

Multimedia, multilingual resources demystify eye care

ANGELIKI ARVANITIS, a bilingual optometrist of Greek heritage, has been recognised as an Eye Health Hero for her service to the community of Darebin in Melbourne.

Ms Arvanitis has been providing eye-care services to the culturally and linguistically diverse Darebin community for 20 years.

Darebin is one of four local government areas participating in the Vision Initiative Pilot Project to support at-risk Victorians to have a regular eye examination. Greater Geelong, Greater Shepparton and Latrobe are also part of the project. They have been identified as having a higher proportion of people who are more at risk of blindness and vision loss.

On World Sight Day, the Vision Initiative introduced new materials to help educate culturally and linguistically diverse communities in these four local government areas about eye care and optometric services.

Ms Arvanitis was speaking at the launch of the new materials that have been produced in Arabic, Cantonese, Greek, Italian, Mandarin and Vietnamese, with the assistance of a government grant.

Vision Initiative manager Dee Tumino said '\$75,000 had been allocated to the development of an eye health multimedia resource to overcome the barriers to eye examinations for these groups.

The funding has been used to develop six short videos to explain the role of eye health professionals and the importance of regular eye examinations in six different languages. The first, in Cantonese, was screened at the launch.

The multimedia resources aim to demystify eye health for those who speak Italian, Greek, Arabic, Vietnamese, Mandarin or Cantonese.

To help break down language barriers, information sheets,

brochures and posters have also been produced in six languages to highlight the importance of eye examinations and good health care.

'All participating optometrists, GP practices and pharmacies in the Vision Initiative Pilot Project areas (Darebin, Greater Geelong, Greater Shepparton and Latrobe) will receive a multicultural kit. This kit will include the multimedia clips, posters, brochures and a sample of the translated information sheets,' Vision Initiative health promotion officer Sarah Zerbib explained.

'We will also be informing Victorian pharmacies, GP practices and optometrists, via trade media and newsletters, that multicultural kits can be ordered from the Vision Initiative team.

'All information sheets, audio recordings and multimedia clips will be available to access from the Vision Initiative website,' she said. 'I've lived in Darebin all my life. My parents are Greek and they speak Greek at home,' Ms Arvanitis said. 'The need for these resources is real for me and my family.'

'I have a list of Greek patients waiting to see me. Darebin's Greek community knows me or knows of me, and that makes them more comfortable to make an appointment for an eye examination,' she said.

Victorian Health Minister David Davis spoke at the launch. 'These are an important set of resources that will make a difference to culturally and linguistically diverse communities,' he said.

Mr Davis noted that nearly 30 per cent of Victorians who spoke a language other than English at home had never had an eye examination, according to the 2008 Victorian Health Population Survey.

The Vision Initiative, launched by Victorian Health Minister David Davis on World Sight Day last year, is managed by Vision 2020 Australia and funded by the Victorian Government.



(L-R) Victorian Health Minister David Davis, chairwoman of the Vision Initiative steering committee Sheila O'Sullivan, optometrist Angeliki Arvanitis, and CEO Vision 2020 Australia Jennifer Gersbeck. Photo: Les O'Rourke, Vision 2020 Australia

Nostalgia as ProVision recalls 25 years of progress

A PANEL OF EARLY contributors to ProVision explored the group's history at its 25th anniversary conference and celebrations in Hobart in October.

James O'Loughlin hosted a dinner and discussion by Micheal Knipe representing ProVision members, David Healy representing suppliers, and Joe Chakman representing Optometry Australia.

A record 450 delegates attended the conference. ProVision CEO Steven Johnston said the biennial conference on 3-5 October was a huge success for members, suppliers, guests and ProVision staff.

The event started with a visit to the Museum of Old and New Art on Friday night, and ended with the celebration dinner on Sunday night.

Members were recognised at the dinner by their peers with a last man standing countdown of length of membership.

This left 14 people standing who were involved in the very early days of ProVision. They were Stephen Wakeing, John Warren, Renata and Sue on

behalf of Peter Cunningham, Andrew Thomas, John Farmer, Reg Bennett, Peter Lewis, Micheal Knipe, Norm Russo, Lesley Vedelago, John Kingshott, Lino Di Guglielmo and Lucilla Colagrande.

Mr Johnston presented supplier awards with Essilor winning for range of products, RimOptics for service, VMD for value and Maui Jim for quality. The overall supplier winner was Maui Jim.

'Delegates were treated to an outstanding speaker program headlined by several international guests. They included Al Gleinman from the USA who ran a workshop on the "brand called you" and added a keynote on the future of optometry in the USA, Robert (William) Morris from the United Kingdom who talked about the independent market in the UK, and Caroline Abram from France who shared the art of designing frames,' Mr Johnston said.

'Attendees were entertained and informed by local speakers including Lisa McInnes-Smith who got the audience to appreciate the art of learning,' Dan Gregory who introduced the audience to five concepts to

develop innovation, Khoá Do who inspired with his incredible life journey, David Foster who gave a taste of Tasmanian wood-chopping, and burns surgeon Professor Fiona Wood who had the audience hanging off every syllable.'

Workshops included Wayne Reuben from CooperVision illuminating the contact lens category, Nick Hornsby from Essilor talking about its eyeCARE training program, Gina Lednyak and Dave Bonovrie from Lednyak Associates on social media, and Rob Ellis from ProVision providing insight into recruiting and retaining the right staff.

A trade show, in which 25 strategic partner suppliers displayed their latest offers, was highlighted by the release of ProShop, a new business to consumer transactional website for ProVision members to start selling on-line.

ProVision raised \$13,800 for Optometry Giving Sight across the weekend, which included \$7,800 in recurring annual donations and \$6,000 in a raffle in which Andrew Thomas from Thomas and Mackay in Adelaide won a trip to an OGS project.



(L-R) David Healy, Joe Chakman, Micheal Knipe and James O'Loughlin

Changing of the guard

The Eyecare Plus National Conference was held in Sydney on 11-12 October. It was attended by nearly 300 members, their staff and suppliers. Founder Dr Anthony Hanks presided over his last conference as chairman and handed over the role to Justin Durkin. Mr Durkin was elected as a director 12 months ago and has been an Eyecare Plus member for nine years.



Dr Tony Hanks (L) and Justin Durkin