



GPs and optometrists working together

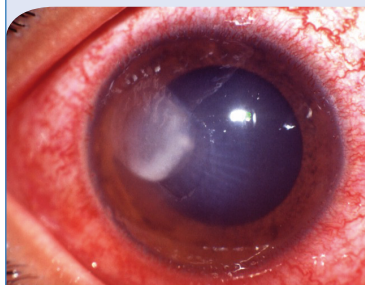
Find a local optometrist

Visit www.optometrists.asn.au or call Optometrists Association Australia on 03 9668 8500.



Looking for specific expertise?

Optometrists Association Australia may be able to link you to an optometrist experienced in managing or treating a specific eye condition, therapeutically endorsed or with specific equipment or clinical interests. Please contact us on 03 9668 8500 or email oaanat@optometrists.asn.au.



Talk to your local optometrist

Local networks are the greatest resource in primary care. Contact your local optometrist to find out what equipment they have and what services and additional expertise they have to assist in the delivery of primary eye care for your patients. Most optometrists are happy to see patients on referral, and happy to refer.

www.optometrists.asn.au

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An optometrist can help you to provide the best eye care for your patients. What can your local optometrist do?

Optometry is at the front line of primary health eye care delivery, with over 5.5 million optometry services provided annually in Australia. For the 2009-2010 financial year optometrists conducted 4.2 million initial consultations, equivalent to 20 per cent of the Australian population.

General Optometry Services

Optometrists are qualified and equipped to provide many primary eye care services including:

- Tests to assess refractive error and visual fields, and prescribing and fitting of glasses or contact lenses when required
- Differential diagnosis of red eye, including conjunctivitis, keratitis, uveitis and dry eye
- Assessment of visual complaints in children
- Examination of the external and internal structures of the eye to detect signs of glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration and retinal disorders
- Examination of the eyes to detect symptoms of systemic diseases that can affect vision such as hypertension and diabetes
- Assessment, management and referral of ocular emergencies
- Driver's vision and occupational vision assessments

Optometrists work with and refer to ophthalmologists, GPs, low vision services and other health professionals as required.

Optometry and Medicare

Optometrists are providers under Medicare. There are specific item numbers for most optometry services including comprehensive vision assessments. Patients are entitled to a comprehensive eye examination once every two years, or more often if clinically necessary. Some services such as digital imaging may attract a fee.

Ocular Therapeutics

Optometrists with training and endorsement of their registration are able to prescribe S3 and S4 topical medications for the management of ocular conditions or disease. Endorsed optometrists may prescribe topical antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, antivirals, glaucoma treatments, anti-allergy medications and cycloplegics.

Therapeutically-endorsed optometrists are trained and able to:

- Use slit-lamp bio-microscopy and other technology to facilitate the appropriate diagnosis and management of patients with infection, inflammation or injury to the anterior eye
- Provide primary eye care and treatment for ocular conditions such as dry eye and allergy
- Examine patients for signs of internal ocular disease and, where necessary, treat these patients or refer them to an ophthalmologist
- Diagnose and manage glaucoma, in shared-care arrangements with ophthalmologists
- Provide after-care for cataract surgery patients
- Assess and, where appropriate, treat infections or other complications arising from contact lens use
- Triage ocular emergencies and ensure urgent cases are seen promptly by an ophthalmologist

Special Areas of Expertise

Many optometrists do additional training and have special expertise in areas such as:

- Paediatric optometry
- Vision therapy in children
- Contact lenses
- Sports vision
- Colour vision
- Occupational vision testing
- Rehabilitation for vision problems
- Low vision



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