award for Outstanding Service in 2017.

Professor Linda Denehy
BAppSc (Physio), PhD

Executive Committee Member (until August 2020)
University of Melbourne appointee to Council
since 2017



Linda is Head of the Melbourne School of Health Sciences and Professor of Physiotherapy at The University of Melbourne, as well as joint head of Allied Health Research at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre. Linda has extensive teaching and learning experience at both under and post graduate level. Her research interests are in rehabilitation in critically ill patients, those with cancer, COPD and in perioperative medicine. Linda is a member of the Society of Critical Care Medicine where she is currently on a guidelines panel examining rehabilitation in ICU. She reviews for national and international competitive granting bodies and for several international scientific journals including, Lung Cancer, Intensive Care Medicine, Critical Care Medicine and Thorax

The Honorable John Chaney
SC BJuris LLB

Skills-based member of Council (from 21 May 2020)



John is a former justice of the Supreme Court of Western Australia, retiring from the court in 2018. His judicial career spanned 14 years, during which time he sat as a judge of the District Court, Deputy President and then President of the State Administrative Tribunal of WA, and on the Supreme Court. Prior to his appointment as a judge, John practised as a barrister for 10 years during which time he was appointed Senior Counsel. Prior to this, he was a partner in a commercial law firm where he practised in the areas of commercial litigation, professional negligence and planning law. He served on the Council of the Law Society of WA for 12 years and was president in 1991. He has sat on several Law School advisory boards at universities in WA, and was an inaugural board member of the Australian Advocacy Institute. John is now engaged in practice as a private mediator and arbitrator. He holds the office of Acting Parliamentary Inspector of the Crime and Corruption Commission of WA, chairs the Forensic Biology Advisory Council and the Piddington Society and is a member of the National Sports Tribunal.

Denise Gronow
CA

Honorary Treasurer
Executive Committee Member
Chair of the Finance & Risk Committee
Chair of the NVRI Board of Administration
Skills-based member of Council since 2018



Denise was appointed as Honorary Treasurer and as Chair of the ACO's Finance & Risk Committee in February 2017. Denise has been an independent member of the ACO's Finance & Risk Committee since March 2014. She previously acted as an alternate director on ACO Council between August 2015 and January 2016. Denise is a qualified chartered accountant with significant experience working at a senior level in both the professional practice and banking sectors.

Associate Professor

Peter Keller

**BAppSc(Optom), MBA, PhD, MHEth,
PGCert OcTher FACO**

Vice President (until August 2020)

Executive Committee Member (until August 2020)

Chair of Human Research Ethics Committee

(until August 2020)

Elected member of Council (until September 2020)



Peter has significant experience across clinical practice in private and public healthcare, clinical research, research ethics and governance, professional associations and membership services. He holds an appointment at the University of Melbourne as an Honorary Principal Fellow and is a clinical instructor at UM Eyecare in addition to his main role with Therapeutic Goods Administration developing and implementing a regulatory oversight program for clinical trials. Peter is an alumnus of Queensland University of Technology - BAppSc(Optom) 1985, University of Western Australia - MBA (1992) and PhD (2008), and University of Melbourne - MHEth (2003) and PGCert OcTher (2004). He is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry. Peter has been an ACO member since 2001 and was appointed to Council in May 2019.

Sophie Koh

**BOptom (UniMelb), GradCertOcTher,
LmusTCL**

Elected member of Council since 2018



Sophie is an experienced optometrist who started her career in the Northern Territory. She has broad experience working in public health and corporate settings across metropolitan, rural and outback Australia. She has extensive experience working in ophthalmology teams and training nurses in East Timor, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Sophie studied her undergraduate degree at the University of Melbourne and was amongst the first cohort of graduates to achieve the ACO Certificate in Ocular Therapeutics. She is now the National Professional Services Advisor at Optometry Australia. She is passionate about public health and Indigenous eye health. She is devoted to empowering students and colleagues to improve their knowledge and skills so they can play a wider role in improving the health and wellbeing of our underprivileged communities locally and overseas.

The Honorable Paul Lucas

BEcon LLB MBA MURP MPIA FAICD

Skills-based member of Council (to April 2020)



Paul was appointed to Council in July 2014. He holds Bachelor's Degrees in Economics and Law as well as Master's Degrees in Business Administration and Urban and Regional Planning. Paul is both a Solicitor and Urban Planner by profession and was Queensland Deputy Premier for 4 years and a Minister in the Queensland State Government for 11 years. His Ministerial responsibilities included Infrastructure & Planning; Local Government; Health; and Attorney-General amongst others. As Health Minister, he was responsible for a number of initiatives in broadening the scope of practice for optometrists and other allied health professionals – an issue he continues to be passionate about. Paul is an Adjunct Professor at Bond University and the Australian Catholic University. Paul chairs the Board of the Brisbane Cross River Rail Delivery Authority and is a Director of the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health. He designed international programs for and lectures for UQ International Development and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Maureen O'Keefe

BSc (Hons) DipEd MBA GAICD

Executive Committee Member

Member of Finance & Risk Committee

Member of the NVRI Board of Administration

Chief Executive Officer



Maureen was appointed Chief Executive Officer and board director of the ACO in 2013. Maureen has held senior executive and board director positions across health, research and education sectors over the past 17 years, with a focus on consolidation and growth of organisations to achieve long term sustainability. Previously Maureen was Chief Operating Officer at Walter & Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research for 7 years during a period of major expansion and restructure, following an earlier career at the University of Melbourne in senior executive roles. Maureen is currently Deputy Chair of Vision2020 Australia and was previously a board director of the BioMelbourne Network and Very Special Kids, and held Ministerial appointments on the Victorian Cancer Agency, the Victorian Clinical Trial Research Council and South Australian Govt Clinical Pathways. Maureen is also a graduate of the Leadership Victoria Program and MIT Sloan Executive Education Program.

Professor Konrad Pesudovs

**BScOptom PhD PGDipAdvClinOptom
DipWSET MCOptom FACO FAAO
FCCLSA FARVO FAICD**

President (until August 2020)
Executive Committee Chair (until August 2020)
Member of Finance & Risk Committee
(until August 2020)
Member of the NVRI Board of Administration
(until August 2020)
Elected member of Council (until September 2020)



Konrad was elected to Council in 2010 and appointed President in June 2016. His career has been spent in outcomes research in ophthalmology and in optometric education. He completed his Bachelor of Optometry at The University of Melbourne, and a PhD in Ophthalmology at Flinders University. In 2009 he was appointed the Foundation Chair of Optometry and Vision Science at Flinders University, a position held until 2017. Konrad is currently working as a research and education consultant. He is a Graduate and Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Governance experience includes Councillor of the Flinders University Council (2017); Councillor of the SA Division of the Optometrists Association of Australia (1992-1996); Contact Lens Society of Australia (SA Chapter) committee member (1993-2000) and President (1994-1996).

Tim Powell

B App Sci (Optom); PGCOT

Member of Finance & Risk Committee
(from August 2020)
Elected member of Council since 2019
Co-opted member of Council from
2018 – 2019



Tim completed his undergraduate degree at QUT in Brisbane and moved to Tasmania on graduation. Tim has a strong history of working with local GP's, ophthalmologists, aged care providers and hospital-based rehabilitation services. Tim has worked across independent, corporate and franchise optometry practices, being a partner in a large independent practice before becoming partner in a multi-site franchise optometry business which he sold in 2017. He is involved in optometry profession advocacy and has extensive experience on state and national based boards. He has held positions on state and national Optometry Australia boards, was part of the inaugural allied health advisory committee to the Tasmanian Primary Health Network and the Optometry Australia Rural Optometry Group. Tim has a passion for rural and remote eye care and is currently undertaking a Graduate Certificate Course in Clinical Redesign through UTAS, which looks at how we can improve the patient experience and outcomes in our health system.

Meetings of Council

During the financial year, eighteen (18) meetings of Council were held, five (5) being additional meetings to address the organisation's COVID response. Attendance by each Councillor during the year was as follows:

	Councillor meetings	Meetings attended
R Hodge	18	18
M Anjou	18	17
J Chaney (from 21 May 2020)	10	10
L Denehy	18	17
D Gronow	18	18
P Keller (until 30 September 2020)	15	15
S Koh	18	18
P Lucas (until 27 April 2020)	8	8
M O'Keefe	18	18
T Powell	18	15
K Pesudovs (until 4 September 2020)	2*	2

* Council approved Leave of Absence

In addition, the Council also met on one (1) other occasion for a strategic planning event.

Guarantee by Members

The entity is registered with the Australian Security and Investment Commission as well as the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission and is a company limited by guarantee. If the company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$50 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the entity. At 31 December 2020, the total amount that members of the company are liable to contribute if the company is wound up is \$24,100 (2019: \$31,000).

Indemnification and Insurance of Officers and Auditors

ACO provides insurance cover to Councillors and Officers against loss for which they may not be indemnified by ACO arising from any claim by reason of any wrongful act committed by them in their capacity as a Councillor or Officer. This policy also covers ACO against any legal payment which is made arising out of a claim by reason of any wrongful act committed by any Councillor or Officer of ACO. The amount of the premium paid in respect of this insurance contract is not included as such disclosure is prohibited under the terms of the contract.

The Auditors of ACO are not indemnified out of assets of ACO.

Proceedings on Behalf of the ACO

No person has applied for leave of Court to bring proceedings on behalf of ACO or intervene in any proceedings to which ACO is a party for the purpose of taking responsibility on behalf of the ACO for all or any part of those proceedings.

ACO was not a party to any such proceedings during the year.



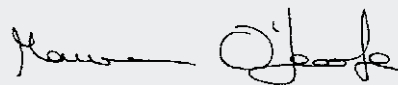
Rodney Hodge
President

Dated this 26th day of April 2021

Auditor's Independence Declaration

The auditor's independence declaration for the year ended 31 December 2020 has been received by the council.

This report is made in accordance with a resolution of the Councillors.




Maureen O'Keefe
Chief Executive Officer

RESPONSIBLE PERSONS' DECLARATION

The Responsible Persons (the Councillors) of the Australian College of Optometry declare that the concise financial report of the Australian College of Optometry and Controlled Entities (Consolidated Group), comprising the consolidated statement of financial position, consolidated comprehensive operating statement, consolidated statement of changes in equity, consolidated statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements set out herein for the financial year ended 31 December 2020:

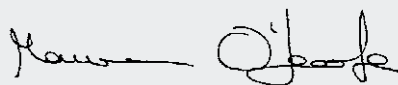
- complies with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports; and
- is an extract from the full financial report for the year ended 31 December 2020 and has been derived from and is consistent with the full financial report of the Australian College of Optometry and Controlled Entities.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Councillors.



Rodney Hodge
President

Dated this 26th day of April 2021



Maureen O'Keefe
Chief Executive Officer

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Information on the Australian College of Optometry Concise Financial Report

The concise financial report is an extract of and is derived from the full financial report of the Australian College of Optometry and Controlled Entities for the financial year ended 31 December 2020. A copy of the full financial report and auditor's report from which this is derived will be sent to any member, free of charge, on request. This discussion and analysis is provided to assist members in understanding the concise financial report.

Consolidated Comprehensive Operating Statement

The total comprehensive results of the consolidated group for the year was made up as follows:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Net results for the year	709,038	(84,890)
Other Comprehensive (loss)/Income:		
Unrealised (losses)/gains on equity investments	(368,549)	790,579
Realised gains/(losses) on equity investments	337,654	86,794
Total Other Comprehensive (loss)/Income	(30,895)	877,373
Comprehensive results	678,143	792,483

Unrealised loss on revaluation of equity investments for the Consolidated Group was \$368,549 (2019: Gain \$790,579). This positive movement on the revaluation of equity investments reflected economic reality. Equity investment assets are held by the Consolidated Group with a long-term view on return and are not considered to be regularly tradeable investments. The overall financial position for the Consolidated Group remains strong.

Consolidated Income

The Consolidated Group income stood at \$16,687,434 (ACO: \$16,038,087), further details as follows:

ACO	2020	2019	Change
Revenue from Operating Activities	\$	\$	%
Government grants	6,211,032	7,358,022	-15.6%
Government support (Note I)	3,353,000	-	100%
Non-government grants, trusts and donations (Note II)	1,335,060	3,021,898	-55.8%
Optical services	3,947,221	5,767,633	-31.6%
Research and Education	685,174	1,208,283	-43.3%
Dividends and distribution (Note III)	55,830	85,859	-35.0%
Interest revenue (Note IV)	31,800	91,553	-65.3%
Property services (Note V)	127,139	182,433	-30.3%
Membership	143,588	178,007	-19.3%
Other	149,561	288,211	-48.1%
ACO Total Revenue from Operating Activities	16,039,405	18,181,899	-11.8%
Capital grant Income	12,181	48,448	-74.9%
Realised gains/(losses) on equity investments	(13,499)	(10,538)	28.1%
ACO Total Income	16,038,087	18,219,809	-12.0%

Consolidated Comprehensive Operating Statement

Note I – During the year, the Company received Federal Government assistance in the form of Cash Flow Boost and Jobkeeper Payments to navigate the challenges of COVID-19.

Note II – Income for 2020 includes \$490,758 (2019: \$1,595,504) received under contract with Brien Holden Vision Institute towards a project for the provision of eye health equipment and training to indigenous communities across Australia. This project is ultimately funded by the Australian Government via Department of Health.

Note III & IV – As at 31 December 2020, the investment income stood at \$74,131 (2019: 166,874). A decreased return on investment due to downward market volatility following the negative impact of COVID-19 and lock down on many businesses, particularly the banking sectors.

Note V – Reduction in tenants occupied space at the ACO in 2020.

Expenditure reduced by 15.2% to \$15,640,742 which included expenditure reduction of \$1,074,074 for the provision of eye health equipment and training for distribution to indigenous communities across Australia.

Trust Funds

Total Trust Fund investment income was \$737,635 (2019: \$599,821), comprising operating income of \$386,482 (2019: \$502,489) and realised gains on sale of financial assets of \$351,153 (2019: \$97,332).

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position and Changes in Equity

Net assets of the consolidated group, including the Trust Funds, increased by 2.9% to \$24,026,435. Details of the net assets of the consolidated group are set out on page 75.

Within its Statement of Financial Position, the consolidated group maintains a strong financial position, with total property, plant and equipment of \$9,254,504 (2019: \$9,719,192) and total financial assets of \$19,773,807 (2019: \$17,084,023).

As at 31 December 2020, the consolidated group retained surplus stood at \$18,718,738 (2019: \$17,672,046). The Reserves stood at \$5,307,697, a 6.5% decrease compare to last year. A full analysis of changes in equity is set out on page 76.

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

Net cash inflow during 2020, as set out on page 77, was \$1,680,385 (2019: outflow \$316,972), comprising a net cash inflow from operating activities of \$2,544,591 (2019: outflow \$773,329) available for investment in asset improvements and replacements. Cash outflows from investing activities totalled \$770,774 (2019: inflow \$542,486).

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of the
Australian College of Optometry



McBAIN
McCARTIN & Co

Report on the Concise Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the concise financial report of the Australian College of Optometry (the registered entity) and the Australian College of Optometry and Controlled Entities (the consolidated group), which comprises the consolidated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2020, the consolidated comprehensive operating statement, consolidated statement of changes in equity and consolidated statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and related notes, derived from the financial report of the Australian College of Optometry and Controlled Entities for the year ended 31 December 2020 and the discussion and analysis.

In our opinion, the accompanying concise financial report, including the discussion and analysis of the registered entity and the consolidated group, complies with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: *Concise Financial Reports*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Concise Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the registered entity and the consolidated group in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of *Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the concise financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Concise Financial Report

The concise financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards in the preparation of the financial report. Therefore, reading the concise financial report and the auditor's report thereon is not a substitute for reading the full financial report and the auditor's report thereon.

The Financial Report and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the financial report in our report dated 28th April 2021.

Responsibilities of the Responsible Persons for the Concise Financial Report

The responsible persons are responsible for the preparation of the concise financial report in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: *Concise Financial Reports* and the ACNC Act, and for such internal control as the responsible persons determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the concise financial report.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the ACNC Act. We confirm that the independence declaration required by the ACNC Act, which has been given to the responsible persons of the Australian College of Optometry and Controlled Entities, would be in the same terms if given to the responsible persons as at the time of this auditor's report.

Auditor's responsibilities for the Audit of the Concise Financial Report

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the concise financial report, in all material respects, complies with AASB 1039: *Concise Financial Reports* and whether the discussion and the analysis complies with AASB 1039: *Concise Financial Reports* based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810: *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

McBain McCartin & Co
Chartered Accountants

123 Whitehorse Road
Balwyn VIC 3103

Dated this 28th day of April 2021

Simon Aukstin (CA)
Partner

Consolidated Comprehensive Operating Statement

for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

	CONSOLIDATED GROUP		ACO	
	2020	2019	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenue from Operating Activities	16,337,599	18,307,265	16,039,405	18,181,899
Employee Expenses	(9,169,492)	(9,891,739)	(9,169,492)	(9,891,739)
Non-Salary Labour Costs	(100,790)	(133,880)	(100,790)	(133,880)
Interest Expense on Lease Liability	(46,675)	(42,977)	(46,675)	(42,977)
Other Expenses	(5,266,227)	(7,376,534)	(5,207,716)	(7,317,364)
Net results before Capital Grant Income and Depreciation and Amortisation	1,754,415	862,135	1,514,732	795,939
Capital Grant Income	12,181	48,448	12,181	48,448
Depreciation and Amortisation	(1,057,558)	(995,473)	(1,057,558)	(995,473)
NET RESULTS FOR THE YEAR	709,038	(84,890)	469,355	(151,086)
Other Comprehensive (loss)/Income				
Unrealised (losses)/gains on equity investments	(368,549)	790,579	(12,558)	66,346
Realised gains/(losses) on equity investments	337,654	86,794	(13,499)	(10,538)
Total Other Comprehensive (loss)/Income	(30,895)	877,373	(26,057)	55,808
COMPREHENSIVE RESULTS	678,143	792,483	443,298	(95,278)

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

as at 31 December 2020

	CONSOLIDATED GROUP		ACO	
	2020	2019	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash and cash equivalents	3,900,582	2,220,197	3,698,288	1,607,085
Financial assets	3,118,810	2,730,087	3,118,810	2,730,087
Trade and other receivables	675,140	519,746	680,603	763,714
Inventories	286,718	323,985	286,718	323,985
Other current assets	209,771	105,942	209,771	105,942
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	8,191,021	5,899,957	7,994,190	5,530,813
NON CURRENT ASSETS				
Property, plant and equipment	9,254,504	9,719,192	9,254,504	9,719,192
Right of use asset	464,996	578,232	464,996	578,232
Intangible assets	104,631	160,674	104,631	160,674
Financial assets	12,079,275	11,613,993	1,551,387	1,497,763
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	21,903,406	22,072,091	11,375,518	11,955,861
TOTAL ASSETS	30,094,427	27,972,048	19,369,708	17,486,674
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Trade and other payables	1,114,647	992,192	1,114,897	996,942
Provisions	1,816,657	1,825,053	1,816,657	1,825,053
Contract liabilities	2,480,024	1,094,672	2,480,024	1,094,672
Lease liabilities	104,362	93,353	104,362	93,353
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	5,515,690	4,005,270	5,515,940	4,010,020
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Lease liabilities	398,756	503,197	398,756	503,197
Provisions	153,546	115,289	153,546	115,289
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	552,302	618,486	552,302	618,486
TOTAL LIABILITIES	6,067,992	4,623,756	6,068,242	4,628,506
NET ASSETS	24,026,435	23,348,292	13,301,466	12,858,168
EQUITY				
Reserves	5,307,697	5,676,246	138,804	151,362
Retained surplus	18,718,738	17,672,046	13,162,662	12,706,806
TOTAL EQUITY	24,026,435	23,348,292	13,301,466	12,858,168

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated Statement of Changes In Equity

for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

	Reserves				
	Asset	Contributed	Development	Retained	Total
	Revaluation- Investments	Equity	Fund	Surplus	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
CONSOLIDATED GROUP					
Balance at 1 January 2019	859,730	3,907,819	118,118	17,670,142	22,555,809
Net result for the year	-	-	-	(84,890)	(84,890)
Other comprehensive income	877,373	-	-	-	877,373
Transfer – gains/(losses) on disposal of equity instruments at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income to Retained Surplus	(86,794)	-	-	86,794	-
Balance at 31 December 2019	1,650,309	3,907,819	118,118	17,672,046	23,348,292
Net result for the year	-	-	-	709,038	709,038
Other comprehensive loss	(30,895)	-	-	-	(30,895)
Transfer – gains/(losses) on disposal of equity instruments at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income to Retained Surplus	(337,654)	-	-	337,654	-
Balance at 31 December 2020	1,281,760	3,907,819	118,118	18,718,738	24,026,435
Total Reserves at 31 December 2020					5,307,697
ACO					
Balance at 1 January 2019	(33,102)	-	118,118	12,868,430	12,953,446
Net result for the year	-	-	-	(151,086)	(151,086)
Other comprehensive income	55,808	-	-	-	55,808
Transfer – gains/(losses) on disposal of equity instruments at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income to Retained Surplus	10,538	-	-	(10,538)	-
Balance at 31 December 2019	33,244	-	118,118	12,706,806	12,858,168
Net result for the year	-	-	-	469,355	469,355
Other comprehensive loss	(26,057)	-	-	-	(26,057)
Transfer – gains/(losses) on disposal of equity instruments at fair value through Other Comprehensive Loss to Retained Surplus	13,499	-	-	(13,499)	-
Balance at 31 December 2020	20,686	-	118,118	13,162,662	13,301,466
Total Reserves at 31 December 2020	-				138,804

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.
The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

	CONSOLIDATED GROUP		ACO	
	2020	2019	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
Receipts from government grants	7,596,384	6,372,455	7,596,384	6,372,454
Receipts from patients, other funding sources and members	9,444,460	10,130,042	9,821,340	10,375,940
Payments to suppliers and employees	(14,449,578)	(17,232,849)	(14,395,566)	(17,080,698)
Lease interest expense	(46,675)	(42,977)	(46,675)	(42,977)
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	2,544,591	(773,329)	2,975,483	(375,281)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
Dividends received	430,094	509,520	66,768	85,859
Interest received	107,623	134,880	34,379	91,554
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(423,591)	(881,073)	(423,591)	(881,073)
Purchase of intangible assets	-	(39,610)	-	(39,611)
Proceeds from sale of financial assets	6,994,406	7,230,949	4,187,717	6,724,206
Purchase of financial assets	(7,879,306)	(6,412,180)	(4,656,121)	(5,929,044)
Net cash generated from/(used in) investing activities	(770,774)	542,486	(790,848)	51,891
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
Repayment for lease liabilities	(93,432)	(86,129)	(93,432)	(86,129)
Net cash (used in) financing activities	(93,432)	(86,129)	(93,432)	(86,129)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	1,680,385	(316,972)	2,091,203	(409,519)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	2,220,197	2,537,169	1,607,085	2,016,604
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	3,900,582	2,220,197	3,698,288	1,607,085

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Concise Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2020

Note 1: Basis of Preparation of the Concise Financial Report

The concise financial report is an extract from the full financial report for the year ended 31 December 2020. The concise financial report has been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 1039: Concise Financial Reports, and the Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

The financial statements, specific disclosures and other information included in the concise financial report are derived from and are consistent with the full financial report of the Australian College of Optometry and Controlled Entities. The concise financial report cannot be expected to provide as detailed an understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financing and investing activities of the Australian College of Optometry and Controlled Entities as the full financial report. A copy of the full financial report and auditor's report will be sent to any member, free of charge, upon request.

The financial report covers the Australian College of Optometry, Schultz Laubman Schultz Endowment Fund Trust, NVRI Governors Endowment Fund Trust and Beresford Cambridge Bequest Trust ("Controlled Entities") as the "Consolidated Group" or "Group".

The accounting policies have been consistently applied in the preparation of the Consolidated Group financial statements and are consistent with the policies of the previous financial year. The Consolidated Group financial statements were prepared in accordance with Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act) and Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and Interpretations of the Australian Accounting Standards Board ("AASB").

Coronavirus (COVID-19) impact

The COVID-19 global pandemic created significant social and economic uncertainty specifically during the 2020 calendar year. At year-end 31 December 2020, ACO continues to be well positioned to navigate the challenges of this pandemic through the support received from Federal government, its well-established relationships with key stakeholders, ongoing client care and support, a robust balance sheet and continued demand for quality public eye health care. There is no identified impairment issues or additional provisioning required because of the pandemic as of 31 December 2020, nor significant financial estimates or judgements that have needed to be made.

Note 2: Comparative Figures

When required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

Note 3: Presentation Currency

The concise financial statements have been prepared in Australian dollars.

Note 4: Events After the Reporting Period

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the consolidated group, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the consolidated group in future financial years.

Segment Reporting for the Year Ended 31 December 2020 and 2019

CONSOLIDATED GROUP	Corporate Services	Education, Membership & Marketing	Clinical Services (VIC)	National Vision Research Institute	Clinical Services (SA)	Trust Funds	Intersegment Eliminations	Total
2020	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
REVENUE								
External Revenue	4,050,832	747,528	13,013,030	1,006,394	179,622	386,483		19,383,889
Other Segment Revenue							(3,034,109)	(3,034,109)
	4,050,832	747,528	13,013,030	1,006,394	179,622	386,483	(3,034,109)	16,349,780
Net result for the year	371,705	(163,193)	406,000	(6,364)	(138,793)	239,683	-	709,038
ASSETS								
Segment assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unallocated segment assets								30,094,427
								30,094,427
LIABILITIES								
Segment liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unallocated segment liabilities								(6,067,992)
								(6,067,992)
2019								
REVENUE								
External Revenue	5,159,754	894,819	14,021,386	1,164,882	30,858	502,489		21,774,188
Other Segment Revenue							(3,418,475)	(3,418,475)
	5,159,754	894,819	14,021,386	1,164,882	30,858	502,489	(3,418,475)	18,355,713
Net result for the year	105,891	(50,149)	(3,147)	(44,331)	(159,350)	66,196	-	(84,890)
ASSETS								
Segment assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unallocated segment assets								27,972,048
								27,972,048
LIABILITIES								
Segment liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unallocated segment liabilities								(4,623,756)
								(4,623,756)

This Consolidated Detailed Income Statement is prepared by management and does not form part of the audited financial statements

Trust Funds' Financial Position

The financial statements for the Consolidated Group (pages 65 to 75) include the results and net assets of:

- the Schultz Laubman Schultz Endowment Fund Trust;
- the NVRI Governors Endowment Fund Trust; and
- the Beresford Cambridge Bequest Trust.

The ACO or the ACO Council members act as the Trustees of these three internally-managed funds.

In accordance with the terms of their Trust Deeds, income from two of the internally-managed funds (Schultz Laubman Schultz

Endowment Fund Trust and the NVRI Governors Endowment Fund Trust), together with income from one externally-managed fund (Lions Vision Research Fund), is designated to fund vision research delivered through the National Vision Research Institute of Australia, a division of the ACO. Income for the Beresford Cambridge Bequest Trust is designated to fund research in to visual impairment.

The financial position and results for the Trust Funds as at 31 December 2020 is summarized as follows:

	INTERNALLY – MANAGED FUNDS						EXTERNALLY – MANAGED FUNDS	
	Beresford Cambridge Bequest Trust		Schultz Laubman Schultz Endowment Fund Trust		NVRI Governor's Endowment Fund Trust		Lions Vision Research Fund	
	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020	2019
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE								
Profit/(Loss) on ordinary activities	37,440	30,179	500,339	126,423	53,054	6,926	(9,122)	(12,016)
Net increase in asset revaluation reserve	(19,117)	40,938	(296,431)	625,211	(40,443)	58,084	(12,980)	42,546
Total Changes in Equity	18,323	71,117	203,908	751,634	12,611	65,010	(22,102)	30,530
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION								
Current Assets	33,379	59,626	232,229	600,949	19,762	90,444	38,631	55,956
Non Current Assets								
Shares in listed companies and units in listed trusts at market value	635,004	590,434	9,045,632	8,730,066	847,251	795,730	419,715	449,491
Total Assets	668,383	650,060	9,277,861	9,331,015	867,013	886,174	458,346	505,447
Current Liabilities	-	-	78,578	335,640	9,711	41,483	20,000	45,000
Net Assets	668,383	650,060	9,199,283	8,995,375	857,302	844,691	438,346	460,447
EQUITY								
Contributed equity	-	-	3,600,153	3,600,153	307,666	307,666	173,867	173,867
Asset revaluation reserve	44,408	63,525	1,157,888	1,454,319	58,777	99,221	9,930	22,910
Retained profits	623,975	586,535	4,441,242	3,940,903	490,859	437,804	254,549	263,670
Total Equity	668,383	650,060	9,199,283	8,995,375	857,302	844,691	438,346	460,447

This information is prepared by management and is extracted from the financial records of the ACO and controlled entities and of the Lions Vision Research Fund for the year ended 31 December 2020.



AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF
OPTOMETRY
CLINICAL SERVICES • RESEARCH • EDUCATION

**374 Cardigan Street, Carlton
Victoria 3053 Australia**

Tel **+61 3 9349 7400**
Fax **+61 3 9349 7499**
Email **aco@aco.org.au**
Web **www.aco.org.au**



NATIONAL VISION
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
OF AUSTRALIA

Tel **+61 3 9349 7519**
Fax **+61 3 9349 7499**
Email **info@nvri.org.au**
Web **www.nvri.org.au**



A low-angle photograph of a brick building under a clear blue sky. The building features a red brick facade and modern grey concrete architectural elements. A small square window is visible above the main text, and a larger window with vertical bars is below it. A tree is partially visible in the bottom left corner.

**AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE
OF OPTOMETRY**