



I see for culture

Eye Health Education  
Resource Kit



I C E E

International Centre for Eyecare Education



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# Eye Health Education Resource Kit

The International Centre for Eyecare Education (ICEE) is proud to release the **“I See for Culture”** Indigenous eye health education resource kit. Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, this resource kit has been designed specifically for use in rural and remote Indigenous health contexts and is primarily picture-based. Your health centre has been chosen to receive a resource kit.

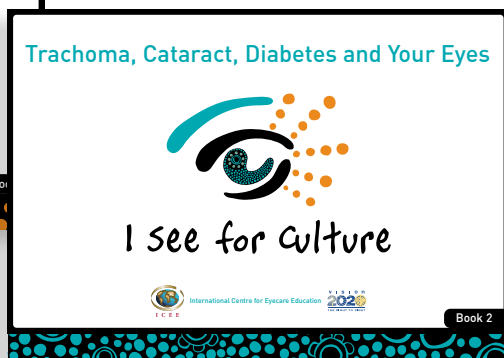
We are delighted to have Mark Ella, first Indigenous captain of the Wallabies rugby union team, as our Ambassador for the **“I See for Culture”** campaign and you will see Mark’s photo on the enclosed posters.

As this resource kit was developed as part of a National Eye Health Demonstration Grant, we hope that you will use the resources in your community and with your patients.

To help us evaluate the resource kit, we will shortly contact you to ask for feedback via a questionnaire.

The resources kit contains:

- 2 x Flip-Charts
- 2 x Posters
- 1 x Model Eye
- 6 x Pairs of Simulator Masks



## Flip-Charts

The flip-charts are picture-based, with wording on one side, to allow health workers to better explain and educate their patients about eyes and vision disorders. Their size is ideal for one-on-one use, although they could also be used with a small group of patients.

### Book 1: “All About Eyes”

A general overview about parts of the eye, how to look after the eyes, what happens during an eye exam, about wearing spectacles, and low vision rehabilitation.

### Book 2: “Trachoma, Cataract, Diabetes and Your Eyes”

Contains information about causes, prevention and treatment of these three eye conditions, which are quite common in Indigenous communities. Information has been incorporated into a ‘story’, to present a more real-life scenario, and make the message more relevant and interesting.

Please use these resources when discussing these eye conditions with your patients, and make sure they are available when an optometrist or ophthalmologist visits your health centre.

Further information on how to use the flip-charts is included later in this booklet.



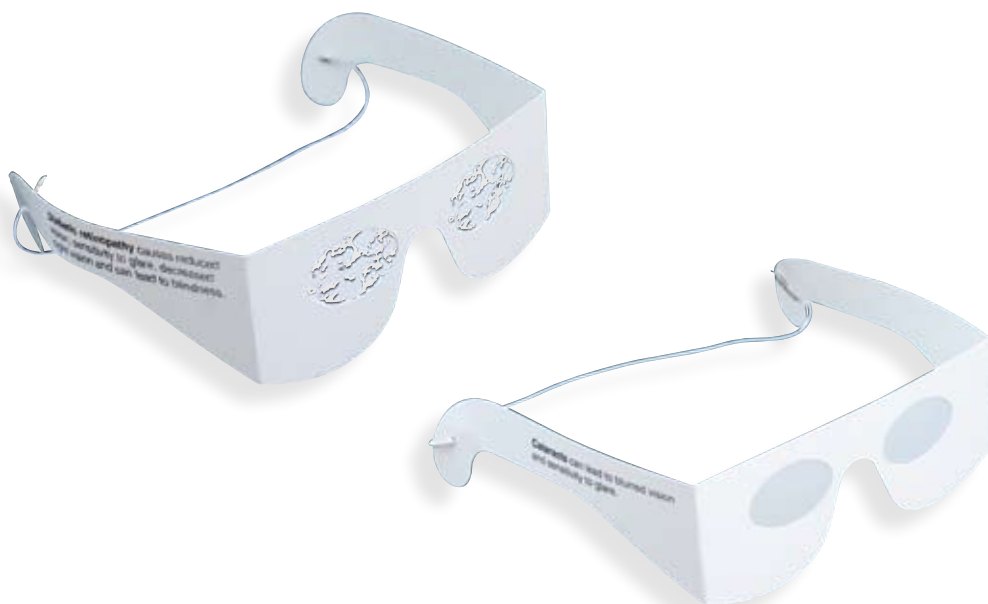
## Posters

Two different posters have been developed to promote and encourage people to get their eyes checked. Please display the posters in a visible place in your community health centre.



## Model Eye

A model eye has been included to assist you in explaining the different parts of the eye to your patients. It can be used in conjunction with the flip-charts or independently.



## Simulator Masks

Cardboard masks produced by Vision Australia, which simulate how a person will see if their vision has been affected by **cataracts** or **diabetic retinopathy**, have been included. You have received 3 pairs of each type of simulator mask. They complement the information provided in the flip-charts on cataract and diabetes and your eyes, and are a useful education tool to help health workers, patients and family members understand how a person's vision may be affected. For example, you can use these simulator masks when:

- Explaining to a newly diagnosed diabetic patient why they should have their eyes checked regularly
- Explaining to a family member of someone who requires cataract surgery what it means and what they can expect.

These simulator masks are made from card-board and are difficult to clean, so they might not last very long. If you would like to order more of these, please contact Vision Australia directly (see [www.visionaustralia.org](http://www.visionaustralia.org)).

# Instructions on using the Flip-Charts

As mentioned before, the flip-charts are picture-based, with wording on one side, to allow health workers to better explain and educate their patients about eyes and vision disorders. Their size is ideal for one-on-one use, although they could also be used with a small group of patients. You have received two different flip-charts:

Book 1



Book 2



- The flip-charts are split into different sections, so it is not intended that you would read the whole flip-chart to each patient. Rather, you would just read and show the relevant section during a clinical discussion. For example:
  - ➔ read Book 1 to a person who you think may have problems with their eyes but is scared of, or does not want to see, the optometrist or ophthalmologist
  - ➔ read the diabetes section of Book 2 to newly diagnosed or poorly controlled diabetics
  - ➔ read the cataract section of Book 2 to a person and their family who has been diagnosed with having a cataract, but may be apprehensive about having surgery.

- Unfolding the white cardboard stand will allow the flip-chart to stand up-right, for hands-free use.
- The text on the odd-numbered pages can either be read to the patient word for word, or used as a guide for discussion. Pictures and captions on the even numbered pages facing the patient correspond to the information in the text.
- When moving on to the next page, turn the patient (picture) page towards you.
- Where it is useful to point out specific pictures for the patient, instructions are provided in italic brackets, e.g. *(Point to picture of girl cleaning hands)*
- Where it is useful to use the simulator masks or model eye, instructions and a small picture of the resources are provided e.g



It may be useful to also have the eye model to point to.



This is when it may be useful for your patient to try on the “vision with cataract” mask.

- These instructions should not to be read aloud.
- Take some time to become familiar with the layout and content of the flip-charts, so you are prepared to use them in discussion with your patients, when you think they will be useful.



# Background Information

The important messages from each section are summarised below:

## Book 1: “All About Eyes”

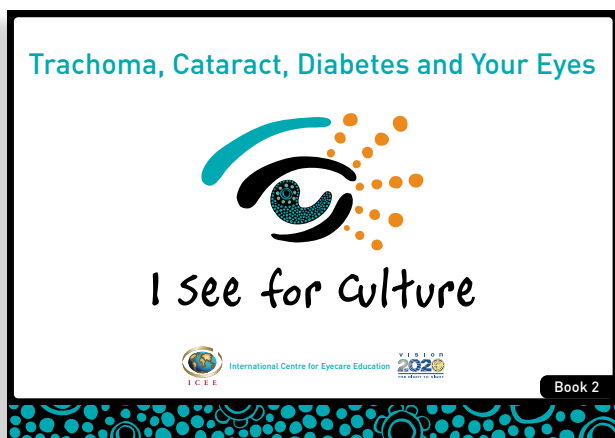
- Our eyes are important for day-to-day activities
- There are many different parts to the eye – both outside and inside
- We have to look after our eyes to prevent eye or vision problems from occurring
- It is important to have an eye exam whenever there is a problem with the eyes or vision
- As a guideline, it is recommended that we have our eyes examined every two years
- Diabetics should have an eye exam once a year
- An eye check-up will determine how well you can see, whether you need glasses, and how healthy your eyes are
- Some people may need eye glasses, eye drops, or an eye operation
- Eye glasses can help people to see more clearly either far away or up close
- Some people can not be helped with eye glasses or an operation, and can have training in using a magnifier or white cane.



## Book 2: “Trachoma, Cataract, Diabetes and Your Eyes”

### Trachoma

- The signs and symptoms of trachoma infection are not always obvious to the patient
- Trachoma can be detected by a health worker or nurse by looking underneath the eyelids
- Trachoma can lead to blindness if the eyelids turn in and the eyelashes scratch the eye
- Trachoma can easily spread from one person to another, particularly by flies
- Maintaining a clean living environment, face cleaning, and using your own bed and towel can help stop the spread of trachoma
- If you have trachoma it can be treated with antibiotics – normally for the whole family
- In people where the lashes have started to scratch the eye, eyelid surgery can fix the problem to prevent blindness.



## Cataract

- Having cataracts can significantly affect your ability to carry out everyday tasks, such as driving and reading
- Cataract is when the lens inside your eye becomes cloudy – it is not a growth on or in the eye
- Cataracts are associated with ageing, but earlier onset can be caused by excessive sun exposure, diabetes, smoking or eye injury
- Early cataracts can be prevented by sun protection (hat and sunglasses), stopping smoking, and controlling diabetes
- A cataract operation is a simple, fast operation, which generally produces an immediate improvement in vision; it is done under local anaesthetic in a hospital
- Following cataract surgery, an eye patch is worn, and eye rubbing discouraged. Antibiotic and steroid drops are prescribed to prevent infection and inflammation, and a one-day post-operative check is required.

## Diabetes and the Eye

- Diabetes can cause many signs and symptoms, including eye and vision problems
- Diabetes is when there is too much sugar in the blood, which makes the small blood vessels in the body leak
- There are many small blood vessels in the retina, at the back of the eye
- If these retinal blood vessels leak they can cause blurry or dark vision, and even blindness
- Preventing or controlling diabetes will help stop the bleeding in the eye – this may include adopting a healthy diet, regular exercise, controlling blood sugar, taking medications, and an eye exam every year
- If there is bleeding inside the eye, a special form of light (laser) applied to the retina can stop the bleeding from getting worse
- Laser can be done at a hospital or sometimes at the clinic, and only takes a few minutes.

## Further Resource Orders

The “**I See for Culture**” resource kit was developed and produced with funding from the Australian Government, Department of Health and Ageing, through an Eye Health Demonstration Grant. As part of this grant, 150 resource kits have been compiled and distributed to selected Indigenous communities throughout the country.

You will be contacted to complete a questionnaire to evaluate the resource kit. Such feedback will assist in deciding whether funding is allocated for further resource kits to be compiled for wider distribution.

For further information on accessing copies of some of the resource kit contents please access the following websites:

**[www.icee.org](http://www.icee.org)**

**[www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au](http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au)**

**[www.visionaustralia.org](http://www.visionaustralia.org)**

# Acknowledgements

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## **Project Advisory Group members:**

Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council  
Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia  
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Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet  
Centre for Eye Research Australia  
Danila Dilba Health Service  
The Fred Hollows Foundation  
Guide Dogs Association of SA and NT  
Optometrists Association Australia  
Queensland University of Technology  
The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists  
University of Melbourne  
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Vision 2020 Australia

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Aboriginal and Islander Community Health Service Brisbane  
Areyonga Community Health Clinic  
Central Australian Aboriginal Congress  
Derbal Yerrigan Health Service  
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Danila Dilba Health Service

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