

ANNUAL REPORT 22/23

SAVING SIGHT FOR 35 YEARS



**Glaucoma
Australia**
Saving sight

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF GLAUCOMA AUSTRALIA

Michelle Hauschild
Mivision March 2023

For the past 35 years, Glaucoma Australia has provided a single, unified voice on all things related to glaucoma. Glaucoma Australia co-founder Clinical Professor Ivan Goldberg spoke to mivision about the early days of the organisation and the challenges it still faces in raising community awareness.

In Ivan Goldberg's study there's a framed photograph of the Sydney Opera House. It was a gift from a long-term patient and a constant reminder of the importance of early intervention and treatment of glaucoma.

"This lady in her early 20s came to me blind in one eye from glaucoma with 90% loss of vision in the other eye. Her glaucoma in the remaining eye was completely out of control despite maximal therapy. She was desperate."

"This eye had had multiple surgeries beforehand, so the surgery she needed quickly was technically challenging and new at that time: insertion of a Molteno drainage device. Fortunately, she responded... her pressures came under good control and her glaucoma absolutely stabilised."

When Professor Goldberg retired from clinical practice decades later, her vision was still intact.

"Her hobby was photography, believe it or not. About three years after (the surgery)... she came to me with a framed photograph she'd taken of the Opera House and said, 'This is for you. It shows you what you have enabled me to see.'"

"And I mean, that moved me beyond words. I kept that in pride of place in my consulting room for 40 years, and when I retired, I took it home with me, and it's now in my study at home."

Wider Impact

The story highlights the life-changing difference that appropriate treatment can make to glaucoma patients, and the importance of community awareness: the *raison d'être* of Glaucoma Australia, the organisation founded by Prof (then Dr) Goldberg and others in 1986. The association was incorporated two years' later, and this year celebrates its 35th anniversary.

"When I came back from my fellowship in the United States in 1980 and set up practice... it became increasingly apparent that community awareness of glaucoma was woeful, that people were not having eye checks on a regular basis, and that people who had been diagnosed and were on treatment – partly because of a lack of understanding or knowledge or support – weren't complying or persisting with their treatments so that the visual outcomes were not optimal."

"It seemed there needed to be a much wider availability of information on an individual and on a community basis. It was also apparent that the amount of research being done into glaucoma and associated neurosciences in Australia was lagging the rest of the world," Prof Goldberg said.

"So, it seemed that a lay organisation that would try to address these major issues was sorely needed, one that would run education campaigns for the community, one that would raise patients' awareness and give them a support structure with information and guidance and support groups at all sorts of different levels, and at the same time, raise money to stimulate glaucoma-related research in our various universities."

Prof Goldberg said, over a period of time, another area of need arose – the need for an advocate for people with visual disability, including people with glaucoma.

Initially, there was an attempt to "roll this into a more general eye disease associated foundation... but it was apparent that glaucoma, as a group of diseases, was not going to get the attention it needed, if you like, and be able to make the progress that was required, there needed to be a dedicated organisation."

Committed Leadership

Prof Goldberg said he is proud that the organisation was – and still is – independent.

"Right from the beginning, we have not been affiliated with any one hospital or any one university or any one medical centre or any one clinician. We've gone out of our way to make sure that it's inclusive and it is national in its approach. I think we've achieved that."

He said Glaucoma Australia has had a number of "extraordinary" chief executive officers. "They've worked very hard. It is not a highly paid job. It's one that people do as much out of altruism as they do for their careers. I've enjoyed working with all of them over these decades."

But he singles out the late Kathleen Holmes, a glaucoma patient he was treating, as someone who was integral to the formation of the organisation.

"I was thrilled and fortunate to find in one of my patients... someone who was highly intelligent, highly motivated, and had the time resources to do it. She was actually the moving force behind the creation of the charitable organisation, creating its legal structure and getting it off the ground."

"Kath was amazing. She was absolutely extraordinary. She was an angel who needs praises sung in her honour. She got an OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia) in recognition for what she'd done."



Glaucoma Australia co-founder Clinical Professor Ivan Goldberg



“He said encouraging optometrists to refer patients to Glaucoma Australia for information and support at the same time as they refer to ophthalmologists has also been successful.”

The Need Today

It is estimated that in Australia, as in other western countries, up to 50% of people with glaucoma don't know they've got the condition and so are not receiving any type of treatment.

Such is the nature of the “sneak thief of sight” that most people do not have warning signs or symptoms until moderate to severe visual damage has occurred. Treatment is available to slow or halt the disease process but not reverse it.

If undiagnosed and untreated – or inadequately treated – glaucoma can lead to visual loss and blindness. One of the challenges for Glaucoma Australia is that it is difficult to measure the level of community awareness.

“We have hints of what has been achieved by diagnosis rates and by treatment rates and by the glaucoma medical market, the amount of money that is spent on the various drugs, the number of prescriptions that are filled, the number of operations that are performed, the number of laser treatments that are performed.”

“So, have we made an impact or made a difference? One of the things we did manage to do was to help facilitate cooperation between optometrists and ophthalmologists. A lot of the screening for glaucoma became de facto optometric, became within their scope of practice.”

“Ophthalmologists became the people who were the professionals that the optometrists referred the patients to, for confirmation of diagnosis, for initiation of a treatment program and subsequent oversight at least of that treatment. Glaucoma Australia actually helped to facilitate that collaboration and cooperation, and that has made an impact.”

He said encouraging optometrists to refer patients to Glaucoma Australia for information and support at the same time as they refer to ophthalmologists has also been successful.

Future Challenges

Going forward, Prof Goldberg said the focus of the organisation will remain unchanged. Community awareness of the disease to ensure earlier diagnosis is vital to saving sight.

“When... the disease itself produces no symptoms, you have to have community awareness. (People) need to have regular eye checks at a time in their lives when they are more at risk of developing the disease, which means increasing age. People who've got a family history (of glaucoma) have a tenfold increased lifetime risk for glaucoma; they need to start checking for it at an earlier age than people who don't have a family history,” he said.

He said people living outside metropolitan areas have particular challenges with a chronic condition like glaucoma.

“The populations in regional and rural Australia, as you would guess, are affected by the same relative scarcity of access to glaucoma care as they are across the whole spectrum of medical care. Of course, once you're treating a chronic disease, you've got this challenge of being able to access that care – not just once, for a short, acute episode and immediate treatment – this is ongoing. This is something that is lifelong.”

He said continued upskilling of eye health professionals was also crucial to “overcome some of the ‘red herrings’ that have bedeviled glaucoma diagnosis, namely an overreliance on raised pressure as one of the major diagnostic points”.

“We know it's a very poor diagnostic parameter. Instead, there needs to be more concentration on what's happening at the optic nerve head structurally, as well as backing it up with visual field tests functionally, he said. “That's been helped enormously by advances in technology that have made these tests more accessible, cheaper, and much more accurate.”

OUR COMMUNITY



22,893
Patients



2,021
Online
Support
Group
Members



805
Referring
Practitioners



1,420
Donors



167
Volunteers

Our Vision

An Australia free from glaucoma blindness.

Our Mission

To prevent glaucoma blindness by increasing early detection and improving patient treatment outcomes.

Our Purpose

Our Purpose is to **improve the lives of people with glaucoma** and those at risk, by increasing **early detection** and **positive treatment outcomes** through education, advocacy, and research. We **empower** individuals to **understand** and take an active interest in their own eye health; we promote **research**, innovation and work collaboratively with health care professionals. • • • • •

OUR IMPACT

2,786

new patients joined the
Patient Support Program

2,000+

people completed the
Glaucoma Australia
Risk Quiz

3M+

Australians received glaucoma
awareness messaging during
World Glaucoma Week

% of patients who said
they always or frequently
feel anxious in relation
to their glaucoma

24%
Supported
patients*

36%
Unsupported
patients*

100+

languages are now available on
the Glaucoma Australia website,
including 65 text-to-speech

33rd

**'Quinlivan' Research
Grant awarded**

84%

**of patients supported
by Glaucoma Australia
are compliant with their
treatment regimen**

91%

**of patients supported by Glaucoma
Australia attend their recommended
glaucoma appointments***

Unsupported patients

50%

**compliant 6 months
post diagnosis^**

**% of patients who rated their
knowledge of glaucoma and
its treatment as excellent or
above average**

51%

**Supported
patients***

37%

**Unsupported
patients***

84%

**of patients supported
by Glaucoma Australia
have informed their direct
relatives to get tested***



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am delighted to deliver the 2023 Annual Report for Glaucoma Australia Incorporated (Glaucoma Australia).

The Board would like to congratulate and celebrate the 35 year anniversary of the formation of Glaucoma Australia by Clinical Professor Ivan Goldberg AM and one of his patients Miss Kathleen Holmes OAM. The original aims to

- raise community awareness of glaucoma, the risk of blindness and encouraging people to get their eyes tested,
- provide support and education to glaucoma patients and families, and
- develop financial resources to fund glaucoma research,

still remain and form an integral part of Glaucoma Australia's Strategic Priorities. Glaucoma Australia has grown to be a relevant, well respected source of support within the eye care and health sector.

The Board was pleased to announce the appointment of the new CEO, Richard Wylie who started on 4 July 2022. Richard has been involved in the Health Sector, especially Not for Profits for a number of years and most recently as CEO at the Liver Foundation.

This year as Covid subsided, Glaucoma Australia continued to adapt the ways in which we deliver our Mission by supporting glaucoma patients and their families. The team has adapted to a hybrid working environment by cautiously returning to the office 2 – 3 days per week and continuing to work from home the remainder of the week. As always the health and wellbeing of our team, patients, friends and supporters are our priorities.

Our Patron, the Governor-General of Australia, His Excellency the Honourable David Hurley announced the recipient of the Quinlivan Research Grant for 2022 on World Sight Day, 13 October 2022. A/Prof Owen Siggs of the Garvan Institute will research Genomic Risk Stratification to Improve Glaucoma Suspect Triage in Rural Primary Care and we look forward to sharing his research progress and results with the Glaucoma Australia community.

We have seen an increase in eye checks after the significant decline due to Covid. The flow-on effect from people starting and resuming eye checks is a growing number of early diagnoses and subsequent treatment plans being implemented – steps that will minimise the risk of blindness. As the number of patients grows, the demand for education and support services is growing through the Patient Support Program.

In November 2022, the Board supported the engagement of a Political Advisory and Advocacy firm to pursue funding from the Federal Government to expand the services provided by the Patient Support Program. The CEO is working with the Advocacy firm, to progress the funding request through the Department of Health and Federal Government Budget and Funding cycle. This is a significant change to Glaucoma Australia's funding strategy, which since its inception, has been funded exclusively by donations, bequests and corporate partnerships.

I am pleased to announce that a Sustainability Committee was formed in November 2022 to develop strategies for the future growth and financial sustainability of Glaucoma Australia.

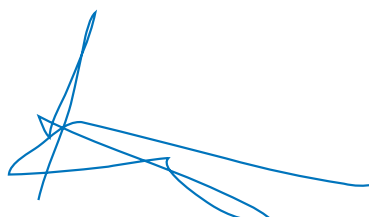
Following the success of the inaugural '7 Sights in 7 Days Challenge' fundraising campaign in 2022, the campaign was renamed this year as the '7 Sights Challenge'. Feedback from the '7 Sights in 7 Days Challenge' campaign led to the duration of the campaign being extended to the full month of March, which included World Glaucoma Week 6 – 12 March 2023. This was Glaucoma Australia's main fundraising activity this year which attracted a higher number of registrations and achieved excellent community engagement.

The Board held a 2 day workshop in May 2023 to review progress and achievements against the Strategic Plan implemented in 2022. All Strategic Priorities are being implemented by the CEO and Glaucoma Australia team with continued emphasis on Extension of Care through our Patient Support Program and Advocacy.

I would like to thank Dr Ben Ashby, our Vice President, most sincerely for assuming the President's role during my absence for health reasons. Thanks also to the Members, Board, Committees and Clinical Professor Ivan Goldberg for their ongoing support.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank the Glaucoma Australia CEO and team. They always go 'above and beyond' to help achieve our Strategic Priorities. We recognise and appreciate their dedication, efforts and stamina. Glaucoma Australia would not be where we are today without them.

Best wishes in these ever-changing times,



Maree O'Brien

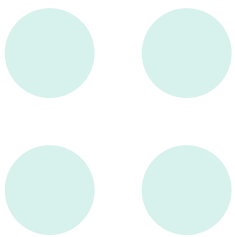
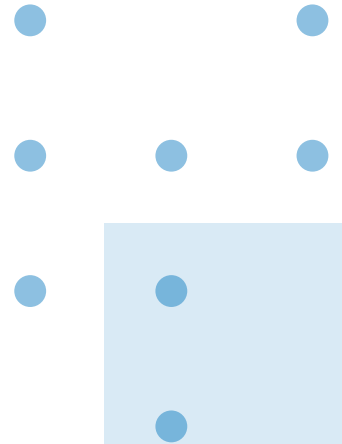
“We have seen an increase in eye checks after the significant decline due to Covid. The flow-on effect from people starting and resuming eye checks is a growing number of early diagnoses and subsequent treatment plans being implemented – steps that will minimise the risk of blindness.”



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CEO'S REPORT



It gives me great pleasure to provide the CEO's report for the period July 2022 – June 2023.

The Origins of Glaucoma Australia

When I first arrived at Glaucoma Australia, Clinical Professor Ivan Goldberg was kind enough to meet with me to share his perspective on the inspiration (or more accurately the frustration) that led to the establishment of Glaucoma Australia.

Back in the mid 80's, Professor Goldberg had become increasingly frustrated by the lack of community awareness about glaucoma and how often he was encountering patients who had lost significant sight without knowing anything was wrong. He was also concerned that even when patients were diagnosed with glaucoma, too many were not complying with their prescribed treatments, leading to entirely preventable sight loss.

Professor Goldberg reflected that the initial goals for the formation of Glaucoma Australia were to raise awareness of the disease throughout the community; to encourage more patients to get their eyes tested regularly (even if they didn't need glasses); to assist those with the disease to achieve better treatment outcomes and finally to support Australian medical researchers to find the treatments of tomorrow.

35 years later Glaucoma Australia has grown to become a trusted and influential organisation in Australian eye health, however the challenges of identifying and treating glaucoma remain ever present. The job is by no means done.

Influencing the influencers

One of the new areas of focus for Glaucoma Australia during the past 12 months has been to increase our advocacy efforts. So what does 'advocacy' mean? It means ensuring the voices of people living with glaucoma and their healthcare providers are heard by the influencers that develop and approve health policy. This could manifest as faster availability of new medications, access to more affordable treatments, more support services for patients, increased funding for research or to influence future health spending priorities.

One of the most influential audiences for this advocacy is of course the Federal Government. This year Glaucoma Australia set the goal of maintaining a regular presence in Canberra, to raise the awareness of glaucoma and to keep the needs of patients living with glaucoma top of mind. Because if we don't keep flying the flag for glaucoma, no doubt other organisations will fill the void with other requests for support.

So how do we hope to positively influence Government for the benefit of people living with glaucoma? Firstly, we want to build a baseline level of awareness around the unique nature of glaucoma 'the sneak thief of sight'. Secondly, we want to emphasise the benefits of identifying glaucoma early, so that the maximum amount of sight can be saved. Finally, we want to demonstrate the cost effectiveness of supporting patients throughout their glaucoma journey. Because well supported patients not only preserve more sight, but they also reduce their reliance on the health system and the NDIS saving many millions of dollars each year.

To date the response from all sides of politics has been very positive and I have no doubt there will be many opportunities for Glaucoma Australia to collaborate and integrate with the Australian health system in the years ahead.

Quinlivan Research Grant

Investing in medical research is vital if we are to find the treatments and cures of tomorrow. Without researchers trying to answer the most difficult questions relating to the mechanisms and complications of glaucoma, future treatments will remain a distant hope.

The 2022 Glaucoma Australia Quinlivan Research grant was awarded to Dr Owen Siggs, Associate Professor at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research. The project titled, 'Genomic risk stratification to improve glaucoma suspect triage in rural primary care' will study a new genetic risk prediction tool for glaucoma, to determine if it can help predict outcomes in glaucoma suspects presenting to rural optometry practices, with the ultimate aim of improving referral pathways for all glaucoma suspects.

Promotion / PR

For a relatively small organisation we certainly punch above our weight when it comes to public awareness activities. This year we continued working with one of Australia's best-known media personalities and Glaucoma Australia ambassador David 'Kochie' Koch to increase awareness of glaucoma and the importance of regular eye health checks.

Our 7 Sights Challenge activity reached an audience of 3M+ through earned media around World Glaucoma Week. In addition, we were able to secure significant pro bono media for a 30 second radio Community Service Announcement (CSA) featuring ambassador Kirk Pengilly in Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne and a 30 second TV CSA which was also produced pro bono and ran across the Seven Network, Prime 7, Win Network, ABC TV, and ABC iView.

I'd like to pay tribute to our wonderfully supportive Board led by President Maree O'Brien and Vice President Dr Ben Ashby. The Board give a substantial amount of their time and their expertise to ensure Glaucoma Australia has the resources and clarity we need to achieve the best possible outcomes. I'd also like to thank our passionate staff for everything they do to ensure Glaucoma Australia presents itself as a professional, ethical, collaborative and compassionate organisation.

Finally, and most importantly, all of Glaucoma Australia's impactful work wouldn't be possible without the support of our wonderful donors and corporate supporters. At the time of this report Glaucoma Australia receives no funding support from either the State or Federal Government, it is truly a community driven enterprise. On behalf of everyone at Glaucoma Australia, thank you for your continued belief that solutions are within reach, and that with continued dedication, we can save the sight of more Australian's.

Sincerely,



Richard Wylie



“I was shocked and confused when I was told I had glaucoma and its progression was so far advanced. I had lost a large and irreversible amount of vision in both eyes, which resulted in me being medically retired from work. My life literally changed there and then.”

– Shannon, 46-year-old father of two



“It’s hard to put into words how much it means to have this support. When I call the support line, it’s amazing. They’re always there for us. They remind us that there’s hope and we would be lost without them.”

– Kayla, mum of Eli who was diagnosed with congenital glaucoma



PATIENT SUPPORT PROGRAM



Glaucoma Australia provides free education, guidance, and support for people living with glaucoma throughout their lifetime journey.

We support healthcare professionals by extending their care beyond patient consultations by emphasising key treatment messages, encouraging adherence to medications and follow up appointments and helping to **reduce patient anxiety and uncertainty.**

From July 2022 – June 2023 we had **2,786 new patients join the patient support program** and 855 existing patients seek support from our orthoptist educators. **In total there were 22,893 patients in the database** with access to glaucoma information via our website, newsletters, events, social media and support groups.

Patient Impact Measurement Survey

Our most recent Patient Impact Measurement Survey (July 2023) was completed by 1,319 patients with the following results demonstrating the effectiveness of the patient support program for the year ending 30 June 2023.

- 91% of patients surveyed stated they attend their recommended glaucoma appointments.
- 84% of patients supported by Glaucoma Australia stated they adhere to their treatment regimen, compared to 50% of unsupported patients 6 months post diagnosis and 37% of unsupported patients 3 years post-diagnosis¹.
- 51% of patients surveyed rated their knowledge of glaucoma and how it is treated as 'Excellent' or 'Above Average' after receiving support from Glaucoma Australia compared to 37% of patients who were assessed by an orthoptist educator when first joining the program. While the percentage of patients who rated their knowledge as 'Below Average' or 'Poor' fell from 22% down to 6%.
- 24% of patients surveyed reported that they 'Always' or 'Frequently' felt anxious in relation to their glaucoma compared to 36% of patients who were assessed by an orthoptist educator when first joining the program. While the percentage of patients that reported they 'Never' or 'Rarely' felt anxious in relation to their glaucoma increased from 26% to 36%.

Overall, Glaucoma Australia's patient support program consistently demonstrates that with guidance and support from orthoptist educators, patients are less complacent with treatment and appointment adherence. Patients are also more knowledgeable about their condition which leads to better treatment outcomes.

Facebook Support Groups

The Glaucoma Support Group and Congenital Glaucoma Support Group have both grown throughout the year with 1,686 and 335 members respectively. These online support groups are a valuable resource for the community to increase knowledge of glaucoma and reduce their anxiety. They enable individuals to engage with others and openly discuss their condition in a safe environment. Discussions and comments are moderated daily by Glaucoma Australia's senior orthoptist educator.



Out and about in the Community

Glaucoma Australia would like to extend its thanks to the volunteers who have given their time over the past year to deliver face-to-face glaucoma education to the community.

- Our Clinical Volunteers have presented at three local RSL and community events about glaucoma and the importance of taking care of your eye health.
- Our Clinical Volunteers also attended Sydney Eye Hospital on three occasions to speak to glaucoma patients visiting the public hospital eye clinic about Glaucoma Australia's free support services.
- Perth Volunteer Events Coordinator, Gaela Hilditch re-started the Western Australia Glaucoma Support Group education talks this year, with the first being hosted in April 2023. Thank you to Perth Eye Hospital and Lions Eye Institute for their support of this valuable initiative.
- With the support of Glaucoma Australia, members of our online support groups have started organising face-to-face social catch-ups around Australia.

Clinical Volunteers and Students

We continue to have a growing interest in the number of Clinical Volunteers joining the team. Volunteers are students or qualified health professionals with an eye health or medical background.

Glaucoma Australia also supports student education by offering Master of Orthoptics students from UTS experience in providing patient education. UTS Master of Orthoptics recognised Glaucoma Australia as a Non-Government Organisation offering the most clinical sessions in 2022. The placement program provides students with a unique and valuable opportunity to put their clinical skills into practice through phone support. Students are trained and guided by our qualified clinical orthoptist educators.

¹ Bansal R., Tsai J. Compliance/Adherence to Glaucoma Medications—A Challenge. J. Curr. Glaucoma Pract. 2007;1:22–25. doi:10.5005/jp-journals-10008-1052

PATIENT STORIES

Shannon's Story

With no known family history of glaucoma and the only one in his family without prescription glasses, Shannon was floored when an eye exam revealed he was legally blind.

"I was shocked and confused when I was told I had glaucoma and its progression was so far advanced. I had lost a large and irreversible amount of vision in both eyes, which resulted in me being medically retired from work. My life literally changed there and then," says Shannon.

"Unfortunately, the fear of losing my remaining vision is always with me and keeps me awake at night. The realisation that my disablement is permanent, will get worse over time and there is nothing I can do to turn that around is extremely difficult to come to grips with. My eldest son, who is five, will often ask, 'Dad, are your sore eyes better?' While I reassure him that they are fine I know in my heart there will come a time where I am going to have to sit down and have an emotional conversation with him about the state of my vision and extremely poor prognosis.

"For me, it's bittersweet to see my children reach various milestones, all the while knowing there are significant events in the not-so-distant future that I won't be able to see. But my wife and I have adopted a bit of a bucket-list life mentality – we no longer put off things we enjoy doing and travel is back on the top of the list post-Covid."



Kayla's Story

Just a few days after their baby boy Eli was born, Kayla and John noticed that his eyes looked cloudy. They didn't realise it but their journey with glaucoma had already begun.

"I remember being in the hospital, walking back and forth, just crying." Thankfully, we found the Glaucoma Australia support line. "We were in this really dark place of not knowing and we relied on them a lot during our most difficult moments" Kayla says.

It has been an emotional rollercoaster for the family, with Eli needing several surgeries before the age of two to stabilise his eye pressure. The good news is that today Eli's vision is stable, and his family feel more confident about managing his condition and his future, thanks to the strong support network they have gained.

"We talk to parents whose kids have congenital glaucoma," Kayla says. "They're teenagers now, and they tell us their kids are doing really well. That's so encouraging for us."

Lei's Story

Glaucoma Australia's patient support program is dedicated to helping people like Lei Malaband, a 54-year-old mother of four who was first diagnosed with glaucoma at 41.

Lei was completely shocked when she was first diagnosed with the incurable condition 13 years ago.

"I had worn glasses for a long time but driving at night was proving more difficult. Testing with my ophthalmologist would reveal a loss of peripheral vision, with the diagnosis of open angle glaucoma that requires nightly medication and adapting my lifestyle to keep my glaucoma stable," Lei explains.

"I turned to a support group on Facebook, which I found through Glaucoma Australia, for key support because my friends didn't really understand it. People think of it as an old person's disease. But unfortunately, it doesn't discern. My view is that everyone's glaucoma journey is going to be different, so don't be frightened to ask questions and most importantly, try not to be scared, even though it can be very overwhelming. I am still the youngest in the waiting room, and I was just over 40 when I was first diagnosed. My advice to all is get your eyes tested regularly. Don't put it off. Better still, make it part of your yearly check-ups."

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RESEARCH



The 'Quinlivan' Research Grant Program

Since 2006, Glaucoma Australia has proudly funded over 30 grants to support Australian glaucoma researchers across a diverse range of projects. Funded by the William A. Quinlivan Research Fund, these grants make a significant contribution to Australian glaucoma research.

Grants are awarded following a rigorous evaluation by an independent research panel.



2022 Independent Research Panel

Professor Allison McKendrick - Chair
MScOptom, PhD

Clinical Associate Professor Andrew White
BMEDSC(HONS), MBBS, PHD, FRANZCO

Dr George Kong
MBBS (Melb) BMedSci PhD (Melb) FRANZCO

Dr Jennifer Fan Gaskin
MBChB MD FRANZCO

Associate Professor Bang Bui
B.Optom, M.Optom, PhD, PGCOT

Professor Bill Morgan
PhD, MBBS, FRANZCO

Professor Robert Casson
MB, BS(Hons), M. Biostats, DPhil, FRANZCO

Associate Professor Mitchell Lawlor
BMed MMed(OphthSci) FRANZCO PhD

Associate Professor Owen Siggs

Garvan Institute of Medical Research

2022 Quinlivan Research Grant Recipient

Genomic risk stratification to improve glaucoma suspect triage in rural primary care.

Glaucoma Australia and its Patron, the Governor-General of Australia, His Excellency the Honourable David Hurley, were very pleased to announce the 2022 recipient of the 'Quinlivan' Research Grant.

Focusing on genomic risk stratification, Associate Professor Siggs aims to improve glaucoma suspect triage in rural primary care. Pinpointing individuals at highest risk of glaucoma blindness is a critical challenge, particularly for those in rural, regional, and remote areas where access to specialist care is limited.

Optometrists are often faced with the difficult decision of whether or not to refer individuals for a specialist glaucoma assessment. This is especially critical in a rural setting, where specialist glaucoma practitioners are in limited supply. This study will test a new genetic risk prediction tool for glaucoma, to determine if it can help predict outcomes in glaucoma suspects presenting to rural optometry practices, with the ultimate aim of improving referral pathways for all glaucoma suspects.

This research is expected to play a key role in improving early detection rates, as well as the treatment experience for people living with glaucoma.



Recent recipients funded by Glaucoma Australia during the year ending 30 June 2023.

2021	Professor Ewa Goldys University of New South Wales	Fluorescent Hyperspectral Imaging (fHSI) technology: Development of novel imaging technology for the early detection and monitoring of glaucoma.
2020	Dr Flora Hui Centre for Eye Research Australia	Investigating whether daily doses of vitamin B3 (nicotinamide) could provide long-term protection against nerve cell damage and prevent glaucoma blindness.
2019	Dr George Kong Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital	Clinical trial to examine the validity of home monitoring using the world's first software app for tablet devices for glaucoma patients

FUNDRAISING HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

7 Sights Challenge

The 7 Sights Challenge returned for its second year calling on all Australians to Find, Snap and Share 7 precious pics to 'help take glaucoma out of the picture'.

Participants from across our beautiful country got out and about to raise awareness and funds to support Australians living with glaucoma. Funds raised from this initiative are invested in early detection programs and patient education and support services.

End of Financial Year Appeal

For the 2023 appeal, Kayla and John shared their family's journey with glaucoma (their 2-year-old son Eli was diagnosed with congenital glaucoma) and how the Glaucoma Australia help line continues to support them with their practical and emotional challenges.

Supporters were encouraged to make a tax-deductible donation before June 30 to keep the help line open and accessible for more impacted Australians. Funds raised go towards providing free education, guidance and ongoing support.

Quinlivan Research Appeal

As part of the Glaucoma Australia 'Quinlivan' Research Grants Program, up to \$200,000 is awarded each year to an Australian based researcher to improve the lives of people with glaucoma through better detection and treatment.

The 2022 research grant was awarded to Dr Owen Siggs, Associate Professor at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research. See page 23 for more details.

The 2022 appeal also shared an incredible breakthrough in glaucoma research – the development of a saliva test which can determine a person's risk of developing glaucoma, well before the disease can be diagnosed.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, funds donated to genetic research through the 'Quinlivan' Research Grants Program over many years have helped contribute to this incredible breakthrough.

Gifts In Wills

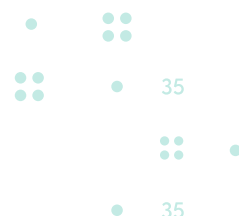
We gratefully received several charitable bequests from generous supporters who want to help future generations impacted by glaucoma. These precious gifts enable these donors to leave an enduring legacy and impression on the world whilst bringing about remarkable change for the generations that follow.

Alongside 100 charities nationwide, Glaucoma Australia also became a partner of the Include a Charity network, an amazing movement which is having a phenomenal impact on our community, shining a light on the significance of incorporating charitable gifts when writing a Will.

We all want a future free of glaucoma, and a Gift in Will ensures we can continue our important work funding ground-breaking research and supporting Australians impacted by glaucoma.

We extend our gratitude to the following Bequestors and their families:

- The Estate of the Late Elaine Ruby Robinson
- The Estate of the Late Doreen Mary Giles
- The Estate of the Late Betty Astbury
- The Estate of the Late Anne Louise Davies
- The Estate of the Late Patricia Helen Gates
- The Estate of the Late Yolanda Maria Hayes
- The Estate of the Late Veronica Estlyn Hardy
- The Estate of the Late Irene Mona Martin
- The Estate of the Late Robert Raymond George
- The Estate of the Late Anita Stafford McKenzie

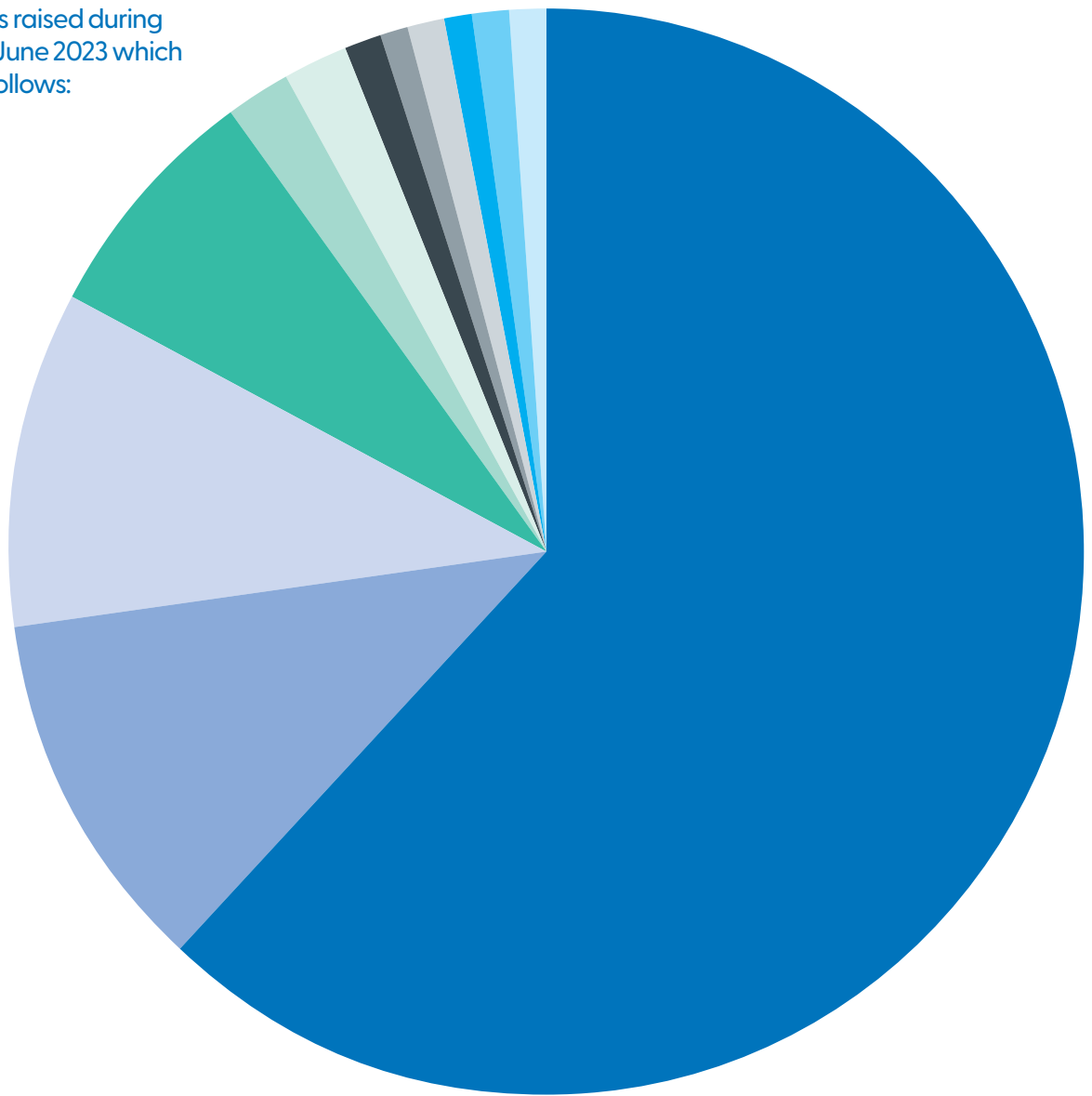


\$1,575,166

was raised during 2022/23

Income Split

Over \$1,575,000 was raised during the year ending 30 June 2023 which is broken down as follows:



Bequests 62%

Donations 11%

Corporate Sponsorship 10%

Merchandise 7%

Trusts & Foundations 2%

Major Gifts 2%

In-Kind Gifts 1%

Subscriptions 1%

Community Fundraising 1%

Fee for Service 1%

Membership Fees 1%

Recurring Donations 1%

THANK YOU

It is only through the kind support of generous individuals, corporations, foundations and organisations that Glaucoma Australia can continue to meet its objectives and realise our vision to eliminate glaucoma blindness. We are grateful for their support throughout 2022/2023.

Platinum Sponsor



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



Bronze Sponsors



Educational Supporters

Perth Eye Hospital
Lions Eye Institute

Supporters

ASE IT
Beamers
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The Angles Family Trust
The Carr Family Trust
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Vision Australia

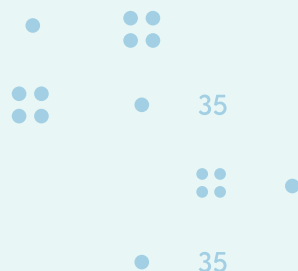
Media Sponsors

Insight
Mivision

We would also like to acknowledge the generous contributions of our amazing donors.

Special mentions

Ms Nathalie Quinlivan
Mr Mark Shepherd
Mr Bernard Sweeny
Mr Roger Moore
Mr Christopher Chown



“I turned to a support group on Facebook, which I found through Glaucoma Australia, for key support because my friends didn’t really understand it. People think of it as an old person’s disease... I am still the youngest in the waiting room, and I was just over 40 when I was first diagnosed.”

– Lei, 54-year-old mother of four



AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT

Identifying people at risk

Glaucoma Australia's risk quiz is designed to identify and educate people at risk of developing glaucoma, prompting them to get tested. Promoted via social media the quiz was completed by over 2000 people between July 2022 – June 2023, with 35% of participants immediately subscribing to our bi-monthly eNewsletter.

Key statistics:

- **83%** of people who completed the risk quiz stated they had **one or more known risk factors** for developing glaucoma.
- **33%** of people who completed the quiz have a **family history of glaucoma**.
- **60%** of people stated they have **regular eye tests every 1 – 2 years**.
- Of those who stated they get their eyes tested every 5 years, rarely or never, **68% said this quiz changed their opinion regarding regular eye exams**.

Live Q&A Events

Glaucoma Australia was proud to welcome Glaukos as sponsor of the 2023 Live Q&A Event series. From July 2022 – June 2023 Glaucoma Australia hosted 17 Live Q&A Events with 23 guest speakers. Streamed on YouTube these popular events have received over 15,269 views.

New patient educator videos

Glaucoma Australia produced 13 new educational videos with Senior Orthoptist Educator, Sapna Nand. These videos answer a series of frequently asked questions about how to manage medications, changing treatment regimens, coffee, Vitamin B3, steroid medications, clinical trials and more. They are available on Glaucoma Australia's YouTube channel and shared across social media. Thank you to our Platinum Sponsor, Pinstripe Media for supporting this initiative.

World Glaucoma Week 2023

During World Glaucoma Week (12 – 18 March), Glaucoma Australia promoted its 7 Sights Challenge to raise awareness and funds to support people living with glaucoma.

Key highlights:

- Media activity reached an audience of 3M+ across radio, print and online.
- A 30 second radio Community Service Announcement (CSA) featuring our ambassador Kirk Pengilly ran in Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne.
- A 30 second TV CSA produced pro bono by creative agency HBK ran across the Seven Network, Prime 7, Win Network, ABC TV and ABC iView.
- 19,469 users visited glaucoma.org.au during the month of March, which is the highest monthly traffic ever recorded.



Ambassador Kirk Pengilly recording the radio CSA

Glaucoma Australia is digitally inclusive

Website visitors can now access content in a way that best suits their needs and in over 100 languages!

In May 2023, Glaucoma Australia implemented ReciteMe assistive technology to offer an even more inclusive online experience. The toolbar includes screen reading functionality, multiple reading aids, customisable styling options and an on-demand live translation feature that boasts over 100 languages, including 65 with text-to-speech.

Helping Australians Take Charge of their Eye Health

To celebrate Men’s Health Week (12-18 June), Glaucoma Australia teamed up with ambassador David Koch to host a special online event ‘Healthy habits – taking charge of your eye health’. Guest speakers included optometrist Professor Bang Bui, Glaucoma Australia’s Patient Ambassador Shannon Davis, and Glaucoma Australia CEO, Richard Wylie who discussed how a glaucoma diagnosis can impact a person’s mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and the practical steps people can take to build healthy habits and a support network. With over 600 views, this event has been very well received.



Growing and engaging our community

177,105
Website users

5,486
Facebook followers

1,686
Facebook Glaucoma
Support Group Members

10,325
Glaucoma eNews
subscribers

1,781
Instagram followers

335
Facebook Congenital Glaucoma
Support Group Members

885
Glaucoma News
subscribers

1,377
LinkedIn followers

183
Facebook 7 Sights
Challengers Group Members

GOVERNANCE

Our Board

Maree O'Brien
BA, Dip Teaching, Grad Certificate – Change Mgt, GAICD
President

Maree O'Brien is an Executive Consultant with extensive senior management and leadership experience. She is a strong business advocate, trusted advisor and able to see things from a range of stakeholder perspectives. Maree has a strong family history of glaucoma and is committed to Glaucoma Australia's mission to eliminate glaucoma blindness by increasing awareness of glaucoma in the community and encouraging people to have their eyes tested regularly.

Maree is also the Managing Director of Executive Change specialising in change management consulting. Her business experience ranges from multinational technology and professional services companies through to small, specialised consulting companies that span Commercial, Government and Not-for-profit organisations, both internationally and in Australia.



Dr Benjamin Ashby
B.Optom (Hons) PhD GradCertOcTher GAICD
Vice President and Member of the Clinical Advisory Panel and Audit & Risk Committee

Dr Ashby has a family history of glaucoma, and he is involved in connecting glaucoma patients to Glaucoma Australia services. Dr Ashby is Clinical Services Director for Specsavers Australia New Zealand with responsibility for clinical performance, optometry professional development, professional services and the development of clinical systems. He is actively involved in the research, development and implementation of sustainable models of eye care delivery that improve patient outcomes and reduce avoidable blindness. Dr Ashby also sits on Optometry Australia's glaucoma clinical guidelines working group, Deakin University Optometry Advisory Board, is an Adjunct Lecturer at UNSW and an Honorary Teaching Fellow at the University of Auckland.



Don Koch
M.Bus Banking & Finance, GAICD, Senior Fellow
FINSIA, Fellow GIA
Honorary Treasurer and Member of the Media & Digital
Technology and Audit & Risk Committees.

Don Koch is an experienced director with roles of Chair of BNK, Chair of Cache Investment Management (a platform as a service startup), Chair of ResusRight (a med tech startup), and a member of the governing board of the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Research Foundation.

Don also had over 40 years experience as a part of the Financial Services Industry in Australia and Internationally before transitioning to a directorship career.

Lynette Klein
B.Bus, AAICD
Honorary Secretary and Member of the Audit & Risk
Committee

Lynette Klein has a family history of glaucoma and is passionate about increasing public health literacy on preventative health measures. Lynette has extensive experience working in the pharmaceutical and not for profit health sectors. She has worked in senior management roles at Bayer, Starlight Children's Foundation, Caltex and Qantas Airways.

She is also the founder of Arrive Collaborative management consultancy. Providing executive counsel to leaders on brand strategy, reputation management, communications, digital storytelling, marketing and fundraising strategies.



Dr Katherine Masselos
MB, BS(Hons), B.Optom, MPH, GAICD, FRANZCO
Chair of the Clinical Advisory Panel

Dr Masselos is an ophthalmologist with expertise in the diagnosis and management of glaucoma.

Dr Masselos performs both glaucoma and cataract surgery and has completed a fellowship in glaucoma at the Manchester Royal Eye Hospital in the United Kingdom. Dr Masselos works in private practice in Sydney and is a staff specialist at Prince of Wales and Sydney Eye Hospitals. She works with the Outback Eye Service to provide eye care to residents of Broken Hill and surrounding regions.

Dr Masselos is also a lecturer at the University of New South Wales.





Kirsten McKerrell
B.Pharm, B.Bus, GAICD

Member of the Clinical Advisory Panel and the Audit & Risk Committee

Kirsten McKerrell is a registered Pharmacist, and businesswoman who has owned and operated Community Pharmacies for over 20 years. She currently owns 3 pharmacies in Southeast Queensland. In addition to her experience in Community Pharmacy, Kirsten is also an Associate Lecturer at the School of Pharmacy at the University of Queensland.

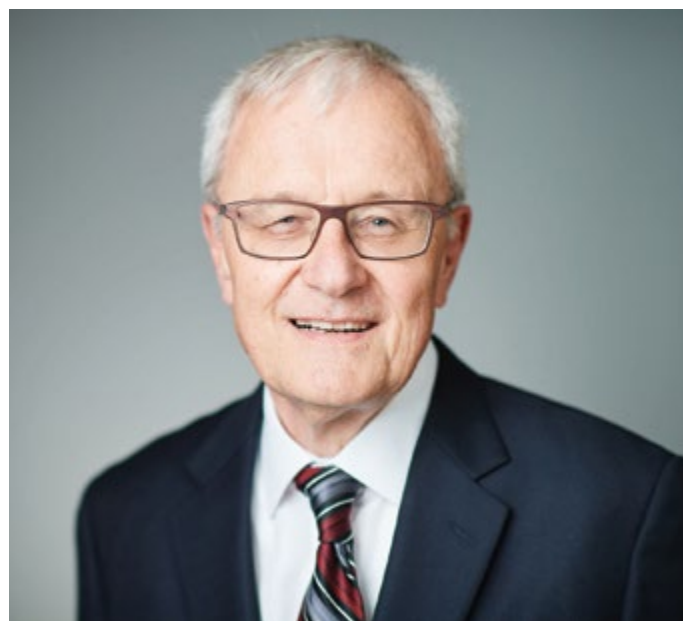
Kirsten is interested in working with not-for-profit enterprises that have a focus on utilising education to improve health outcomes.

William Peter Day
LLb. (Hons), MBA, FCA, FAICD
Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee

Peter Day has held senior Executive and Executive Director positions, mainly with the Rio Tinto Group and Bonlac Foods. He was Chief Financial Officer for Amcor for 7 years until 2007. Peter is a former Chairman of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and was Deputy Chairman of the Australian Securities & Investments Commission for two years.

He has served on private, public and for-purpose boards and is currently a non-executive Chair of two listed organisations, Alumina Limited and Australian Unity Office Fund.

He is also a director of Maurice Blackburn, a leading plaintiff law firm. He has also supported professional education initiatives plus health and disability services through board and volunteer roles. He has a family member who is under treatment for glaucoma.



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Satish Chandar
MBA (Executive)

Chair of the Media & Digital Technology Committee

Satish Chandar is an Independent Strategy and Management Consultant with extensive experience in developing and implementing business strategies and transformation programs across medium to large organisations in financial services industry as well as in the not-for-profit sector. With a career spanning over 30 years across multiple geographies, his current interests are in the cross-section of business, technology and digital strategies and advising on the associated challenges and opportunities.

With a strong family history of glaucoma, he is keen on supporting early detection and treatment of glaucoma across the general public.

OUR COMMITTEES

Clinical Advisory Panel

The Clinical Advisory Panel is a committee of the Glaucoma Australia Board and supports the board with its aim to prevent visual loss among patients with glaucoma. It is comprised of health care providers including Ophthalmologists, Optometrists and Pharmacists.

- Dr Katherine Masselos (Ophthalmologist) – Chair
- Dr David Wechsler (Ophthalmologist)
- Dr Nelson Kuo (Ophthalmologist)
- Dr Mark Chiang (Ophthalmologist)
- Dr Jennifer Fan-Gaskin (Ophthalmologist)
- Dr Brian Ang (Ophthalmologist)
- Dr Geoffrey Chan (Ophthalmologist)
- Dr Ben Ashby (Optometrist)
- Peter Murphy (Optometrist)
- Inez Hsing (Optometrist)
- Ho Wah Ng (Optometrist)
- Anna Delmadoros (Optometrist)
- Janelle Tong (Optometrist)
- Kirsten McKerrrell (Pharmacist)
- Han Fey Yap (Pharmacist)
- Jessica Leung (Pharmacist)
- Khanh Nguyen (Pharmacist)
- Mariyam Aly (Pharmacist)
- Dan Hillier (Pharmacist)
- Nhan Do (Pharmacist)

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee is a committee of the Glaucoma Australia Board and assists the board in fulfilling its responsibilities regarding oversight of the audit and risk requirements of Glaucoma Australia and other stakeholders to meet current and future developments in line with the Strategic Plan.

- William Peter Day – Chair
- Don Koch
- Kirsten McKerrrell
- Lynette Klein
- Richard Wylie (GA representative)

Media and Digital Technology Committee

The Media and Digital Technology (M&DT) Committee is a committee of the Glaucoma Australia Board and assists the board in fulfilling its responsibilities regarding oversight of the digital and technology requirements of Glaucoma Australia and other stakeholders to meet current and future developments in line with the Strategic Plan.

- Satish Chandar – Chair
- Don Koch (Resigned August 2023)
- Richard Wylie (GA representative)
- Gillian Hopkins (GA representative)

Sustainability Committee

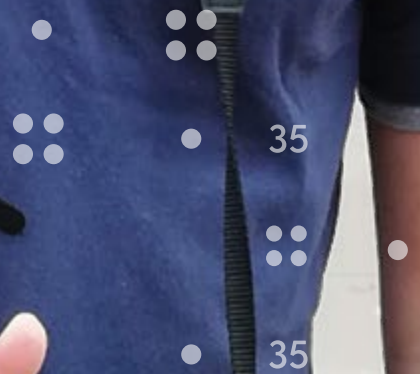
The Sustainability Committee is a committee of the Glaucoma Australia Board and assists the board in fulfilling its responsibilities regarding oversight of the financial sustainability of Glaucoma Australia to meet current and future developments in line with the Strategic Plan.

- Lynette Klein – Chair
- Maree O'Brien
- Dr Ben Ashby
- Satish Chandar
- Kirsten McKerrrell
- William Peter Day
- Kay Richards
- Richard Wylie (GA representative)



“I think sight is one of your senses that if you were to lose it, it would **significantly change the way you live.** If you could do something to stop and reverse that loss, **it would be a wonderful thing.**”

– Martyn, diagnosed at 53 years old



PATRON & AMBASSADORS

His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)

His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) has been Patron of Glaucoma Australia since 2019 and helps Glaucoma Australia to promote the importance of eye health and regular eye exams.

“I am delighted to be Patron of Glaucoma Australia,” said the Governor-General. “Since being founded in 1988, Glaucoma Australia has increased community awareness of glaucoma, supported patients and their families, and funded critical research. This is an important mission, and their impact has been significant. The hard work of those involved, their supporters and the researchers they fund and collaborate with has directly helped the hundreds of thousands of Australians.”



Kirk Pengilly

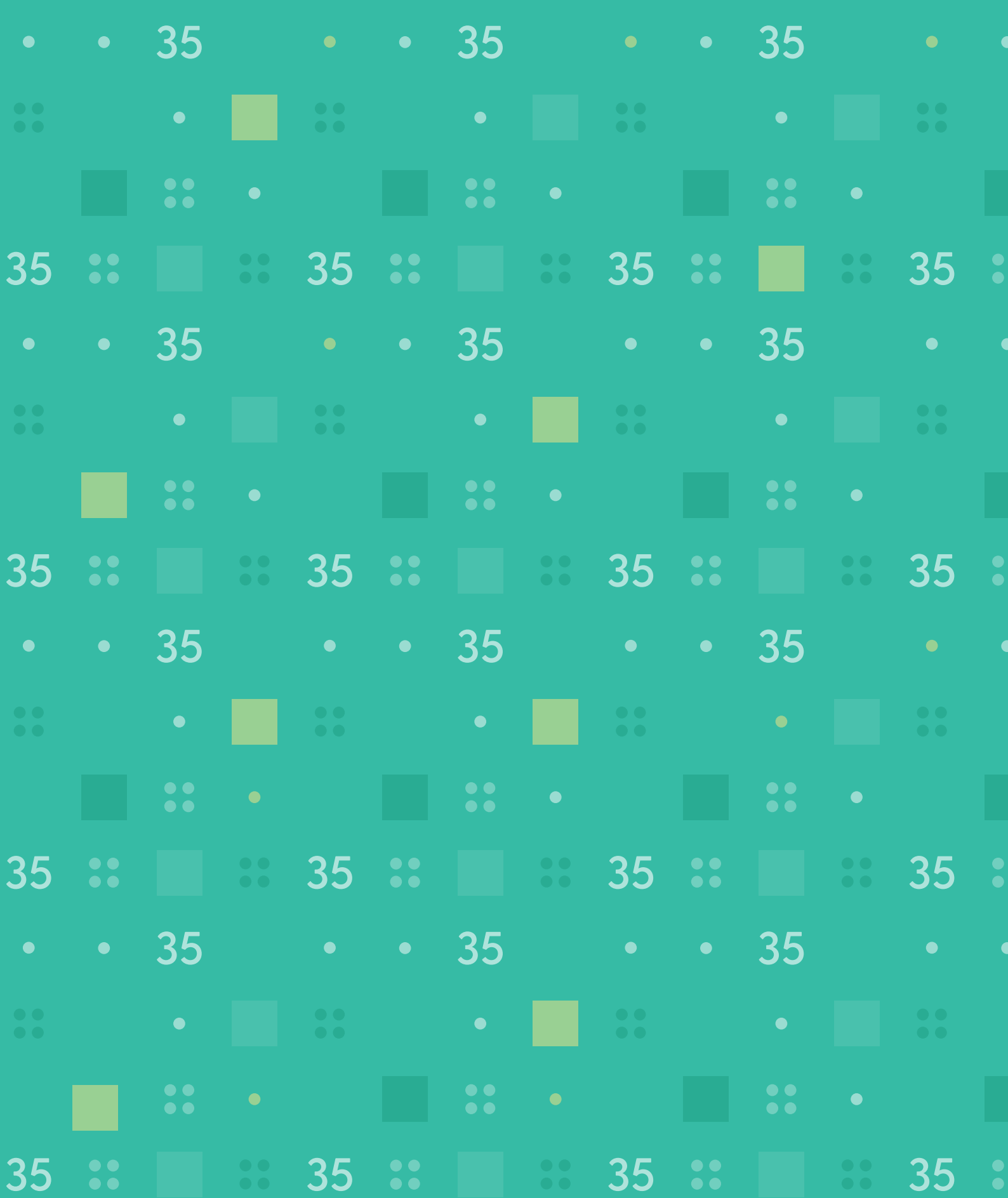
Aussie music legend and Glaucoma Australia ambassador Kirk Pengilly fronted the 7 Sights Challenge campaign in 2023. He says it's a potent reminder that your sight enables you to do things you may take for granted, such as going for a run, riding a bike, snapping a photo or simply seeing your loved ones.



David Koch

David Koch is one of Australia's best-known personalities, having co-hosted Network Seven's Sunrise for the past 20 years. David had no symptoms when he was diagnosed with glaucoma three years ago. The shock discovery is the driving force behind his involvement with Glaucoma Australia and his decision to publicly share his glaucoma diagnosis which reached over 7 million people.





**Glaucoma
Australia**
Saving sight