



AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

CLINICAL SERVICES • EDUCATION • RESEARCH

STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2019

PRESERVING SIGHT AND PREVENTING BLINDNESS



NATIONAL VISION
RESEARCH INSTITUTE
OF AUSTRALIA
AN ACO DIVISION

Vision And Mission

“To be a world-leading institution in the science, education and practice of optometry” through “promoting the visual health and wellbeing of the communities we serve by leading the profession to build its knowledge base, attain and advance clinical skills and deliver the best possible optometric care.”

What We Are Working Towards

Preservation of sight and the prevention of blindness by:

- leading clinical best practice, demonstrating clinical excellence and educating the profession;
- providing public health eye care for those most in need;
- undertaking research to improve understanding of vision and diseases and disorders that impact on vision;
- providing a learning environment for the teaching of optometry students, graduate optometrists and supervising research and higher degrees; and
- innovating in delivery of eye care for the community and the optometry profession.

“The ACO Strategic Plan is a rolling multi-year five year strategic plan, commencing in 2014. At the end of each year the five-year plan is updated and extended by one year. A comprehensive strategic planning review will take place every 4 years, with the first review due in 2017, for implementation in 2018.”

ACO Council

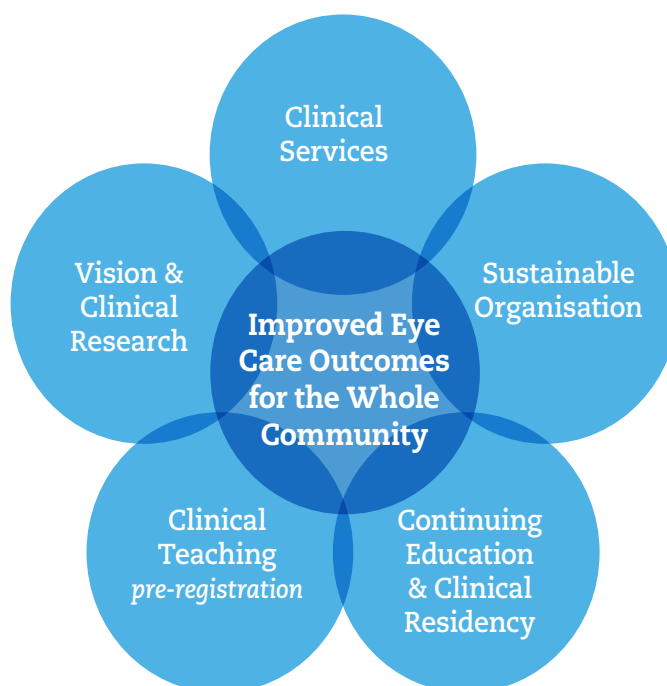
Refer to >

www.aco.org.au/about-us/annual-reports for the latest version of the ACO Strategic Plan

Core Guiding Values

We are led by the following values and principles in how we approach our work:

- **Accountability and Transparency**
We are responsible and accountable for our work and services and open and transparent in the decisions we make.
- **Integrity and honesty**
We act with integrity and honesty and avoid conflicts of interest and improper behaviour.
- **Leadership and innovation**
We foster and support professional leadership and encourage innovation in our work.
- **Respect and Care**
We treat others and ourselves with respect and care and our workplace is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.
- **Teamwork and partnership**
We foster and support teamwork within the ACO and work collaboratively with partners to promote service excellence.
- **Knowledge and excellence**
We continuously improve our professional knowledge and strive for excellence in all areas of our work.



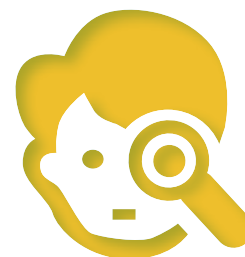
Strategic Objective 1: Leading Clinical Best Practice

Promoting and demonstrating leading practice in the provision of clinical eye care services.



Strategies	Key Outcomes/Indicators
Provide optometry programs that demonstrate best practice in our clinical and education services.	<p>Enhancement of specialised services to support development of the profession into the future.</p> <p>Translation of clinical research into evidence based practice.</p>
Ensure optometrists receive high quality education and training so that they can practise at the highest standards.	<p>Work with the universities, the Optometry Board of Australia (OBA), the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ) and Optometry Australia to support national objectives including maintaining standards for education and training.</p> <p>Continue to review current Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs to ensure the highest standards are maintained.</p>
Actively engage with government, public health organisations and client support organisations nationally in pursuit of common goals to improve visual health.	Strong relationship and shared understanding of common goals with key funders and partner organisations.
Continue to demonstrate ethical practice and standards and inspire up-and-coming practitioners to pursue a higher level of optometric practice in specialised and general practice.	<p>Australian College of Optometry (ACO) attracts membership of like-minded practitioners nationally who are also seeking the highest ethical and clinical standards and have an interest in contributing to the development and progression of eye care in the community and the profession.</p> <p>Increase in fellowships and awards to recognise excellence.</p>
Ensure high standards in optometry in Australia are maintained through delivery of assessment programs for international optometrists seeking registration in Australia.	ACO delivers OCANZ examinations to determine whether international candidates meet entry level competency (as determined by the OBA) to practice optometry in Australia to the standard required.
Support OCANZ and the OBA with implementation of the new registration requirements that all optometrists in Australia must have ocular therapeutic certification by December 2019.	ACO's ocular therapeutics certificate course is delivered at a high standard, meets demand and is accessible to optometrists requiring the certification for registration in Australia, by delivering the course online so that they can achieve qualification and obtain non-conditional optometry registration.
Support international vision health through partnership.	Engagement with international eye care development organisations in developing eye care systems and services.

Strategic Objective 2: Valued public health eye care services



Improving patients' lives by providing exceptional general and specialised optometric care to communities most in need.

Strategies	Key Outcomes/Indicators
To be responsive, flexible, efficient, effective and innovative in an environment of changing economic, social and government policy.	Diversification and growth (enhancement of services), where appropriate, to meet challenges and changes in optometric practice and care (sustainability). Value demonstrated for every dollar spent of government and philanthropic funding through reporting and performance.
Identify areas of unmet eye care need in the community and identify best ways to develop services to respond to this need.	Audit of existing and future demand for public health eye care. Plan developed giving consideration to increasing access to existing sites and networks, establishment of new clinics and new partnerships using existing channels.
Provide high quality and accessible specialised clinical services to support private optometrists, GPs and other health practitioners.	Increase in number of referrals from optometrists for specialised ACO services, with results reported back to appropriate clinicians. Increase in referrals to ACO services from e.g. GPs, optometrists, outreach services, aboriginal health centres, refugee/asylum seeker agencies.
Continue commitment to Clinical Excellence Framework.	Continuous improvement program in place.
Partner with relevant organisations including government and community health to efficiently and effectively deliver services to communities most in need.	Further development of existing partnerships and development of new partnerships with other organisations with similar goals.
Maximise use of workforce and resources by: optometry further developing its working relationship with ophthalmology to better integrate optometry services delivered at hospitals; and broadening the ACO's workforce strategy to include other health practitioners.	Increased involvement supporting hospitals with co-management and post-operative care at the ACO. More efficient and effective use of resources across the sector.
Extend services for indigenous Australians to areas of unmet need nationally. Improve referral and patient pathways through greater integration with primary care and other health providers for indigenous communities. Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in respectful, culturally sensitive and sustainable ways.	Services provided based on population need nationally, determined in consultation with national bodies and local indigenous groups. Greater integration with primary health care. Stronger referral pathways. Cultural awareness training completed by staff and students.

Strategic Objective 3: World Class Research



Advancing knowledge in vision science and the diseases and disorders that impact on vision to improve patient care and health outcomes.

Strategies	Key Outcomes/Indicators
<p>Research vision diseases and disorders that have a major health impact on Australians and those most in need in our region, and service innovation to improve eye health outcomes.</p>	<p>Linkages developed with relevant organisations including universities, independent medical research institutes and funding agencies, which result in research collaborations and projects.</p>
<p>Create a strong, vibrant, innovative research environment with an international profile by increasing the critical mass of researchers and multidisciplinary teams developing further external research partnerships and collaborations, and expanding the breadth and depth of research in the National Vision Research Institute (NVRI).</p>	<p>Increased number of researchers including postdoctoral fellows and PhDs.</p> <p>Increased success in winning new grants from National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and Australian Research Council (ARC) and other funding bodies.</p> <p>Increase in number of papers published in high quality international journals and presentations given at international conferences.</p> <p>Clinical Research Laboratory established in NVRI.</p>
<p>Translate discoveries into outcomes that will improve understanding, prevention, diagnoses and treatment of vision disease and disorders.</p>	<p>Number of papers published each year (per researcher) increased.</p> <p>Number of papers published in journals with impact factors greater than 5 increased.</p> <p>Percentage of our published papers that are ranked in the top 10% of their field in the Thomson/ISI database of citations increased.</p> <p>Participation in clinical trials using ACO/NVRI IP or 3rd party, number of licensed patents and value of licensing deals, or development of a new product from ACO/NVRI IP or discovery occurs within every 5 years.</p> <p>At least one major advance resulting from research in diagnosis, prevention or treatment is incorporated into health care every decade.</p> <p>Researchers are recognised by receipt of major research prizes in every five-year period.</p>
<p>Increase involvement of the ACO clinics in clinical research, noting the importance of public health research and the shift to early stage disease interventions.</p>	<p>Increase in clinical research projects through the NVRI, involving the ACO clinics.</p>

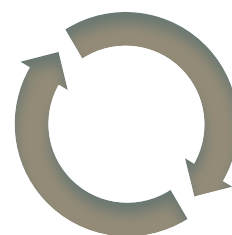
Strategic Objective 4: Education



To develop the knowledge and skills of optometry students and optometrists in practice by providing the best possible clinical teaching and education.

Strategies	Key Outcomes/Indicators
<p>Develop and deliver high quality, innovative models of continuing professional education to the optometry profession across Australia.</p>	<p>ACO is recognised for delivery of high quality professional development that is relevant, independent and follows principles of evidence based best practice.</p>
<p>Provide clinical training of the highest quality delivered by the best clinicians and clinical teachers for optometry undergraduate and postgraduate (pre-registration) courses nationally and internationally.</p> <p>Offer a Clinical Residency program that provides education and clinical development for new graduate optometrists.</p>	<p>ACO is regarded as a 'Leading Optometry Clinical Placement Provider' both nationally and internationally.</p> <p>Number of students and international profile of students grows within limits of available placements.</p> <p>Strong links with all Australian university optometry schools.</p>
<p>Research Higher Degree training to be of the highest quality with required levels of support and facilities provided.</p>	<p>Increased number of PhD and Honours students (in basic science and clinical research) in collaboration with university partners and on time completion achieved.</p>
<p>Provide opportunities for robust discussion in public health eye care, education and research.</p>	<p>Greater collegiality developed, increased sharing of knowledge and ideas, and educational opportunities.</p> <p>ACO develops and delivers CPD that is independent and innovative and provides equity of access to the optometry profession nationally, including metropolitan, rural and isolated areas.</p>

Strategic Objective 5: A Strong, Effective and Sustainable Organisation



Continuously improving and developing our people, resources and infrastructure, and effectively communicating and building relationships with our key stakeholders.

Strategies	Key Outcomes/Indicators
Provide long-term security for the ACO and enable the organisation to take a longer-term perspective in decision making so as to achieve its vision and mission.	<p>A strong endowment developed which will provide long-term financial security for the organisation.</p> <p>All funds entrusted to ACO are invested strategically to maximise their benefit towards achieving the ACO's vision and mission.</p> <p>An improved underlying financial position that enables reinvestment in ACO's activities, including clinical services, research and education.</p>
Develop a workforce strategy that considers key issues including progression pathways, rewards and recognition and succession planning and workplace culture to support the strategic plan.	<p>Workforce strategy is developed and regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Staff survey results indicate staff feel that they have opportunities to be involved and valued, to work collaboratively, and for effective communication between managers and staff.</p>
Communicate our work, services and achievements to the wider community.	<p>Increased referrals to our clinical services.</p> <p>Increased profile in the media and awareness and support for the ACO/NVRI's activities in the profession and the wider community.</p>
Engage with the Commonwealth, State and local governments regarding public health, education and vision research.	Government ministers and departments are aware of, and engage with, the work and achievements of the ACO and the NVRI.
Develop and maintain effective relationships with supporters, trusts and foundations.	Donors feel that their investment has made a valuable contribution to achieving our vision.
Ongoing commitment to planning across the ACO.	Regular review of the ACO's strategic plan, operational plans, risk plan and capital works plan.
Increase use of ICT, including e-health, to improve efficiency and effectiveness across relevant sections of the organisation.	ICT, including e-health systems, are designed to support future growth, directions, quality of care and productivity/efficiency improvements across the ACO.
Foster a culture of continuous improvement.	Rolling reviews of functions and services across the ACO with regards to quality, efficiency, effectiveness and productivity.
Develop a strong communications and marketing capability.	Increased media, brand awareness and understanding of key messages/positioning
Recognise the history and heritage of the ACO and the people and organisations that have contributed to its success and made significant contributions.	<p>ACO's 75th anniversary in 2015 includes celebration of people, achievements and supporters.</p> <p>A celebration is held for the 30 year anniversary of delivery of the Victorian Eyecare Service program in partnership with Department of Health and Human Services Victoria.</p>



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