



**Dedicated to saving sight
with your help...**

Annual Report 2014-2015



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Macular Disease Foundation Australia

Vision

Macular Disease Foundation Australia's vision is to reduce the incidence and impact of macular disease in Australia. Macular disease encompasses macular degeneration, diabetic eye disease, retinal vein occlusion and a range of other diseases of the macula.

Strategic Goals

The Foundation is the voice of the macular disease community, representing its best interests. The strategic goals, which underpin all of the Foundation's work, are to develop a sound knowledge base, to influence public policy, establish and maintain strong relationships and partnerships, and build healthy communities.

These goals are achieved through education and awareness programs, funding and supporting research, representing the community and providing vital client support.

Working with the Community

As a national charity, Macular Disease Foundation Australia relies upon support from all sectors of the community to achieve its vision and strategic goals.

Values

Macular Disease Foundation Australia is driven to achieve its vision by a dedicated Board, Committees, State Chairs, staff and volunteers, all of whom share common values.

These values are:

Respect

Respect for the dignity of the person

Compassion

Concern, support and understanding

Integrity

Trustworthiness, honesty, loyalty, reliability and the highest standard of ethical behaviour in an environment of total quality care

Competency

Focus on effective, appropriate, high-quality care in the advocacy for, and administration of, services for people with macular disease, their family and carers.

Guiding Principles

As a national charity, Macular Disease Foundation Australia depends upon active support of volunteers, individuals and organisations to meet the needs of people it represents.

The Foundation is guided by the following principles:

Access and Equity

The Foundation is committed to equity of access to treatments, care and rehabilitation

Knowledge

The Foundation values its knowledge and continues to develop expertise, drawing on its own and others' experience

Social Justice

The Foundation pursues social justice, works to empower the macular disease community and strives to oppose any disadvantage they may be experiencing

Investment

The Foundation invests in the future by using resources and knowledge to improve the future of the macular disease community. To undertake this task it is committed to strengthening the Foundation, its people and practices

Change

The Foundation is persistent in pursuing change and works creatively to make a real difference for the macular disease community

Consideration

The Foundation respects the client and all those with whom it relates in the meeting of its objectives. The Foundation treats others with respect at all times

Participation

The Foundation encourages the active participation of families, friends and communities

Acceptance

The Foundation values and celebrates diversity in its membership and in activities. It provides guidance and support for all people with macular disease, their family and carers in a non-discriminatory, ethical manner

Standards

The Foundation upholds the highest ethical standards in its daily work and its relations with all parties

Appreciation

The Foundation appreciates the contribution of governments, volunteers, advocates, other non-government organisations, and all those who work for the common good of the macular disease community

Partnerships

The Foundation values, supports and works with all partners including the medical profession, corporations and allied health care professionals in order to improve the quality of life of all people with macular disease.

Ita's Story

My father was in his mid-eighties when he lost his central vision to macular degeneration. It changed his life. As a journalist and author he had always started his day reading a couple of newspapers. Suddenly this was no longer possible.

As a journalist and author myself I couldn't imagine not being able to ever read again. I was as devastated about Dad's fate as he was.

One of Dad's sisters also had macular degeneration and their youngest brother was diagnosed with it too. Fortunately the sight of one of my uncle's eyes has been saved with the help of a treatment now available for wet macular degeneration. At 92, he is able to read and still drive. This has been a major breakthrough in the management of the disease and my uncle's doctor has been able to stabilise his vision. If only this treatment had been around to help Dad, how happier the last years of his life would have been.

One thing I have noticed is how few people know that a family history of the disease brings with it a high risk of macular degeneration. When I tell them that I have a 50 per cent chance of getting it too, most people are usually shocked. My children are equally at risk and consequently we all do some kind of regular exercise, watch our weight and follow the eating program recommended by the Foundation.

I get my macula checked annually and when my ophthalmic surgeon tells me my 'macula is in pristine condition' his words are music to my ears!



Ita Buttrose AO OBE

Patron, Macular Disease Foundation Australia

Ita Buttrose is one of Australia's most admired businesswomen and an accomplished communicator, advising corporate as well as community and welfare organisations. She has a wealth of experience across a broad range of industry sectors and combines many roles as social commentator, businesswoman, journalist and author.

As Patron of the Foundation for ten years, Ita has been instrumental to its success in raising awareness of macular degeneration. A powerful voice within Australia, she shares her personal experiences to convey key health messages of risk factors, prevention, detection, treatment and rehabilitation.

In 2013 Ita was named Australian of the Year. She holds the appointment of Officer of the Order of Australia for her services to the community, particularly in the area of public health education. Ita is also the National Ambassador of Alzheimer's Australia and Emeritus Director of Arthritis Australia.

Key Highlights of 2014-2015

138

public education sessions

conducted across Australia
with **7,300** people attending.

The Foundation was
a major contributor to
**The Economic Impact
of Diabetic Macular
Oedema in Australia** report
by Deloitte Access Economics.

Foundation strategies and expertise shared with
international eye health specialists at events
including the 'Global Engagement' program in
Latin America, Poland, Germany and Italy.

**mEYE World
Photographic Competition**

attracted an unprecedented
1,305 entries, up 38%
on the previous year.

Inaugural **national
campaign** generating
awareness of **diabetic
retinopathy**,
reaching more than
4 million people.

**Key Foundation
publications translated** into

7

languages.

**Sight saving
treatment** listed on the
**Pharmaceutical Benefits
Scheme** for diabetic macular
edema and retinal vein
occlusion.

Almost
8,800
calls made to **national
Helpline**, bringing the
total calls since initiation to
130,000.

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**State Governors
acted as Custodians
of Vision during
Macular Degeneration
Awareness Week 2015.**

“Mac de Gen” launched
online with a series of
7
informative animations
on macular degeneration.

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Third round of applications
for Macular Disease Foundation
Australia Research Grants
Program opened totalling
\$1.3 million.

96%
of Foundation survey respondents reported
being **“mostly satisfied”** or **“very satisfied”**
with Foundation services.

14,000
information kits packed by
Foundation volunteers for
national distribution.

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25 presentations
held for health
professionals, with almost
1,300 attendees.

Report from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

The 2014-2015 year was an exciting one in the Foundation's history as we continued to improve the eye health of Australians by reducing the incidence and impact of macular disease. We are proud of our ongoing internationally recognised success as a world leader in awareness of macular degeneration, and our achievements as we launched into a broader campaign to raise awareness of diabetic eye disease.

During the year the Foundation's financial capacity continued to strengthen which enables us to continue to meet the increasing demand for our programs and services. In the year ended June 2015 the Foundation generated a net surplus of \$1.36 million (2014: \$0.4m). This was primarily through significant growth in bequests, a generosity of giving which is greatly appreciated but is of course an unknown in terms of sustainable income.

The ongoing ability of the Foundation to achieve its mission in a manner which is sustainable is dependent upon maintaining the strong financial position it has established and the ongoing contributions from its wide supporter base of corporations, government, foundations and individual donors and bequestors. The ageing population and the increasing prevalence of diabetes will continue to place high demands on the Foundation's services to support those with age-related macular degeneration and diabetic eye disease. Additionally, the services delivered to those with other macular diseases will also continue to be a priority. The generosity of those who support the Foundation makes a vital contribution to funding the delivery of services and the Research Grants Program.

The Foundation has a key objective to fund Australian research in macular degeneration. Subsequent to year end, in October 2015, the Foundation granted



Elizabeth Carr, Chairman



Julie Heraghty, Chief Executive Officer

a record \$1.3 million to Australian researchers via its Research Grants Program. This included the inaugural Blackmores Macular Disease Foundation Research Grant. This brings our total commitment to research grants to \$2.8 million since the program launched in 2011.

Our 14th annual Macular Degeneration Awareness Week asserted its position as a highlight on the public health calendar when State Governors across Australia agreed to be the Foundation's *Custodians of Vision*. The participating Governors had their eyes tested by an ophthalmologist and supported the communication of our key eye health messages to the Australian community. Their generous contribution played a significant role in this years' campaign success.

The Foundation's first diabetic eye disease awareness advertising campaign was undertaken in 2015 with the aim to increase awareness of this disease and encourage those with diabetes to have regular eye tests. Over 1.1 million Australians have diabetes and all are at risk of diabetic eye disease. The Foundation's National Research Advisor, Professor Paul Mitchell, has stated that many people with the more common type 2 diabetes will have had the disease for many years by the time they are diagnosed. A large proportion of these people will develop potentially blinding diabetic retinopathy within five to ten years of their diabetes diagnosis.

As part of our work in this area, in collaboration with Diabetes Australia, the Foundation played a significant role in the production of a Deloitte Access Economics report on the economic impact of diabetic macular edema – the major and growing cause of vision loss in Australians with diabetes.

Our Patron, Ita Buttrose AO OBE, once again was tirelessly committed in her support for the Foundation, helping us communicate key messages on macular disease throughout the year, and particularly in her promotion of Macular Degeneration Awareness Week and the mEYE World Photographic Competition. We thank Ita Buttrose who has been Patron

of the Foundation for over a decade, dedicating her time and expertise to promote prevention and early detection of macular degeneration. Thanks also to Ambassadors Jean Kittson and Jan Utzon, who continue to commit to the Foundation's work in raising awareness of disease and the impact on individuals, their families and carers.

Our sincere thanks go to all our major sponsors and partners who once again helped enable us to meet our objectives in education, awareness, and research. They also supported the Foundation so that we could provide client services and be the voice of the macular disease community. A special thanks to the Federal and NSW governments, Bayer, Blackmores, Mylan, Novartis, and the Perpetual and Profield Foundations.

The Foundation is most grateful to the many donors and supporters, both individual and corporate, who give so generously so that the Foundation can undertake its work in prevention, early detection and support for those at risk of, or living with, macular disease and associated vision loss and blindness. Thank you also to the people and organisations we work with including government and government departments, eye care professionals and their representative bodies, and low vision rehabilitation service providers.

Thank you to our staff and volunteers who work to ensure the delivery of quality services and outcomes. Good governance is a vital aspect of any organisation and we thank all the Foundation Board Directors for their guidance, commitment and expertise.



Elizabeth Carr
Chairman
BA (Hons) UWA
MPA Harvard University
FAICD



Julie Heraghty
Chief Executive Officer
BA DipEd, Assoc MAPS

Governance

Board Directors

Macular Disease Foundation Australia has a strong and experienced Board that represents the needs of the macular disease community.



Ms Elizabeth Carr, Chairman – BA (Hons), MPA FAICD

Elizabeth Carr was an inaugural board member of the Foundation and in October 2006 accepted the position of chairman. Elizabeth's background incorporates both the private and public sectors. She has worked in senior executive positions for IBM and Macquarie Group and within senior levels of politics and government in NSW, WA, PNG and the USA.

Elizabeth has been a not-for-profit board chair and board member for over 20 years. She is also Chair of St Catherine's Aged Care Services (NSW), and Seton Villa (NSW). She is a director of the Kokoda Track Foundation and St Marys Anglican Girls School (WA). Elizabeth is a member of the Environmental Protection Authority (WA), a director of the Safety, Return to Work and Support Board (NSW) and its associated Audit and Risk Committee, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee for the Department of Family and Community Services (NSW), and a Member of the Harvard Club of Australia Council.

Elizabeth Carr is the Chairman of the Board and is a member of all Committees.



Mr Ashley Chapman, Deputy Chairman – CPA, MACS

Ashley Chapman retired in 2004 after a career in information technology spanning over 40 years. His experience includes 15 years with IBM in a variety of roles covering systems engineering, programming and education. Industry experience included banking and finance, airline, distribution and government utilities. After leaving IBM he became a partner in a CPA firm and then in 1978 founded Management Control Systems, a company specialising in the development and marketing of financial systems for the distribution and manufacturing industries both in Australia and overseas.

Ashley Chapman is Deputy Chairman of the Board and is a member of the Audit and Risk Committee, the Investment Sub-Committee, the Client Services Committee and the Board Nomination and Evaluation Committee.



Mr Peter Brown (retired 8 December 2014)*

Peter Brown has spent 30 years in advertising and communication. He worked in London in consumer advertising and new product development before moving to Sydney in 1988, becoming Creative Director of a major healthcare agency. In 2005 Peter started his own company, spanning both consumer and healthcare advertising.

Peter Brown was a member of the Client Services Committee.



Mr Barry Clarke – FIPA (retired 8 December 2014)*

Barry Clarke has over 40 years experience in the financial services sector in both executive and CEO roles. He is currently a director of the Royal Society for the Blind of South Australia and serves on its Client Advisory Committee and the Finance and Investment Committee. Barry is legally blind, having experienced the onset of macular degeneration over 20 years ago, therefore he has a clear understanding of the needs of people with vision impairment.

Barry Clarke was a member of the Client Services Committee and the Investment Sub-Committee.



Colonel John Fenwick – BA, MBA, GAICD, AFAIM (appointed 24 June 2015)

John Fenwick is a colonel and defence professional with over 25 years experience in the Army. His career spans being a helicopter pilot to leading and managing at numerous levels in the Defence Force in a variety of positions. He is currently the director of a program of several Army material projects and their project managers, managing multiple stakeholders and funding approvals with Government.

John is a graduate of the Australian Defence Force Academy and the Royal Military College at Duntroon. He holds an MBA specialising in Accounting and Finance from Deakin University and a BA in Economics and Information Systems from UNSW. John is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and an Associate Fellow with the Australian Institute of Management.

John Fenwick is a member of the Audit and Risk Committee.



Mr Richard Grills

Richard Grills is the previous Managing Director of Designs For Vision, a company which supplies ophthalmic and optometric products throughout Australasia. Prior to founding Designs For Vision in 1978, he was a clinical and dispensing optician specialising in visual handicap. He conducted low vision clinics throughout NSW at hospitals and ophthalmic practices.

Since 1974 Richard has been a lecturer in ophthalmic optics at Sydney University and also teaches at UTS (orthoptics) and Notre Dame University (ophthalmic nurses). Richard is the Chairman of the Optical Distributors and Manufacturers Association (ODMA) and a director of the Genetic Eye Foundation. He is a member of the visiting advisory board at both UNSW Optometry School and UTS Orthoptic School.

Richard Grills is a member of the Client Services Committee.



Professor Jill Keeffe – PhD, OAM (retired 8 December 2014)*

Professor Jill Keeffe is a member of the faculty of the L V Prasad Eye Institute in Hyderabad, India and has an Honorary Professorial position in the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of Melbourne. She is also a Technical Advisor to Lions Clubs International Foundation's SightFirst program. Her research focuses on the development and evaluation of eye care services that aim to prevent vision loss and blindness.

She was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for "services to public health particularly in the area of vision testing and as a contributor to the advancement of eye care education and practice".

Professor Jill Keeffe was a member of the Client Services Committee.



Ms Imelda Lynch – RN, BN, MHSN, GAICD (appointed 24 June 2015)

Imelda Lynch has a nursing background with extensive executive and health administration experience having spent 25 years in leadership positions in both the public and private health sectors.

She was founding CEO of Bellberry Limited, the first provider of independent human research ethics committees in Australia, a position she stepped down from in 2014. She now holds a non-executive director role with Bellberry.

Imelda Lynch is a member of the Client Services Committee.



Mr John McCarroll – B.Ec, GAICD

John McCarroll is a director at JB Were Ltd - Private Wealth Management. John has more than 30 years experience in the finance industry, initially in Europe and for more than 20 years in Australia. John holds a Bachelor of Economics from Monash University (Victoria), is a diploma member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and was a director of the Australian Stockbrokers Foundation for over 19 years.

John McCarroll is a member of the Investment Sub-Committee, the Audit and Risk Committee (appointed 30 March 2015) and the Board Nomination and Evaluation Committee.



Mr Peter Reid – BA, LLB, FAICD (retired 8 December 2014)*

Peter Reid has practised as a lawyer since 1972 specialising in international law and the energy and resources sector. He served as an Australian diplomat for seven years including a posting to the Australian Mission to the United Nations in New York. He then spent nine years as the Senior Exploration Counsel for Esso Australia and the past 26 years in private legal practice. He is a frequent speaker at international industry and professional conferences and has lectured at The University of Sydney Law School. He has served as a non-executive director of companies in both the private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

Peter Reid was a member of the Audit and Risk Committee, the Investment Sub-Committee and the Client Services Committee.



Mr Paul Rogan – BBus, FCPA, AICD

Paul Rogan is a senior executive with more than 25 years experience in the financial services sector both in Australia and the United Kingdom. He is currently the chief executive, distribution product and marketing, of Challenger Limited and is a director of its subsidiaries.

Paul has served as an executive director on subsidiary boards of the National Australia Bank and MLC Group, including as chief executive officer of the wealth management operations in the United Kingdom and MLC Building Society. He is also a past chairman of the Victorian Building Society Association and past counsellor on the Association of Australian Permanent Building Societies.

Paul Rogan is the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Investment Sub-Committee. He was Chair of the Research Committee until 8 December 2014.



Dr Jim Runciman – FRACS, FRANZCO

Dr Runciman is a leading ophthalmologist with a special interest in retinal diseases and the support of those with vision impairment. He is a fellow and past SA chairman of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists and has recently retired as a director of the Adelaide Eye and Retina Centre, as well as from the board of the Royal Society for the Blind SA, having served on it since 1995, including as a past president. He remains involved in ophthalmic research and is a consultant to Ellex Lasers Research and Development.

Dr Jim Runciman is the Chair of the Medical Committee and a member of the Research Committee.



Ms Suellen Tapsall – BA, MA, FAIM

Suellen Tapsall is the director of AIM WA – University of Western Australia Business School Executive Education. In this role she successfully and effectively works with public and private sector organisations in Western Australia, interstate and overseas, to build their individual and organisational leadership capability.

Suellen has extensive experience managing complex multi-stakeholder projects. Her career has been built around communications and stakeholder engagement, working as an academic leader and formerly in journalism and corporate communications. She is a former national president of the Journalism Education Association and has co-authored several books and major reports.

Suellen Tapsall is the Chair of the Client Services Committee and a member of the Research Committee.



Associate Professor Nitin Verma – AM, FRANZCO, MD, MMed, Dip NBE (appointed 25 August 2014)

Associate Professor Nitin Verma is a leading ophthalmologist with a special interest in retinal diseases and has published and presented more than 100 papers. He is Head of the Department of Ophthalmology at the Royal Hobart Hospital, Clinical Associate Professor at the School of Medicine, University of Tasmania and Sydney, and is in private practice at Hobart Eye Surgeons.

Associate Professor Verma is a Board Member and Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO), and Board Member of RANZCO Eye Foundation and the national Hospitalier for St John Ambulance Australia. He is also the Honorary Consul in Tasmania for Timor Leste. He was awarded the Order of Australia in 2010 for his service to ophthalmology.

Associate Professor Verma is the Chairman of the Research Committee (since 8 December 2014) and a member of the Medical Committee

* Peter Brown, Barry Clarke, Professor Jill Keeffe and Peter Reid retired from the Board in December 2014 in line with the Australian Institute of Company Directors' recommended tenures for Board members and part of the continual process of Board renewal.

National Research Advisor



Professor Paul Mitchell - MBBS, MD, PhD, FRANZCO, FRACS, FRCOphth, FAFPHM

Professor Paul Mitchell is a world renowned medical retinal specialist and director of the Centre for Vision Research, Westmead Millennium Institute. He is also a professor in the Department of Ophthalmology, University of Sydney and director of Ophthalmology at Westmead Hospital.

Professor Mitchell's clinical work focuses on the management of age-related macular degeneration, diabetic and other vascular retinopathies and on systemic diseases and their effects on the eye. His research has targeted the epidemiology of eye disease and clinical aspects of retinal diseases.

Professor Mitchell has made significant contributions in the fields of public health and ophthalmic epidemiology via the landmark Blue Mountains Eye Study, the first, large Australian population-based study of age-related eye disease, yielding almost 300 international publications.

As National Research Advisor, Professor Mitchell provides the Foundation with expertise, support and guidance on the analysis of medical and research matters.

Chief Executive Officer



Ms Julie Heraghty – B.A, DipEd, Assoc MAPS

Julie Heraghty joined Macular Disease Foundation Australia as Chief Executive Officer in 2004. Under Julie's leadership the Foundation has evolved into a robust organisation serving the needs of the macular disease community. The activities of the Foundation over this time have resulted in Australia becoming a world leader in awareness of macular degeneration.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Julie spent over seven years as a Policy Advisor to NSW State Ministers, and also served as a director and manager in major government departments. She has served in local government as Deputy Mayor and worked voluntarily for many charitable causes. Julie's career began as a secondary school teacher and she is also a registered psychologist.

In 2013 Julie was awarded the Harvard Club of Australia Nonprofit Fellowship to attend the course *Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management* at the Harvard Business School. The prestigious fellowship was a personal honour for Julie and supported the continued growth and development of the Foundation.

Board Committees

Audit and Risk Committee

Paul Rogan (Chairman), Elizabeth Carr, Ashley Chapman, Colonel John Fenwick (appointed 24 June 2015), John McCarroll (appointed 30 March 2015), Peter Reid (retired 8 December 2014).

Investment Sub-Committee

Members of the Audit and Risk Committee form the Investment Sub-Committee along with: Barry Clarke (retired 8 December 2014) and John McCarroll.

Client Services Committee

Suellen Tapsall (Chairman), Elizabeth Carr, Ashley Chapman, Richard Grills, Imelda Lynch (appointed 24 June 2015), Peter Brown, Barry Clarke, Professor Jill Keefe and Peter Reid (retired 8 December 2014).

Medical Committee

Dr Jim Runciman (Chairman), Elizabeth Carr, Dr Amanda Greaves, Dr Alex Harper, Associate Professor Wilson Heriot, Dr David Hilford, Associate Professor Alex P Hunyor, Dr Tharmalingam Mahendrarajah, Professor Paul Mitchell, Associate Professor Nitin Verma, Associate Professor Dimitri Yellachich.

Research Committee

Paul Rogan (Chairman until 8 December 2014), Associate Professor Nitin Verma (appointed Chairman 8 December 2014), Elizabeth Carr, Dr Jim Runciman, Suellen Tapsall.

Board Nomination and Evaluation Committee

Elizabeth Carr (Chairman), Ashley Chapman, John McCarroll.

State Chairs

State Chairs assist the Chief Executive Officer with representation of Macular Disease Foundation Australia at a State level:

Queensland: Dr Amanda Greaves

Victoria: Associate Professor Wilson Heriot

Tasmania: Associate Professor Nitin Verma

South Australia: Dr Jim Runciman

Western Australia: Suellen Tapsall

New South Wales: Vacant



Jean's Story

I remember the day my mother Elaine told the family she was losing her sight. She was in her early forties and had been to an ophthalmologist because she was having trouble with her vision. In particular the white lines on the road had become wavy. She wasn't told what her vision problem was, only that she would go blind one day and there was nothing she could do about it. Then she was sent home.

Without an understanding of her eye condition it was impossible to know how we could help or prepare for the future.

Nearly fifty years later mum is legally blind and many of the pleasures of her life have been greatly restricted; seeing movies, reading books, watching television. She now relies on her remaining senses. She still cooks an excellent fruitcake, conjuring by recollection, taste, smell and a fine mathematical mind. Dad is a great help to her, assisting when needed and being her constant, faithful chauffeur.

Much of their lives revolves around things they do with vision impaired groups, like walking, fitness and bowls. It is sad that mum can no longer read, drive or go to the movies – things she loved doing. She does have talking books, and a really big TV screen.

I have an uncle who also has macular degeneration so I am keenly aware that along with age, genetics puts you at risk. I care deeply about the eye health of my family and the possibility of my children getting the disease. I hope that one day, with enough support for research, we will have a cure for this disease.

At the moment, early diagnosis is imperative for treatment so my key message for everyone is get your macula checked and if you have someone in your family with macular degeneration contact the Foundation. They are warm, friendly and give invaluable information and great support. They make a huge difference.

Ambassador Jean Kittson

Jean Kittson is a performer, writer and proud Ambassador of Macular Disease Foundation Australia. Jean is an engaging speaker and willingly shares her personal insight into the impact of macular degeneration on her family. Macular Disease Foundation Australia is very grateful to Jean for her ambassadorial work and dedication in promoting the Foundation's important messages.

Education

Objective: To educate with accurate, specific, current and ongoing information.

The Foundation's work in educating and engaging members of the public and health professionals is helping to build healthy Australian communities.

The Foundation delivers education programs to members of the public as well as the health and aged care sectors. These programs are tailored to meet the needs of the audience and are supported with relevant resources.

Education of the Public

In 2014-2015 the Foundation delivered education sessions on macular degeneration to members of the public and community groups. These sessions included disease symptoms, risk factors, treatment options and the importance of nutrition and lifestyle. Sessions also covered low vision services, and aids and technologies available to help people with vision loss maintain independence and quality of life.

In 2014-2015 the Foundation conducted 138 education sessions for the general public, members of the Foundation's client base, and community-based organisations including seniors' groups, social groups, service clubs, health care professionals, vision-impaired groups, and groups for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Over 7,300 people attended these sessions. All received a comprehensive information kit and were asked to complete an evaluation form, which was used to inform further educational programs.

Public Education

Over 1,500 people attended 28 public education sessions held by the Foundation in metropolitan and regional locations across the country during 2014-2015.

These sessions were promoted by invitations sent to people on the Foundation's mailing list, as well as invitations and posters sent to local ophthalmologists, optometrists, general practitioners, pharmacies, health and community centres, retirement villages and local clubs and groups. Advertising was placed in local newspapers and press releases were sent to local media including print, radio and television.

Community Education

In response to requests from community groups, the Foundation spoke to over 5,800 people at 110 community education sessions. Participating community groups included Probus clubs, seniors groups, service clubs such as VIEW and Rotary, retirement villages and aged care facilities, Vision Impaired Person (VIP) support groups and other health related support groups.

The Foundation conducted 138 education sessions for the general public, members of the Foundation's client base, and community-based organisations.

Additionally, the Foundation reached out to the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities including Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese communities, providing education sessions with the aid of an interpreter.

The Foundation spoke to over 5,800 people at 110 community education sessions.

Seniors Expos

Foundation educators engaged with over 1,500 people at presentations and exhibition stands at annual Retirement, Lifestyle and Travel Expos in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra. Attendees received the Foundation's free self-testing Amsler grid as well as free information on macular degeneration, nutrition and low vision aids and services.

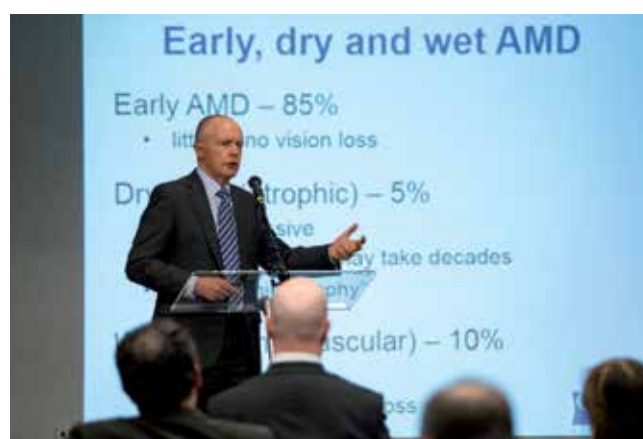
Over 1,350 seniors visited the Foundation's stand to collect their free information kit and Amsler grid at the NSW Seniors Week Expo in Sydney in March 2015.

"Early this year I went to one of the Foundation's education sessions which had been organised by my Probus club. I was given an Amsler grid and shown how to use it to check my vision. I discovered a problem with my right eye – I'd never noticed it before. Having been to the education session I knew it was important to go straight to my optometrist and so I did. I was immediately referred on to an ophthalmologist who diagnosed a macular hole. I'm very grateful to the Foundation because it's thanks to their advice that I've now been treated and my vision is stable."

Lesley, NSW

Educating Health Professionals

The Foundation delivered 25 education sessions and distributed free resources to almost 1,300 health professionals. Attendees included ophthalmologists and optometrists as well as practice managers, ophthalmic nurses, orthoptists, pharmacists, general practitioners, aged care workers, social workers and students. The Foundation continued to provide education to nursing and administration staff at the Sydney Eye Hospital.



The Foundation delivered 25 education sessions to almost 1,300 health professionals.

Contributing to Literature on Macular Diseases

The Foundation actively contributed to informative articles that appeared in publications distributed to healthcare professionals, ensuring the voice of the macular disease community was heard on relevant topics that included depression; nutrition and supplements; independent living and treatment of macular diseases.

General Practitioners

The Foundation continued to support general practitioners by presenting at selected meetings and providing resources on macular disease. In 2014-2015 general practitioners across Australia received the Foundation's new publications on diabetic eye disease.

Optometry

The Foundation continued to support the optometry profession with resources and professional education. A highlight within the 2014-2015 year was the Australian Vision Conference in Queensland, where the Foundation was able to showcase the resources and support it provides to optometrists and their patients.

In March 2015 Queensland ophthalmologist Dr Nathan Walker represented the Foundation, delivering a CPD session on diabetic eye disease to optometrists in Bundaberg. This session supported the Foundation's program of diabetic eye disease awareness activities taking place in Bundaberg at the time.

Health and Aged Care

Australia's ageing population presents increasing challenges for the health and aged care sector. In 2014-2015 the Foundation reached out to people working in aged care, presenting tailored education sessions about macular disease and the way in which the Foundation can support this sector's work and its clients.

Pharmacy

Pharmacists and pharmacy staff are key providers of health information to the community. In 2014-2015 the Foundation supported the needs of this sector by distributing relevant resources direct to pharmacies across the country in the lead up to Macular Degeneration Awareness Week.

Students

The Foundation maintained its commitment to educating students about macular disease and the Foundation's services available to patients. Highlights included presenting to the inaugural intake of orthoptic students at the University of Technology Sydney, and working with students of optometry, nursing and aged care.

Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) Congress

The annual RANZCO congress is a valuable opportunity for the Foundation to strengthen existing relationships with ophthalmologists and allied health professionals.

At the 2014 RANZCO Congress in Brisbane during November, Chief Executive Officer Julie Heraghty presented to over 480 ophthalmologists and allied eye health professionals including orthoptists, ophthalmic nurses and practice managers at a number of sessions.



Where did we go?

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Seniors' Groups NSW

Albury
Bankstown
Baulkham Hills
Beecroft
Beverly Hills
Brookvale
Burwood
Cabramatta
Cammeray
Campbelltown
Caringbah South
Carlingford
Castle Hill
Cheltenham
Cherrybrook
Concord West
Cronulla
Dee Why
Engadine
Epping
Ettalong
Gladesville
Gordon
Gwynneville
Gymea
Hornsby
Hunters Hill
Leura
Marsfield
Matraville
Menai
Merrylands
North Epping
North Rocks
North Ryde

Padstow
Panania
Pennant Hills
Penrith
Petersham
Revesby
Riverwood
Rouse Hill
Seaford
St Ives
Sutherland
Sydney
Sylvania
Tamworth
Waitara
Warrawee
West Ryde
Winston Hills
Wollongong
Woolooware

QLD

Kawana Waters
Chermside
Red Hill
Yeronga

TAS

Newstead
Kingston
Lauderdale

VIC

Box Hill
Clarinda
Noble Park

WA

Albany
Canning Vale
Cottesloe
Denmark
Innaloo
Mandurah
Melville
Merriwa
Midland
Nedlands
Northam
Osborne Park
Rockingham
Wannanup
Willagee

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Groups NSW

Bankstown
Kogarah
Parramatta
Riverwood
Stanmore

SA

Adelaide
Mawson Lakes
Service Clubs

TAS

Invermay

VIC

Balwyn North

Health Care Professionals NSW

Kogarah
Gymea
Sydney
Castle Hill
Kingswood
Chatswood
Erina
Epping
Broadway
Tamworth
Pymont

QLD

Broadbeach
South Brisbane

SA

Adelaide

VIC

Cheltenham

WA

Mount Claremont

"I have the Amsler grid on my fridge at home and regularly check my eyes."

"I found today's session very informative. It inspires me to make sure my family knows more about macular degeneration."

"Very informative and simple language that the average person can understand."

PUBLIC EDUCATION

ACT

Mitchell
Woden

NSW

Bathurst
Goulburn
Gymea
Hornsby

Kingsgrove
Lane Cove
Rosehill
Tamworth

QLD

Bowen Hills
Maroochydore

SA

Marion

TAS

Riverside

VIC

Caulfield
Shepparton

WA

Albany
Crawley
Mandurah

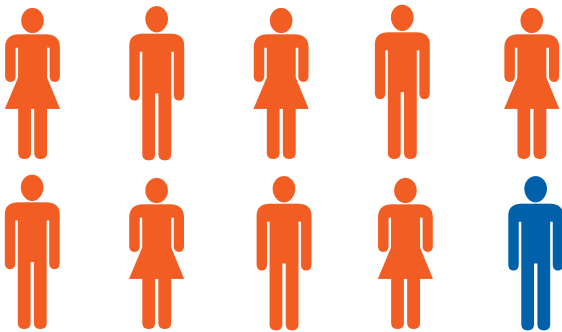
"I found the talk very interesting and I will alter my diet to lessen my chances of developing the disease."

Over 1,500 people attended 28 public information sessions nationally

Achieving our Goals

Education Sessions

GOAL Target Age Group



RESULT
98% of attendees were in the at-risk age group (aged 50 plus)

GOAL Satisfaction Rating



RESULT
98% of attendees rated the education sessions as “excellent” or “good”

GOAL Target Audience



RESULT
58% of attendees had macular degeneration, or were family, friends or carers of a person with macular degeneration

GOAL Knowledge



RESULT
94% of attendees indicated that they knew “a reasonable amount” or “a great deal” more about macular degeneration after the education session

Dennis Sutton: A call to the Foundation saved my sight

As reported in the 2013-2014 Macular Disease Foundation Australia annual report, a quick call to the Foundation in late 2013 saved the sight of commercial fisherman Dennis Sutton. In 2015 CEO Julie Heraghty travelled to Coffs Harbour to find out how Dennis and his sight had fared.

With his sight now stable, Dennis Sutton said he is back on the ocean fishing, but probably not for long. "Macular degeneration gave me a bit of a scare. It made me take some time to think about the future. I'd like to do a bit of travelling; jump on a plane, drive for a week or fortnight, come back home, then head off somewhere else," he said.

Dennis said he's glad he called the Foundation when he did.

"I was on the beach preparing to go out mullet fishing when I saw a wave, the size of a mountain, on the ocean's horizon. A few nights before, when logging into my computer, I'd noticed the lines on the screen curved up at one end. Those changes came on so quickly. I'd seen an ad about eye tests in the *Coffs Harbour Advocate* and decided to call the number. I got Julie Heraghty at the Foundation. She said, 'you've got to see an optometrist immediately' then she made the appointment for me. I didn't want to go because I had a crew waiting for me to go fishing, but she gave me no choice! Once I'd been seen by my optometrist in Macksville, I was told to get to Coffs Harbour for treatment that day because I had wet macular degeneration.

"It was just as well I went because a few months after my first injection my ophthalmologist told me I was very lucky. I'd have been blind in that eye if I hadn't followed Julie's instructions."

Thanks to regular treatment, Dennis currently has perfect vision in his right eye. Having been cautioned about the possibility of developing wet macular degeneration in his left eye, he regularly uses an Amsler grid to monitor for any changes to his vision.



"You've got to see an optometrist immediately... I didn't want to go... my ophthalmologist told me I would have been blind."

Awareness

Objective: To increase awareness of macular disease

Since 2001 the Foundation has worked to increase awareness and understanding in an effort to reduce the incidence and impact of macular disease in Australia.

The Foundation's work has had a multiplier effect:

- Promoting regular eye tests has helped achieve improved eye health in Australia and benefited the eye health sector.
- Promoting a healthy diet and lifestyle, including exercise and cessation of smoking, has supported key public health messages in eye health and other chronic diseases.

Independent national Galaxy Research surveys, commissioned by the Foundation since 2007, provide strong evidence of our success in building awareness of macular disease and heeding the call to action: have an eye test and macula check.

“Australians clearly value their sight and while it is encouraging to see the high levels of awareness, translating this awareness into action is the most important step.

Quite simply, having your eyes tested could save your sight.”

Julie Heraghty, CEO
Macular Disease Foundation Australia

82%

of Australians are aware of macular degeneration (up from 47% in 2007).

74%

of those polled were aware that macular degeneration affects the eyes (up from 32% in 2007).

89%

of people over 50 in the ‘at risk’ group had a macula check in the last two years (up from 33% in 2007 and 69% in 2014).

Macular Degeneration Awareness Week 2015

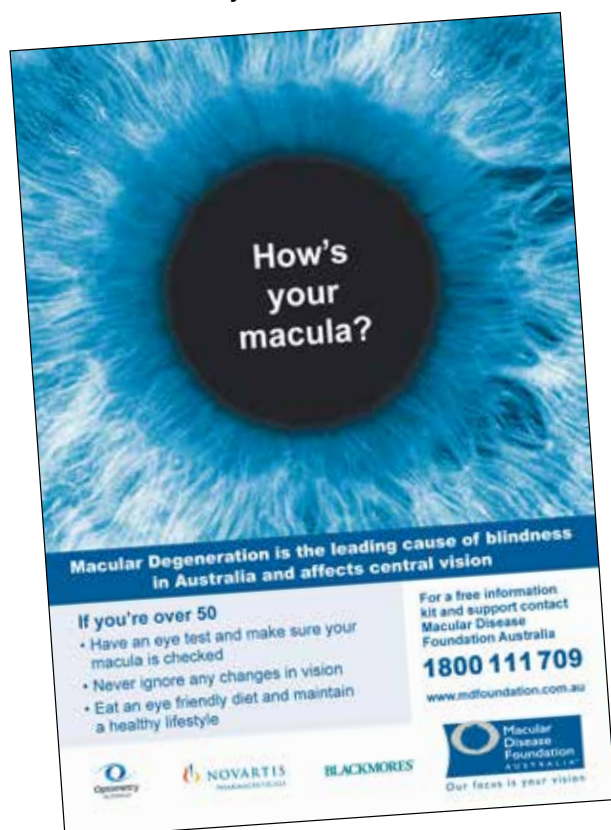
(Sunday 24 to Saturday 30 May)

In 2015 the Foundation's annual Macular Degeneration Awareness Week campaign reached out across Australia to those at risk of macular degeneration or living with the disease, promoting the key eye health message, "How's your macula?"

State Governors across Australia became *Custodians of Vision* for the week, having their eyes tested and macula checked.



The Governor of New South Wales has his eyes tested and macula checked by Associate Professor Alex Hunyor.



Information Distribution

For Macular Degeneration Awareness Week over 12,000 resource kits, containing over 400,000 individual items, were distributed via a direct mail campaign to optometrists, ophthalmologists, orthoptists, pharmacies, health food stores, community health centres, libraries, and federal / state parliamentarians. Resources were used to build awareness of the disease and the key health message within local communities.

- 87,000 resources / promotional items were distributed to fulfil 489 resource reorders received in response to the direct mail campaign
- Over 6,000 resource materials were distributed by Rotary Clubs across Australia.

Highlights

- Televised news coverage in Western Australia, Tasmania and ACT of State Governors having their eyes tested and macula checked
- Radio interviews with presenters across Australia including Alan Jones and Chris Smith
- Articles in the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Australian Women's Weekly* and *Take5* magazine
- Strong support from trade publications online and in print
- Feature story on Friend of the Foundation Dennis Sutton in the trade magazine *division*
- Editorial in local papers across the country generated by optometrists
- A total reported audience reach of over 11 million.

Survey Attracts Media Attention

The Foundation commissioned an independent survey by Galaxy Research to measure major concerns Australians have about their sight. The results, along with key eye health messages, were promoted to the Australian public during Macular Degeneration Awareness Week.

Key Findings

- 47 per cent of Australians ranked loss of sight as their number one health concern, ahead of loss of memory (37 per cent), loss of limb (7 per cent) and loss of hearing (4 per cent)
- The top three areas of life most impacted by loss of vision were identified as:
 - Driving: 88 per cent
 - Reading: 84 per cent
 - Working: 72 per cent
- 85 per cent of Australians over the age of 50 are aware that macular degeneration affects the eyes
- One in four still had not had their eyes tested and macula checked within the last two years.

The Foundation thanks long term supporters Blackmores and Novartis, as well as Optometry Australia and Rotary, for their support of the annual Macular Degeneration Awareness Week campaign.

Australia's State Governors become Custodians of Vision

State Governors across Australia had their eyes tested and macula checked by leading ophthalmologists during Macular Degeneration Awareness Week.

Footage and images of these eye tests were screened on television and published in print, showcased on the Foundation's website and shared through social media platforms.

Foundation Chief Executive Officer Julie Heraghty said, "We are honoured the State Governors agreed to be *Custodians of Vision* for Macular Degeneration Awareness Week 2015. Their support in having an eye test and macula check has greatly assisted Macular Disease Foundation Australia in raising awareness across the country".

New South Wales



His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) Governor of New South Wales and Mrs Linda Hurley had their eyes tested and macula checked at Government House by Associate Professor Alex Hunyor.

"I am fortunate to have had good eyesight my entire life. This has helped me to fulfil the responsibilities of my previous military career, as well as the everyday activities we all undertake," said the Governor of New South Wales.

Victoria



His Excellency the Honourable Alex Chernov AC QC Governor of Victoria and Mrs Elizabeth Chernov visited the surgery of Associate Professor Wilson Heriot of Eye Surgery Associates.

The Governor accepted the role of *Custodian of Vision* to help raise awareness of macular degeneration as over 270,000 Victorians live with some evidence of the disease.

"As Governor of Victoria, I encourage all those at risk, especially those over 50, to join me in having their eyes tested and macula checked during this Macular Degeneration Awareness Week," he said.

South Australia



His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AO, Governor of South Australia, visited the surgery of Dr Grant Raymond.

With over 90,000 South Australians having some evidence of macular degeneration, the Foundation appreciated the Governor's support in raising awareness of the importance of having an eye test and macula check.

Western Australia



Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson AO Governor of Western Australia had her macula checked by Associate Professor Dimitri Yellachich at Western Australia Government House.

The Governor said, "I'm really pleased to be a *Custodian of Vision* for Macular Degeneration Awareness Week. I'm over 50, and as this is one of the major risk factors for macular degeneration. I know I need to have regular eye tests."

Tasmania



Associate Professor Nitin Verma welcomed Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Kate Warner AM Governor of Tasmania and her husband Mr Richard Warner to his Hobart Eye Surgeons practice.

"I'm delighted to be *Custodian of Vision* for Tasmanians for Macular Degeneration Awareness Week," the Governor said. "It's important to have testing because so often early intervention really matters, and can have very positive outcomes."

mEYE World Photographic Competition 2014

Since its inception in 2011, the mEYE World Photographic Competition has become a key annual event. The competition raises awareness of macular disease through the visual arts and is promoted widely through the media.

The 2014 competition invited Australians to enter a photograph of “a sight worth saving” along with 30-60 words explaining how their entry captured this theme. Judges were Foundation Patron Ita Buttrose, Australian artist Ken Done and photographers Rex Dupain and Alan Pryke.

Competition winners were announced by Ita Buttrose at the Foundation’s 2014 Annual General Meeting. Ita said, “The competition is a wonderfully creative way to remind people how precious their sight is and why we should do all we can to preserve it.”

The Grand Finalist and winner of the Healthcare Professional Category, Dr Kerry Boytell, was presented with a framed copy of her winning photograph.

Other category winners were Yvonne Hill, Paralowie SA (Macular Disease Community category), Corinne Le Gall, Vincentia NSW (Open category), and Mikayla McCubben, Kingscliff NSW (Junior category).

A 2015 Foundation calendar showcased the photographs of the winners and runners up.

**Entries received for the
mEYE World Photographic
Competition 2014 increased by
38 per cent on the previous year.**

Thank you to our judges Ita Buttrose, Ken Done, Rex Dupain and Alan Pryke and prize donors; Adobe, Ken Done Gallery, Mainline Photographics, Manfrotto, Momento Australia, New Holland Publishers, Safilo Australia, Saxon, Wacom Australia, Yaffa Publishing Group.



*2014 Open Category winner -
by Corinne Le Gall, Vincentia NSW*



*2014 Macular Disease Community Category
winner - by Yvonne Hill, Paralowie SA*



*2014 Junior Category winner -
by Mikayla McCubben, Kingscliff NSW*

Dr Kerry Boytell: Grand Finalist - mEYE World Photographic Competition 2014

Retired anaesthetist Dr Kerry Boytell was the Grand Finalist of the Foundation's 2014 mEYE World Photographic Competition.

In 2014 the theme for the competition was 'a sight worth saving'. For Kerry, that sight was a hard earned image of a snow leopard in the high country of Montana.

"My husband (Eric) and I were on a game farm, in the high country of Montana (United States)," said Kerry. "There was a snow leopard running around and we were told if we stayed at a particular point it would probably come out. We waited there in the freezing snow for half an hour and finally, it came.

"My fingers were so cold it was hard to control the camera and when the moment came to shoot, when the snow leopard climbed up on to that ledge, it was amazing. But it happened so quickly that I didn't have time to check what I'd captured before it dived away."

For Kerry, sight is the key sense that enables her to pursue her passion. "I found in photography an outlet for my creative endeavours and am so lucky to have good eyesight which allows me to follow this passion. Macular Disease Foundation Australia plays such a significant role in helping those not so fortunate, and should be wholeheartedly supported."



Dr Kerry Boytell



2014 Grand Finalist and Healthcare Professional Category winner - by Dr Kerry Boytell, Mosman NSW

Diabetic Retinopathy Awareness Campaign

In 2015 the Foundation launched its inaugural national campaign to generate awareness of diabetic retinopathy, the leading cause of blindness in Australia's working age population. This included the targeted distribution of information booklets to health professionals and an awareness campaign via radio, television, print and online media that reached more than four million people, including members of the public and health professionals.

Media Highlights included:

-  **News for Seniors:** An article in the Department of Human Services *News for Seniors* magazine featured Australian music icon Marcia Hines who lives with diabetes. Marcia spoke about her personal lifestyle strategies to prevent the onset of diabetic eye disease. *News for Seniors* reached two million people and was made available in 16 languages; further spreading the word to the many diverse communities within Australia's multicultural population.

-  **Body+Soul:** A full page article in *Body+Soul* featured Friend of the Foundation and volunteer, Susan Harvey. This major feature focused on Susan's experience of living with diabetic eye disease and reached an estimated 1.8 million readers, appearing in News Corp's major metro Sunday papers nationally: *Sunday Telegraph*, *Sunday Mail Adelaide*, *Sunday Times Perth*, *Herald Sun Melbourne*, *Sunday Mail Brisbane*, *Sunday Territorian* and *Sunday Tasmanian*.

- Online advertisements:** Online advertisements, aimed at increasing awareness of diabetic eye disease, were viewed over 2.3 million times with more than 4,800 people clicking through to view information displayed on the Foundation's website and to order an information kit.



Susan Harvey: I wish I'd never ignored my eyes



Photographer: Rohan Kelly Body + Soul

At 65, Susan Harvey has lived with type 2 diabetes for six years and has lost significant vision due to diabetic eye disease, the leading cause of blindness and severe vision loss in working aged Australians.

Susan's diagnosis of type 2 diabetes came as a surprise, despite the fact that both her mother and her uncle had developed the disease in later life. "I woke up one day and my foot was so swollen I couldn't stand on it," she said.

Susan was diagnosed with diabetes and treated in hospital for eleven days. It was during this time that her sight rapidly deteriorated. "One day I picked up a newspaper and I just couldn't read the print," she said. "It was as rapid as that."

Susan was referred to a diabetes specialist and an eye specialist for regular consultations.

"I now have my macula tested, read the eye chart, and have photos taken so that the ophthalmologist can check for swelling at the back of my eye. I cried a lot when I first began to lose some vision, but soon decided 'life must go on' and became actively involved in the community."

Susan began volunteering at Macular Disease Foundation Australia national office after she discovered she had diabetic eye disease and is now an invaluable part of the team, volunteering three days a week.

"It's hard to put into words what I get out of volunteering," she said. "It gives me a sense of doing something for other people and now that I'm retired, it gives me a reason to get out of the house instead of sitting at home." She also enjoys the social interaction with other volunteers and Foundation staff members. "You couldn't find a nicer group of people," she added.

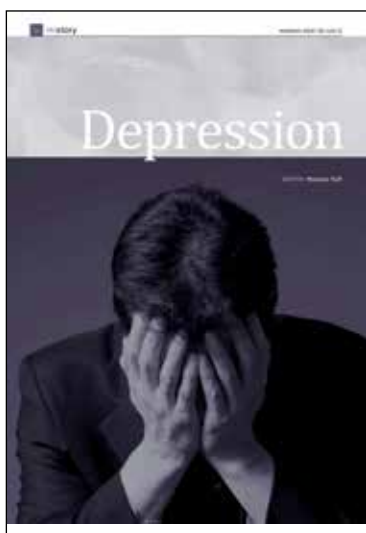
Trade Publications

The Foundation was successful in gaining support from key media in the eye health sector to raise awareness of issues surrounding macular disease. Articles appeared in *Insight*, *Australian Optometry*, *RANZCO News* and *mivision*, ensuring health professionals remained informed of new developments as well as the important work of the Foundation.

Depression: the dark side of vision loss

The lead story in the May issue of *mivision* ophthalmic journal focussed on depression experienced by people with vision loss.

This important article referenced the Foundation's *Ripple Effect of Vision Loss* research to help highlight the importance of caring for carers as well as people with a macular disease.



Keep On Driving - Safely

The *Keep on Driving – Safely* initiative began in NSW in 2009 with the insertion of a macular degeneration information brochure into driver licence renewals. Subsequently, over five million brochures were provided to NSW drivers over a five-year cycle. In 2014, the ACT Government adopted this campaign, which will see over 300,000 inserts over a five year cycle. This public health initiative serves as a reminder of the importance of our eye sight for safe driving.

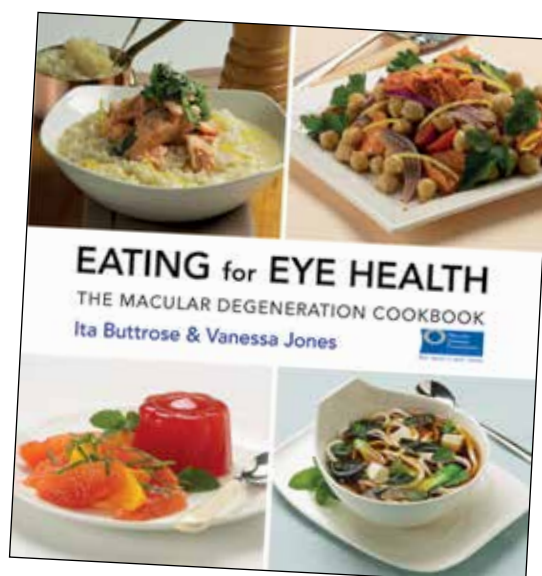


Friends of the Foundation

Friends of the Foundation continued to support the Foundation's work in advocacy, public relations, social media and fundraising. This invaluable program enables the Foundation to capture inspiring personal stories from people living with macular disease, their carers, family members and healthcare providers. These stories are invaluable when communicating key eye health messages from a personal perspective. The Foundation is grateful to have so many people willing to share their story, including our Patron Ita Buttrose and Ambassadors Jean Kittson and Jan Utzon.

Eating for Eye Health – The Macular Degeneration Cookbook

The Foundation's *Eating for Eye Health – The Macular Degeneration Cookbook*, co-authored by Foundation Patron Ita Buttrose and chef Vanessa Jones, continues to be an important tool for promoting eye health. Relunched in 2014 due to popular demand, the book generates awareness of the disease, providing critical eye health information and encouraging Australians to eat foods that promote eye health.



Shane: Treatment Saved My Eyes



Shane with wife Melissa

Shane was on holiday in Byron Bay when he learned that he had diabetic macular edema.

Diagnosed with type 2 diabetes at age 26, he maintained regular appointments with his optometrist so that his eye health could be managed. He'd informed his optometrist about his diabetes and was taking his medication.

Shane said it came as a shock when the optometrist rushed him off to an ophthalmologist. "I knew it was serious."

Shane lives north of Canberra with his wife Melissa and two children. He said the treatment he now receives for diabetic macular edema has saved his sight and enabled him to continue to work and support his family.

"Our local community is very supportive, but it can be difficult.

"If I'd had more knowledge about the complications associated with diabetes when first diagnosed, I would have taken a different approach to my health," he said.

"If I'd had more knowledge about the complications associated with diabetes when first diagnosed, I would have taken a different approach to my health."

Shane

Ten Years Dedicated to Saving Sight

Thank You to our Patron, Ita Buttrose AO OBE





Research

Objective: To support and pursue research

Economic Impact of Diabetic Macular Edema

In November 2014, the Foundation was invited to contribute to a new Deloitte Access Economics report on the economic impact of diabetic macular edema. With increasing incidence of diabetes in Australia, this report provided essential data to inform advocacy and representation to government. Additionally it assisted the Foundation to determine key eye health messages and plan education and awareness campaigns.

The Deloitte Access Economics report was presented to Federal MPs at Parliament

House on 26 May 2015. In a presentation at the event, the Foundation's National Research Adviser, Professor Paul Mitchell, delivered key messages about reducing the incidence and impact of diabetic macular edema.

The Foundation's Chief Executive Officer, Julie Heraghty also spoke at the event. She said a coordinated national partnership approach between Government, patient organisations, clinicians, industry and the community was needed to support early diagnosis of diabetic macular edema and improve the entire continuum of care, from awareness and screening to treatment access and rehabilitation.

A Patient Perspective

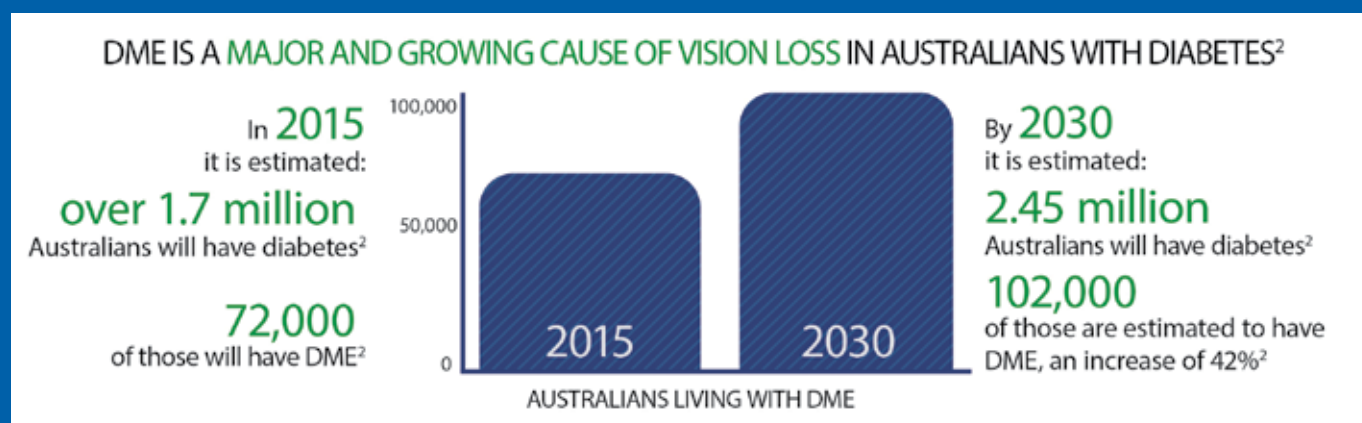
During the launch of *The Economic Impact of Diabetic Macular Oedema in Australia* report at Parliament House, Julie Heraghty interviewed a patient with diabetic macular edema and his wife. The interview demonstrated the significant impact of this disease and the value of prevention, early detection and timely treatment.



“A co-ordinated national partnership approach... (is) needed to support early diagnosis of diabetic macular edema and improve continuum of care.”

Julie Heraghty,
Chief Executive Officer,
Macular Disease
Foundation Australia

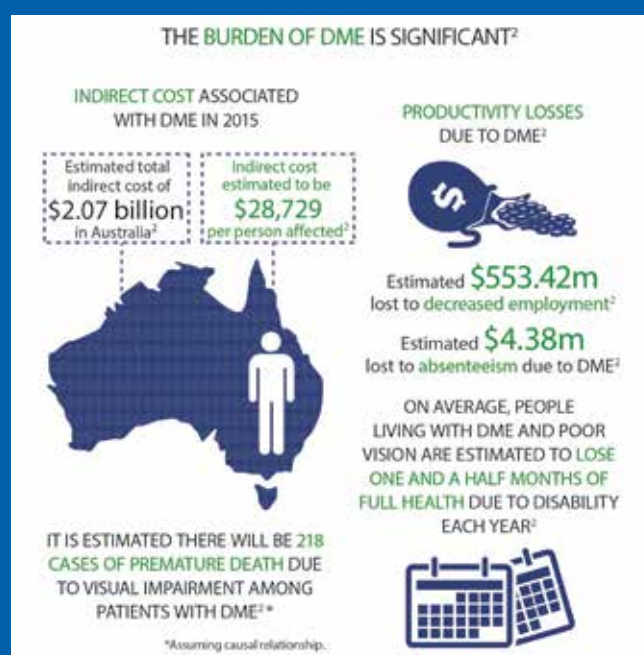
Key Findings from the Report



The Deloitte Access Economics report estimated that 72,000 Australians are living with diabetic macular edema (DME). Additionally it identified that the number of people with diabetic macular edema will increase by 42 per cent to 102,000 people in the next 15 years.

The report found that:

- The entire indirect financial and wellbeing costs associated with diabetic macular edema are set to amount to approximately \$2.07 billion in 2015. Of this approximately \$570 million is due to productivity losses from lower workforce participation, absenteeism and premature death.
- Approximately one in two people with diabetes do not have their eyes examined within the recommended timeframe, highlighting the importance of raising awareness of eye testing for early detection and treatment.
- With current methods of screening, an additional 9,200 cases of diabetic macular edema could potentially be detected every year if retinal examinations were provided to all people with diabetes currently not being screened in that year.



- If two thirds of all people living with diabetic macular oedema who had visual impairment were treated with anti-VEGF therapy, the benefits potentially associated with improvement in vision and wellbeing would amount to \$353.13 million in 2015.

Macular Disease Foundation Australia worked with Bayer Australia and Diabetes Australia to complete this report on the economic impact of diabetic eye disease.

The entire indirect financial and wellbeing costs associated with diabetic macular edema are set to amount to approximately \$2.07 billion in 2015.

Macular Disease Foundation Australia Research Grants Program

Macular Disease Foundation Australia funds world-leading research that aims to reduce the incidence and impact of macular disease and ultimately, to find a cure.

The Foundation's grants and fellowships make significant funding available for Australian medical, low vision and nutritional research into macular degeneration. They are awarded following rigorous evaluation, based largely on the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) process, along with international peer review, to ensure that the successful applicants meet the highest standards.

In April 2014-2015 the Foundation opened the third round of applications for the Macular Disease Foundation Australia Research Grants Program, totalling \$1.3 million.

Within this program were two grant funding pools; the Macular Disease Foundation Australia Research Grant, and the inaugural Blackmores Macular Disease Foundation Australia Research Grant for research into the nutrition and/or lifestyle aspects of macular degeneration. This brings the total commitment to research grants to \$2.8 million since the program launched in 2011.

On World Sight Day, 9 October 2014, Associate Professor Bamini Gopinath was awarded the third Blackmores Dr Paul Beaumont Research Fellowship, valued at \$100,000 over two years.

Subsequent to year end the 2015 grants were announced on World Sight Day, 8 October 2015.

Funded Research Grants Projects

The Foundation's Research Grants Program currently supports the following Australian world leading researchers:



Professor Paul Mitchell

*University of Sydney,
Westmead Millennium Institute*

Professor Mitchell's research will enable early identification of people at high risk of macular degeneration progression. Lifestyle modifications can then be made to slow disease progression and improve quality of life. Funding for this project concluded at the end of 2014.

**The Foundation has committed
\$2.8 million to world leading
research since 2011, funding
Australian researchers to
find better ways to reduce
the incidence and impact of
macular degeneration and
ultimately find a cure.**



Professor Robyn Guymer

*Centre for Eye Research Australia,
University of Melbourne*

Professor Guymer's project looked at new diagnostic tests to enable earlier identification of people at high risk of disease progression and as a result, facilitate faster completion of trials looking into new treatments for macular degeneration. Professor Guymer has had a total of 12 scientific papers published in leading journals as a result of her research made possible by the Foundation. Funding for this project concluded at the end of 2014.



Professor Erica Fletcher

University of Melbourne

Professor Fletcher is examining a possible cause for the development and progression of early Age-related macular degeneration. This research is aimed at developing new treatments and screening people at greatest risk of disease progression.



Associate Professor Damien Harkin

*Queensland University of Technology
and the Queensland Eye Institute*

Associate Professor Harkin is developing technology to enable healthy retinal pigment epithelium cells (RPE) to replace those that are damaged or killed during the progression of macular degeneration.



Associate Professor Bamini Gopinath

*University of Sydney,
Westmead Millennium Institute*

Associate Professor Bamini Gopinath received the second Blackmores Dr Paul Beaumont Research Fellowship, which concluded in December 2014. She was awarded the third Fellowship running from 2015-16 and is now analysing diet and lifestyle of patients with late stage macular degeneration, which will help refine recommendations and key messages to reduce risk of disease progression.

Other Research

Survey of Australia's Health Concerns

An independent Galaxy Research poll commissioned by the Foundation as part of Macular Degeneration Awareness Week in 2015 found almost half (47 per cent) of Australians ranked loss of sight as their number one health concern, ahead of loss of memory (37 per cent), loss of a limb (7 per cent) and loss of hearing (4 per cent). Additionally the survey found that driving would be the area of life most impacted by loss of vision for 88 per cent of respondents.

The survey findings revealed that although 85 per cent of Australians over the age of 50 are aware that macular degeneration affects the eyes, alarmingly one in four still had not had their eyes tested and macula checked within the last two years.

The survey was completed in May 2015.

Evaluating the Foundation

The Foundation evaluates its services every year by surveying a sample of its client base. The information collected is analysed and used to inform activities and services for the year to come. In 2015 the Foundation surveyed 2,000 people from across the spectrum of the Australian macular disease community:

- ☐ Those with a macular disease
- ☐ Family and friends of people with a macular disease
- ☐ Those with a general interest in macular diseases
- ☐ People working in a macular disease related field.

In 2015 the survey identified:

- ☐ 71 per cent of people who had accessed the Foundation's services had macular degeneration or had a family or friend living with macular degeneration
- ☐ 89 per cent of people who accessed the Foundation's client services were 50-years of age or over.

What do our clients think of our services?

Clients surveyed gave overwhelmingly positive ratings to the Foundation's flagship services. The Helpline, newsletter, education sessions and website were described as "good" or "excellent" by 95 per cent or more of all who had accessed these services.

The Foundation's publications were perceived to be of very high value with 92 per cent of respondents ranking the *Annual Research Update* as "helpful" or "very helpful", with the *Nutrition and Supplements Fact Sheet* described by 96 per cent as "helpful" or "very helpful".

How satisfied were our clients?

85 per cent of clients surveyed said their expectations had been mostly or fully met. 96 per cent were "very" or "mostly satisfied" with Foundation services and 99 per cent said the Foundation's advocacy work was "good", "very good" or "excellent".



95%

of all who had accessed the Foundation's services said the Helpline, newsletter, education sessions and website were "good" or "excellent".

96%

of the Foundation's clients were "very" or "mostly satisfied" with Foundation services.

99%

of clients said the Foundation's advocacy work was "good", "very good" or "excellent".

Research Communication

Macular Disease Research E-newsletter

Macular Disease Foundation Australia's weekly research e-newsletter is distributed to over 900 ophthalmologists and other interested eye care providers.

The e-newsletter summarises global published peer-reviewed research on key diseases of the macula. This important resource ensures eye health professionals remain informed of the latest developments in treatment, diagnosis, genetics, diet and other related issues.

Research Interpretation

The Foundation interprets the latest, typically complex research into key messages that are easily understood by the public to help them reduce their risks of macular disease, seek early diagnosis, treatment and/or rehabilitation.

Research is also interpreted so that clients can understand a diagnosis and maintain hope for the future.

Annual Research Updates

The annual *Research Update*, produced every December, summarises promising research developments over the year, in language easily understood by the general public.

The Foundation is especially grateful to the Medical Committee which provides oversight and guidance on the Foundation's key messages.

Support Services

Objective: To provide and facilitate relevant support

Macular Disease Foundation Australia provides services in person, over the phone, in print and online to people who are living with, and at risk of macular disease, their families and carers.

During 2014-2015 the Foundation expanded its reach by increasing its online presence, to better meet the needs of people of all ages across the broader community who seek information about macular disease. The social media forums, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube were used to disseminate information and actively engage in discussion among digital users.

Helpline – A Frontline Service

During 2014-2015 the Foundation's Helpline answered almost 8,800 calls from people around Australia who live with a macular disease, their family members, friends and carers. The Foundation's Helpline team offered these people valuable information, guidance, understanding and support.

Online Communication

The Foundation's website has become a powerful tool for the dissemination of information about macular disease, research and associated issues, as well as the activities of the Foundation.

In 2014-2015 the website was used to publicise macular disease research and treatments as well as the Foundation's activities including:

- The Foundation's new diabetic eye disease resources
- The animated series "Mac de Gen"
- Macular Degeneration Awareness Week with audio visual coverage and a photographic gallery to highlight eye tests undertaken by State Governors who were *Custodians of Vision* for the week
- The annual mEYE World Photographic Competition
- The Foundation's new Low Vision Advisory Service



Mac de Gen

In 2014-2015 the Foundation launched “Mac de Gen” on its website. This series of short informative animations targets people at risk of, or living with, macular degeneration. Presented by the star Mac De Gen, the animations are an easy way to understand different aspects of the disease.

The series comprises:

- Risk factors for macular degeneration
- Reducing your risk of macular degeneration
- Eye testing for macular degeneration
- The Amsler grid
- Symptoms and early detection of macular degeneration
- Treatment for macular degeneration
- Living with low vision

The animated Mac De Gen series is showcased on the Foundation’s website and has also been promoted through the Foundation’s social media channels.



Publications

The Foundation produces publications in print, audio and online formats to maximise understanding of different macular diseases, the risk factors, and strategies for prevention, early detection, treatment, management and rehabilitation.

In 2014-2015, reflecting its broadening scope, the Foundation significantly expanded its resources, enabling it to provide comprehensive information about other macular diseases. This included the development of comprehensive publications on diabetic eye disease, the leading cause of blindness in working age Australians. These publications are critical to increasing awareness of risk factors and symptoms, and to giving guidance on diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation.

Publications on Macular Diseases

A series of comprehensive publications was published for the following macular diseases: vitelliform macular dystrophy (Best's disease); macular hole; macular pucker; macular telangiectasia; myopic macular degeneration; posterior vitreous detachment and floaters; retinal detachment; retinal vein occlusion; retinitis pigmentosa; Stargardt's disease and Charles Bonnet Syndrome.

Guides for Low Vision

The Foundation continued to maintain, update and distribute a comprehensive range of guides that assist people to live independently with low vision, and help carers and family to provide effective support.

This series comprises:

- **Low Vision: A Guide**
A practical introduction to living with low vision
- **Family, Friend & Carer: A Guide**
For people providing care to a person with low vision
- **Slips, Trips & Falls: A Guide**
Practical advice on avoiding falls
- **Low Vision Aids & Technology: A Guide**
Information on the different types of aids, equipment and technology which assists those with low vision.

Reaching out to Australia's Multicultural Population

Recognising Australia's diverse multicultural population, the Foundation translated key publications into Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Vietnamese. These publications were made available in print and on the Foundation's website.



Information Kits

During the year Foundation volunteers packed almost 14,000 information kits comprising publications about various macular diseases and low vision.

These kits were distributed at education and awareness events and in response to calls to the Foundation's Helpline from Australians at risk of, or living with, a macular disease.

Foundation volunteers packed almost 14,000 information kits comprising publications about various macular diseases and low vision.



Audio Publications

The Foundation produced a number of its primary series of information booklets as audio publications for the use of people with low vision. The series, comprising Age-related Macular Degeneration; Nutrition and Supplements for Macular Degeneration; and Slips, Trips & Falls: A Guide is available online via the Foundation's website and on CD.

Newsletter

The Foundation's quarterly newsletter focuses on issues related to macular disease. It provides updates on projects and advocacy campaigns being undertaken by the Foundation and outlines key research. The newsletter remains a vital tool for communicating with, and educating, the community.



Diabetic Eye Disease

The Foundation produced a new comprehensive booklet to support its work on diabetic eye disease. This publication was promoted heavily to the public through awareness activities and also to healthcare professionals.

Every general practitioner, diabetes educator, optometrist and ophthalmologist across Australia received copies. Over 60,000 booklets were distributed, providing health professionals with a useful tool for patient education. A small leaflet was also produced and distributed to eye health professionals, providing key information about diabetic eye disease.

According to research, only 50 per cent of people with diabetes have their eyes tested at the recommended frequency of every two years, or more often, when at higher risk.



“The booklet is an excellent resource for health professionals to use when alerting patients to the very real risks of blindness associated with diabetes... As we know, there is a major issue with diabetes and retinopathy. We’re seeing many people far too late, which highlights the important role of education, raising awareness and early detection. This publication is an excellent resource to support health professionals and I commend the Foundation on its work in this area.”

Professor Paul Mitchell, National Research Advisor
Macular Disease Foundation Australia

Low Vision Services

Low Vision Advisory Service

In January 2015 the Foundation established a free low vision advisory service, in collaboration with Guide Dogs NSW/ACT. This service operates from the Foundation's national office and involves an orthoptist from Guide Dogs working closely with clients to assess individual needs and determine which aids and technologies can help to best maintain independence and quality of life.

Clients are able to view, discuss and trial a wide range of low vision aids, equipment and technology during this consultation.

The service has quickly gained momentum with people from the Sydney area and throughout NSW making appointments.

Low Vision Information Days

Low vision information days provide an opportunity for the Foundation to personally connect with the macular disease community, to provide advice and obtain feedback on different skills and equipment that can enhance quality of life and independence.

During 2014-2015 the Foundation organised and presented at low vision information days for members of the public across NSW. Low vision service providers were invited to present alongside the Foundation, including Vision Australia, Guide Dogs, Quantum RLV and Humanware.

Navigator Audio Book Program

The Navigator is a hand-held portable device that reads books and newspapers aloud. The Foundation provides free access to the Navigator via two projects: the Navigator Library Access Project and the Navigator Home Access Project. These projects provide free access to audio book technology either through a local library or via download access from home.

Low Vision Badges

During 2014-2015 the Foundation received numerous requests via the Helpline for its "I have low vision" badges. These badges, which are supplied free of charge, identify people with low vision in the community, and in doing so, can encourage others to offer assistance and understanding.



Representation

Objective: To advocate for the best interests of the macular disease community

The Foundation is the voice of the macular disease community, advocating for affordable access to registered treatment along with rehabilitation to maintain independence and quality of life.

Treatment

Treatment Access and Affordability

During 2014-2015 the Foundation advocated for the accessibility and affordability of registered treatments for people living with diabetic macular edema (DME) and retinal vein occlusion (RVO), diseases that affect the macula and can cause vision loss and blindness.

Diabetic macular edema is a complication in some people who develop diabetic eye disease. Most people with type 1 diabetes and 60 per cent of people with type 2 diabetes will develop diabetic eye disease within 20 years of diagnosis. About 1 to 2 per cent of people over 40 are affected by retinal vein occlusion, although most cases occur in people over 60.

Anti-VEGF treatment has rapidly become the standard of care for most people with these conditions, with impressive evidence of safety and efficacy.

In May 2015, ranibizumab (Lucentis) was listed on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for reimbursement for the treatment of DME and RVO.

The Foundation continues to advocate on behalf of the macular disease community to ensure the accessibility and affordability of registered treatments.

South Australian Hospital Crisis

Redevelopment of the Royal Adelaide Hospital, announced in 2013, threatened to reduce the already inadequate 24 outpatient eye clinic rooms to just 11, placing further strains on existing long waiting lists and unacceptable delays for injections for treatment of wet Age-related macular degeneration. The Foundation advocated for more services to meet the eye health needs of patients in South Australia and in September 2014 South Australia Health announced it would fund an additional seven eye clinics per month. The Foundation also commented on the South Australia Transforming Health Discussion Paper which addressed the ophthalmic diagnosis and treatment capacity crisis in South Australia. The Foundation highlighted the need for a South Australia Eye Hospital and Research Centre and improved ophthalmic services in regional and remote South Australia.

“I congratulate the Minister on this decision to list ranibizumab (Lucentis) on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. It will change the lives of a huge number of people with diabetic eye disease.”

Professor Paul Mitchell, National Research Advisor,
Macular Disease Foundation Australia. May 2015.

Benefits

Eye Tests

Federal government changes on 1 January 2015 meant that people aged 65 are now eligible for a Medicare rebate for a comprehensive eye examination once every year rather than the previously defined biennial examination. However, those under 65 with no symptoms of eye disease are eligible for a Medicare rebate on an eye examination now only once every three years. The Foundation supported Optometry Australia's representations, and concerns over the extended eye examination period for those under 65 without symptoms.

Private Health Funds and Low Vision Aids

Since 2010 the Foundation has been working with Australia's private health funds to improve the low vision aid benefits offered. In September 2014, the Foundation audited the six largest private health funds, which make up 86 per cent of the private health insurance market, to ascertain if there had been any improvements. While some improvements have been achieved, there is still a real gap in meeting clients' needs and in the way that private health insurers communicate with clients. The Foundation continued to educate providers on the equity of providing these benefits, given that hearing and other disabilities are accommodated.

Aged Care

Residential Aged Care Facilities

The Foundation recognises the important role residential aged care facilities play in supporting the eye health of Australia's growing ageing population. In December 2014 the Foundation was awarded a two and a half year grant to develop a program that will support facilities in this role. The grant will be used to produce resources on eye health for use in all residential aged care facilities across Australia.

Commonwealth Home Support Program

For many years, the Foundation has advocated strongly for people who develop vision loss after the age of 65 to have access to affordable low vision aids, technology and support. This issue became particularly critical when this age group was denied access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

In July 2014 the Federal Government released the draft Commonwealth Home Support Program, which recommended reforms to aged care to assist older people to live in their own homes for as long as possible. The Foundation advocated strongly for low vision aids and technology, as well as a holistic approach to assessment, mobility aids, home modifications and to purchase low vision aids and equipment. Additionally, there is discretion to increase the cap to \$1,000 if required.

As a result, older Australians who meet the criteria under the Program, can now access \$500 per financial year to be used to purchase aids and equipment with the discretion to increase the cap to \$1,000 if required.



The Foundation working in aged care

Submissions

During 2014-2015, the Foundation represented the best interests of the macular disease community by presenting 24 submissions to State and Federal Government including:

Senate Select Committee on Health

The Foundation presented a 36 page submission to the Senate Select Committee on Health that addressed numerous significant issues that affect consumers with low vision including:

- Access and availability of public hospital outpatient treatment
- Out-of-pocket treatment costs
- Health promotion, prevention and early intervention for macular disease
- Eye checks in residential aged care facilities
- The need for patients with diabetes to have two-yearly checks or annual checks if there is evidence of retinopathy
- Gaps in the ophthalmology workforce
- Access to low vision aids and technologies expenditure.

Expert Review of Complementary Medicines Regulations

The Foundation made submission to the Therapeutic Goods Administration's review of Australian regulatory guidelines for complementary medicines and was invited to meet with the expert panel comprising Professor John Horvath AO, Emeritus Professor Lloyd Samson AO and Mr Will Delaat AM. Professor Paul Mitchell and Foundation representatives addressed the expert panel on key issues related to access to complementary medicines with level one evidence.

National Diabetes Strategy Consultation Paper

In April 2015 the Department of Health released a consultation paper requesting responses to a range of key goals and areas for national action on diabetes. The Foundation, in its response, addressed several issues related to screening, the role of the Chief Medical Officer and improved referral pathways between healthcare professionals.

PIN-only Credit Cards

Australia's banks and major financial institutions announced that PIN-only authorisation credit cards would be introduced from 1 August 2014. The Foundation conducted a survey of the banks and institutions to assess the avenues for information and support available to those with low vision requiring assistance, which revealed that few major banks and financial institutions had established processes to assist with the transition. The Foundation successfully advocated with banks and major financial institutions to have our vision impaired clients supported and accommodated.



Alliances

In 2014-2015 Macular Disease Foundation Australia represented the needs of the macular disease community in the areas of ageing, health and disabilities by driving the Foundation's advocacy agenda through the following organisations:

National Aged Care Alliance (NACA)

A representative body of peak national organisations in aged care, including consumer groups, providers, unions and health professionals. The Foundation is represented on the NACA Ageing and Disability Interface Group.

Australian Blindness Forum (ABF)

The forum promotes effective functioning of blindness agencies by exchanging information and influencing the policy agenda of governments.

Vision 2020

A global initiative of the World Health Organisation and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness. The Foundation is represented on the Diabetes Blindness Prevention Strategic Working Group.

NSW Health

The Foundation is an appointed member of the following:

Agency for Clinical Innovation (ACI) Governing Body:

Promotes equitable access to public sector ophthalmic services for the entire population of NSW. The Foundation is also represented on the ACI's Community Eye Care Project Steering Committee.

NSW Health Non-Government Organisation Advisory Committee:

Facilitates collaboration between NSW Health and the non government organisations on the development and implementation of NSW Health policy.

Federal Funding for the Foundation

Since 2005, an average of \$137,439 per year in Federal Government funding has been received for the Foundation's national education program. This is a small amount given the high prevalence and enormous impact of macular degeneration in this country.

In 2014-2015 the Foundation continued to advocate for the necessary Federal funding to meet the growing needs in prevention and early detection and supporting those living with disease.



Accessibility of Information

Representations to a major energy utility on behalf of our clients resulted in marked improvements in readability standards of their newsletters. The company was receptive to understanding the importance of colour, contrast and font size, to enable easy reading of written material.

Global Reach

The Foundation was represented at major ophthalmic meetings around the world throughout the year including the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) in the United States and EURETINA congress in London. These are the major gatherings of ophthalmic researchers in the world and provide valuable insights into current international research and new trends in the management of Age-related macular degeneration, diabetic macular edema, and other retinal diseases.

The Foundation was represented by Associate Professor Alexander Hunyor at an exchange forum in Amsterdam attended by global retinal specialists where he outlined the work of the Foundation and the important link with ophthalmology in advocacy work.

The Foundation continued to support Macular Degeneration New Zealand (MDNZ) for a third year with Chief Executive Officer Julie Heraghty conducting a strategic planning day and sharing the Foundation's expertise and resources to strengthen the work of our New Zealand colleagues.

The achievements of the Foundation in raising awareness of macular disease and promoting early detection were highlighted by Chief Executive Officer Julie Heraghty in a feature published in *mivision* ophthalmic journal. The article also highlighted the Foundation's campaigns to achieve accessibility and affordability of treatments and its global reach, which is resulting in the Foundation's strategies being emulated around the world.

Global Engagement Program

Macular Disease Foundation Australia shared its best practice with ophthalmologists and representatives of macular disease organisations across the world, as part of a 'Global Engagement' program. Workshops were conducted with nine countries in Latin America and in Europe; Poland, Germany and Italy. Information shared included how the Foundation has built a successful foundation upon which to reach out to the macular disease community, and importantly its awareness and advocacy activities.

"What I especially appreciate is all the information I have been given which is very supportive and will improve my performance. Thank you! Thanks eternally".
Global Engagement program attendee, Argentina



Jan's Story

For a considerable part of my life I was blissfully unaware of the existence of the disease known as macular degeneration.

When my grandfather, naval engineer and yacht designer Aage Utzon, gradually lost his sight in the late 1960's, it was accepted as something that could be expected when you grew older. Not until my father, Jørn Utzon, began to experience the same symptoms at the turn of the millennium, did the term 'macular degeneration' appear in the vocabulary of our family. Wet macular degeneration was the verdict. His vision steadily declined over the years until his passing in 2008.

My father was able to keep working on projects up until the end of his life. As he and I had been working together for almost 40 years, we had developed an architectural rapport as it were, where his ideas and directives, through my hands, could produce the documents and drawings needed for the refurbishment of the Sydney Opera House.

Because of his analytical approach to his own condition, the rest of the members of our family became acutely aware of the trauma that macular degeneration can have on a person's life. As you can imagine I have become very aware of macular degeneration, and must accept that I have a hereditary risk of being afflicted with the disease.

Witnessing my father's sight deteriorate from macular degeneration was heartbreaking. I can only urge everyone to have their macula checked, and very importantly, urge our society to make a greater effort to find a cure for this disease, which unnecessarily disables many of our citizens, individuals who, if they could retain their eyesight, with their skills and knowledge could be of great benefit to our society.



Ambassador Jan Utzon

Jan Utzon is a Danish architect and son of famed Sydney Opera House architect Jørn Utzon. Deeply influenced by his father's approach to architecture, the two worked closely together on several prestigious projects until Jørn's passing in 2008. Jan, through his own design practice, has undertaken many interesting projects. One of his most successful is the Performing Arts Centre in Esbjerg (1997) with its theatre and concert hall combined with the earlier art museum. Macular Disease Foundation Australia is grateful to have a strong and staunch advocate in Jan, and thank him for agreeing to be a champion for the cause.

Best Practice Management

Objective: To ensure best practice management

An Experienced Board

Macular Disease Foundation Australia has a strong, experienced Board that represents the needs of the macular disease community. The Board reflects the diversity in the macular disease community and includes people living with the disease or who have a family member with the disease, ophthalmologists and people who bring to the governing body special skills in a broad array of areas.

Throughout 2014-2015 the Board worked closely with the Chief Executive Officer to meet the mission and objectives of the Foundation.

Expert Committees

The following committees worked with the Chief Executive Officer as part of good governance and management throughout the year.

- **Audit and Risk Committee:** Oversees and enhances the financial reporting, external audit, risk management and internal control frameworks. The Investment Sub-Committee oversees investments.
- **Medical Committee:** Provides medical expertise, guidance and advice on medical matters related to macular disease.
- **Client Services Committee:** Oversees and enhances the ability of the Foundation to provide the highest quality services to meet the needs of the clients.

- **Research Committee:** Provides expertise and guidance in relation to the research program development.
- **Board Nomination and Evaluation Committee:** Reviews Board appointments and performance.

Committed Staff

As Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation, Julie Heraghty leads a team of 14 staff responsible for education and awareness, marketing and public relations, support services, research, finance and administration. The national office is in Sydney and provides Australia-wide services.

Professional staff development is an ongoing priority to help ensure that, through their individual roles, staff are able to contribute to the delivery of services to the macular disease community in the most effective and professional way.

Dedicated Volunteers

Volunteers provide valuable support to the Foundation, contributing both time and expertise in many different areas of work, from keeping the publication store in order to collating the large quantity of information sent out to those requesting resources.

Many volunteers live with a macular disease, others are touched by it in some way through a family member or friend. Others volunteer as part of their philosophy of giving to the community.

Foundation Volunteers



Financial Report

PROFIT & LOSS (FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE)

\$000	2015	2014
Revenues		
Sponsorships	1,456	1,963
Donations/Fundraising	1,031	518
Donations - Research Grants Program	567	330
Corporate support	627	610
Government grants	516	481
Investment income	407	319
Total Revenues	4,604	4,221
Expenses		
Support services	876	649
Awareness	681	1,446
Research Grants Program	376	370
Research	204	242
Management	402	408
Education	345	350
Representation	226	211
Fundraising	136	129
Total Expenses	3,246	3,805
Net Surplus	1,358	416

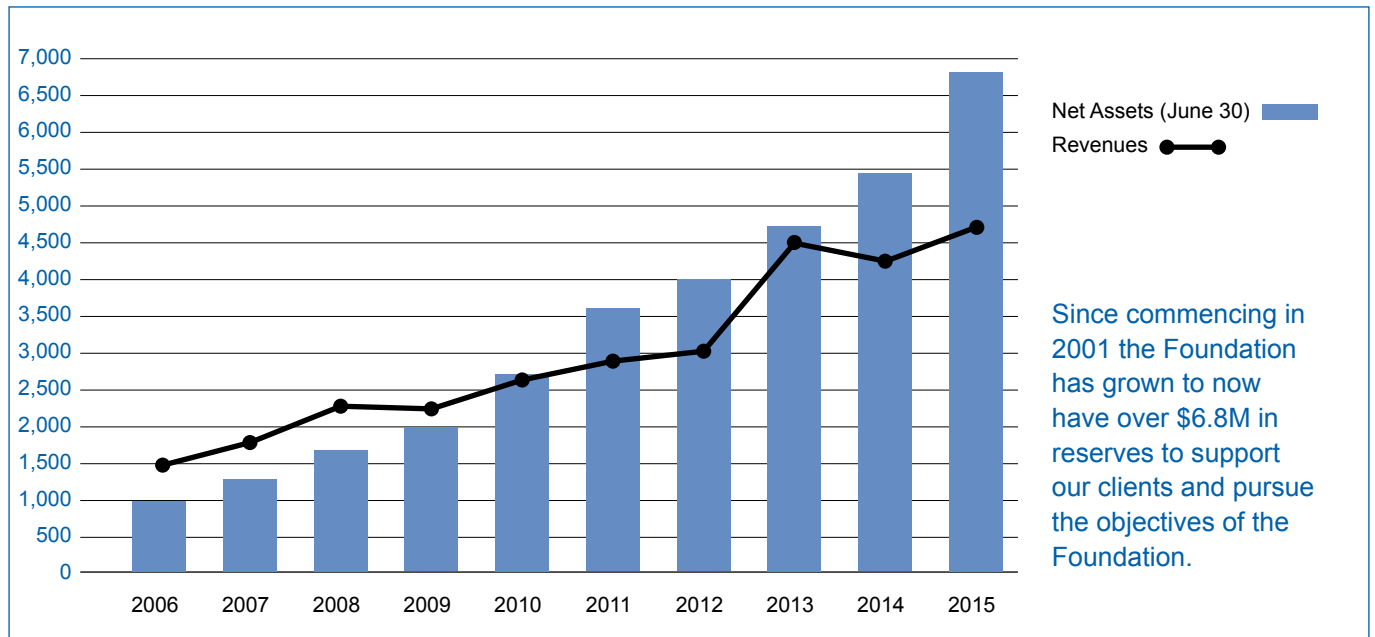
BALANCE SHEET (AS AT 30 JUNE)

\$000	2015	2014
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,365	1,184
Investments	5,672	4,420
Trade and other receivables	929	1,078
Plant and equipment	41	62
Total Assets	8,007	6,744
Liabilities		
Trade and other payables and provisions, current	1,203	1,317
Provisions, non-current	20	42
Total Liabilities	1,223	1,359
Net Assets¹	6,784	5,385

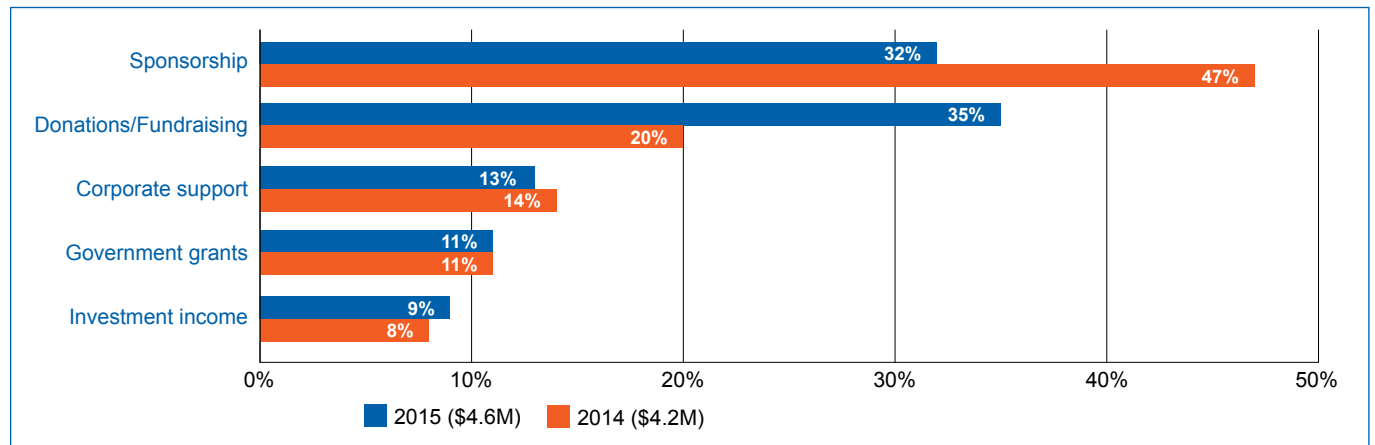
¹As at 30 June 2015 the Foundation had \$2,000,000 (2014: \$1,800,000) set aside within the Net Assets to support future research initiatives.

The information on this page was extracted from the audited Financial Statements of Macular Disease Foundation Australia for the year ended 30 June 2015 and is presented in a management reporting format. The audited Financial Statements can be obtained free of charge on the Macular Disease Foundation Australia website or by contacting the Foundation on 1800 111 709.

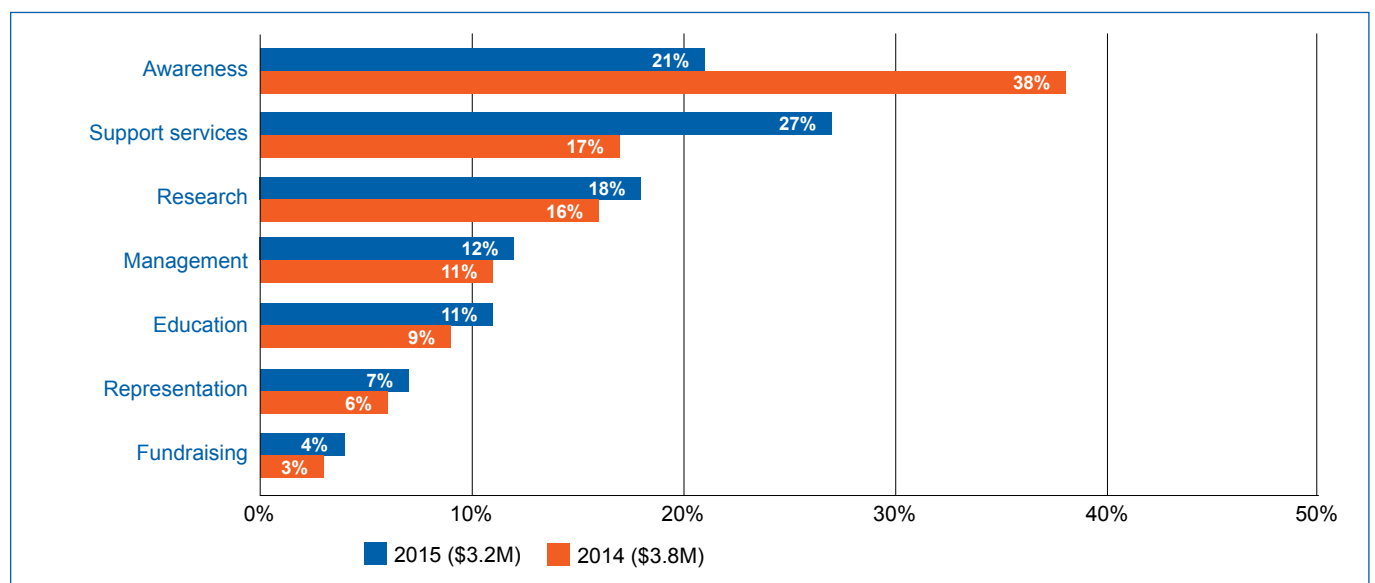
10 YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY (\$000)



REVENUE SOURCES



EXPENDITURES



Fundraising

Objective: To provide income to support the Foundation's services

The Foundation relies on financial support from government, organisations and individuals to meet the real needs of the macular disease community. Together we are reducing the incidence and impact of macular disease in Australia.

Government Funding

The Foundation's work continued to be supported by the Australian Federal and NSW Governments during 2014-2015.

Funding from the NSW Government contributed to the Foundation's delivery of comprehensive education and awareness programs as well as support services to thousands of people in NSW, including in regional and remote areas.

Federal Government funding through the Department of Health contributed to the Foundation's national education program.

The Foundation thanks the Federal Government, which has provided financial support since 2005, and the NSW Government, which has continued to provide funding since an initial establishment grant in 2002.

Corporate Sponsorship

Corporate sponsorship is integral to the Foundation's work, enabling the continuation of awareness campaigns, education, research and client service and support. The Foundation thanks all corporate sponsors who provided support during 2014-2015.

Bayer

Since 2011 Bayer has provided valuable support for numerous initiatives in the areas of client services, awareness, education and research. This has allowed the Foundation to expand its activities and services to assist the many people who require the Foundation's help.

Since 2013 the Foundation has also received support from Bayer's global organisation to expand its voice on the world stage.



Adrian Dolahenty and Anna Karelak, Bayer

Blackmores

With a shared common value to reduce the incidence and impact of macular degeneration in Australia, Blackmores has been a long-term supporter of the Foundation's education, research and awareness programs. Additionally, Blackmores and The Blackmore Foundation has funded the Blackmores Dr Paul Beaumont Research Fellowship.



Marcus Blackmore with Foundation Ambassador Jean Kittson

Mylan EPD

A new partner in 2015, Mylan supported an awareness campaign specifically focused on diabetic eye disease, the leading cause of blindness in working aged Australians. This support enabled the Foundation to enhance its work in raising awareness of the importance of eye health for those living with diabetes.



Sylvain Vigneault, Mylan EPD

Novartis

Generous support from Novartis since the Foundation's establishment has made a significant contribution to improving macular health in Australia. In particular, Novartis supported the Foundation's first national television and radio awareness campaigns from 2008 to 2012, which helped Australia become a world leader in awareness of macular degeneration.



Jeff Martens, Novartis

Quantum RLV

Low vision aids and technologies provider Quantum RLV, is a founding supporter of the Foundation and helps support the Foundation's education programs.



Tim Connell, Quantum RLV

Foundations and Trusts

Foundations and Trusts provide the Foundation with important support across a range of activities.

Profield Foundation

The Foundation acknowledges the support of Profield Foundation since 2007, which has funded client services including the Helpline, publications and awareness and education activities.



Profield Foundation Board

Donations

Donations from individuals and organisations, both large and small, are essential to the Foundation's ability to maintain and expand services to meet the needs of the macular disease community.

Bequests

Bequests form an increasingly important part of the Foundation's funding. Bequests can be directed to support ongoing client services, or to the Foundation's Research Grants program. The Foundation appreciates the very generous bequests made every year by members of the public.



Community

ClubsNSW ClubGRANTS

During 2014-2015 the Foundation was a beneficiary of the NSW ClubGRANTS scheme, which encourages large registered clubs in NSW to contribute directly to the provision of frontline services in their local communities.

Clubs that supported the Foundation in 2014-2015 were: Bankstown Sports Club, Cabra-Vale Diggers, Campsie RSL Club, Club Central Hurstville, Commercial Club (Albury), Griffith Leagues Club, Griffith Exies, Hornsby RSL Club, Orange Ex-Services' Club, and Petersham RSL Club.

Roth Gair Charity Golf Day

The 8th annual Roth Gair Charity Golf Day was held in February 2015 in memory of the late Mr Roth Gair, a long time member and past President of the Lions Club of Forest Hill, who lived with macular degeneration. This event was organised by Ian Kennedy and hosted by the Lions Clubs of Forest Hill and Park Orchards in Victoria.



From left to right: Paul Kinsey and Paul Stewart, Park Orchards Lions; Robert Street, Toyo Tires, Ian Edgar, Tyrepower Victoria, Judith O'Hagan, Macular Disease Foundation Australia

Dedicated Community Members

Every year people across Australia choose to fundraise for Macular Disease Foundation Australia by seeking financial support to undertake challenges and participate in events. Alana Simmons was just one of the Foundation's many generous supporters, raising funds in honour of her aunt who was recently diagnosed with macular degeneration. She completed a 61-day "virtual relay" cycling and running 1,300 km on a treadmill and exercise bike.

Thank You

The Foundation thanks all sponsors, donors, volunteers and supporters whose generosity enables Macular Disease Foundation Australia to meet the real needs of the macular disease community. Together we are reducing the incidence and impact of macular disease in Australia.

Sponsors & Supporting Partners

**Australian
Government**



Health
South Eastern Sydney
Local Health District



BLACKMORES®



Science For A Better Life

Profield
FOUNDATION



Mylan

Seeing
is believing

Perpetual
P

Funded by the Perpetual Foundation

KING&WOOD
MALLESONS



Quantum
Reading • Learning • Vision



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advertisingpublicitymarketing

Thank you to our supporters

Generous bequests made to the Foundation fund **support services** as well as **world leading research** in Australia that ultimately aims to find a **cure for macular degeneration**.

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Funding by Federal and State governments is critical to **maintaining services to support** people at risk of, and living with, a **macular disease**.

Volunteers provide **valuable support** to the Foundation, contributing both **time and expertise** in many different **areas of work**.

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Sponsorship by **Australian business** enables the Foundation to **invest in world-leading research** and promote **awareness** of **macular disease**.

Every donation we receive makes an **important contribution** to the **critical services** the Foundation provides **throughout the year**.

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Our **partner relationships** are built on **respect** of each other's **independence, integrity** and **autonomy**, focusing on the **best outcome** for the **patient**.

Thanks to our **dedicated eye health professionals** who **support the Foundation** with their **expert knowledge**.

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Funds raised by service clubs, community groups and sports and recreational organisations **support campaigns** to **reduce the incidence and impact** of macular disease.

Professional Friend Program

The Foundation has enjoyed a strong and valuable relationship with optometrists, ophthalmologists and other eye care practitioners across Australia since its inception in 2001. Our combined efforts have saved the sight of thousands of Australians. By becoming a Professional Friend, eye care professionals demonstrate their ongoing support of Macular Disease Foundation Australia and show their commitment to being at the forefront of client support services.

Thank you to our Professional Friends:

Kevin Adams, For Eyes Fremantle ● Dianne Andrews, Menai Eye Care ● Susan Ang, The EyeStore ● Dr Jennifer Arnold, Marsden Eye Specialists ● Sally Atkins, Atkins Optometrist ● Dr Andrew Atkins, Victorian Eye Surgeons ● Odette Azzi, Belfield Optometrist ● Dr Gayatri Banerjee, Nepean Valley Eye Surgeons ● James Baumgarten, Family Eyecare ● Dr Paul Beaumont, Retina & Vitreous Centre ● Dr Peter Benecke, Northern Eye Surgery ● Reg Bennett, Campbelltown Eye Care ● Geoff Blackwell, Clear Optometry ● Garry Bormann, Vision Eye Health ● Dr Robert Bourke, Vision Eye Institute ● Deanne Bradford, Windsor Optometry ● Ian Breadon, Eyecare Plus Clifton Hill ● Ian Brigden, Eyecare Plus Nelson Bay ● Elaine Bryant, Lakes Entrance Optometrists ● Dr Guy Bylsma, Hobart Eye Surgeons ● Mary-Rose Campbell, Optomize ● Dr Derek Chan, Retina Consultants ● Dr Jay Chandra, Jay Chandra & Associates Pty Ltd ● Dr John Chang, Retina & Vitreous Centre ● Dr Christopher Chesney, Mentone Eye Specialists ● Wai Yoong Chin, Wai Yoong Chin Optometrist ● Andy Christiansen, The Optical Superstore ● Dr Augustino Clark ● Justin Clunas, Hansen Optometrists Eyecare Plus Orange ● Janelle Coates, EyesWest ● Judith Cooper, Judith Cooper Optometrist ● Dr Sudha Cugati, Mawson Lakes Eye Specialists ● Dr Jenny Danks, Peninsula Eye Centre ● Peter D'Arcy, Peter D'Arcy Optometrist ● Cedric De Souza, Melville Optical Clinic ● Maria Dimitratos, Icon Eyewear ● Dr John Downie, Chatswood Grove Eye Clinic ● Jane Duffy, Fitzroy North Eye Centre ● Cameron Dyson, Dyson & Long Optometrists ● Fiona Eising, Eye Zing Optometrists ● Dr Michael English, Cambridge Eye Clinic ● John Farmer, L&F Eyecare ● Dr Andrew Field, Cairns Eye and Laser ● Dr Adrian Fung, Retina and Macula Specialists ● Russell Glasser, Eyecare-2-You ● Dr Kai Goh, Murdoch Ophthalmology ● Kylie Gough, Eyecare Plus Nambucca Heads ● Dr Tim Gray, Kingswood Eye Centre ● Alan Greenhill, Alfred Nott Optometrists ● Dr John Gregory-Roberts ● Dr Erwin Groenweld, Brisbane Eye Clinic ● Nicholas Hansen, Hansen Optometrists Eyecare Plus Orange ● Mark Hansen, Hansen Optometrists Eyecare Plus Orange ● Sean Hansen, Hansen Optometrists Eyecare Plus Orange ● Jake Hansen, Hansen Optometrists Eyecare Plus Orange ● John Harbison, Christensen Harbison Optometrists ● Amanda Harkness, Moss Vale Optical ● Dr Graham Hay-Smith, Moreton Eye Group ● Sandra Heaney, Sandra Heaney Optometrist ● Aaron Henry, Aaron Henry Optometrist ● Dr David Hilford, Watkins Medical Centre ● Graham Hill, Graham Hill & Associates Optometrists ● Huy Ho, A+ EYECARE ● Peter Ho, Peter Ho Optometrist ● Associate Professor Alex Hunyor, Chatswood Retina Associates ● Gonzalo Jacome, Optometrist Menai ● Leesa Jagers, Eye See Eyes ● Dr Girish Jamnadas,

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Help Macular Disease Foundation Australia

Donate to Save Sight

Making a donation can help the Foundation achieve its vision of reducing the incidence and impact of macular disease in Australia. All donations support the many activities undertaken in education, awareness, support services, research and representation. Every donation goes towards helping save sight. Joining the Foundation's regular giving program provides a sustainable future for the work of the Foundation.

Donate to Research

The Foundation's Research Grants Program funds Australian research into macular degeneration. The aim is to save sight and reduce the impact of vision loss.

A Bequest

A bequest can make a lasting impact on generations to come and is gratefully received by the Foundation.

Corporate Partnerships

There are many opportunities for partnerships with corporations to support the work of the Foundation in its activities in education, awareness, support services, and research.

Sponsors

As the Foundation implements a range of programs across Australia, sponsorship opportunities exist for organisations to support specific projects.

Community Fundraising Events

The Foundation welcomes contributions from the fundraising activities of community and service organisations, schools and clubs. The Everyday Hero and GoFundraise websites are available for people to support the Foundation by participating in events to raise funds.

A Commemorative Gift

A donation to the Foundation in lieu of a gift can help commemorate a significant occasion.

A Memorial Gift

A memorial gift can be made in lieu of flowers in the memory of a family member or friend.

Volunteering

The Foundation welcomes and values volunteers who undertake a range of work to support its activities across Australia.

**To donate or for more information
contact the Foundation**

1800 111 709

info@mdfoundation.com.au

www.mdfoundation.com.au

**Macular Disease Foundation Australia is a registered charity.
All donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.**

OUR VISION

To reduce the incidence and impact
of macular disease in Australia



Our focus is your vision

Macular Disease Foundation Australia

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