

# Optometry Victoria South Australia Annual Report

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*2024–2025*

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## President's report

The 2024–2025 year has been one of purpose and progress for Optometry Victoria South Australia. Across both states, we have continued to grow stronger as a united voice for our profession — advocating with impact engaging with authenticity, and building the foundations for a resilient and enduring future.

### **Engaging our members and strengthening our community**

Our members remain at the heart of everything we do, and this year has seen deeper engagement and connection across every career stage.

From students and early-career optometrists to experienced practitioners, we have continued to listen, support and empower.

Through our member advisory committees — SACVSAT and ECOVSAT — we have strengthened the feedback loops that ensure member voices directly inform our advocacy, education and professional initiatives. These committees have provided valuable insights into workforce conditions, collaborative care and professional satisfaction, guiding national discussions and shaping our future priorities.

Education and professional growth remained central to our work. This year marked the final chapter for our long-running

Blue Sky and SRC Mini conferences. As we celebrate their legacy, we look ahead with excitement to the launch of a new of interactive conferences. The inaugural Optometry Clinical Conference (OCC), a collaborative national event between OV/SA, OQNT and OTas, hosted in Melbourne in August 2025 brought together optometrists from across Australia for a truly unified learning experience and a stellar pub choir performance.

Regional events, CPD workshops, CPR courses and peer networking dinners across both states have continued to support local connection and member access to quality, face-to-face education, close to home.

We also continued to invest in the next generation of optometrists through university partnerships, student presentations and national leadership initiatives. From on-campus events and career expos to the Student Leadership Program and advocacy placements, these initiatives have helped students understand the vital role of their professional association and the opportunities available to them through membership.

### **Leading with influence and intent**

This year, we continued to take the voice of optometry directly to government and policy decision-makers, ensuring that the expertise of our profession is recognised and valued within Australia's broader health system.

Our advocacy work in both South Australia and Victoria has spanned key priorities — including children’s vision screening, oral prescribing, and improved access to affordable spectacles through GlassesSA.

We strengthened our relationships with both the Victorian and South Australian Chief Allied Health Officers, advanced collaboration with key departments, and brought our messages into Parliament through awareness events and briefings that elevated eye health on the political agenda.

Our engagement with the South Australian Greens on myopia awareness saw parliamentarians pledge to become Myopia Champions in their communities, and early in 2025-26 we hosted a Victorian parliamentary event focused on children’s vision with high political engagement.

These advocacy efforts have been guided by our exceptional State Leads, Cassandra Haines and Isaac Curkpatrick, who continue to be powerful champions for our members and our profession. Cassie’s leadership in South Australia has helped shape policy discussions around paediatric vision and road safety, while Isaac’s appointment as our State Lead for Victoria brings renewed energy and strategic insight as we prepare for the next state election cycle. I extend my sincere thanks to both Cassie and Isaac for their passion, professionalism and unwavering commitment to advancing optometry in their respective states.

### **Understanding and shaping our workforce future**

This year’s national workforce research — the University of Queensland Optometry Workforce Projections Study and preliminary findings from Flinders University’s employment conditions study — provides important context for our advocacy and member support across Victoria and South Australia. These studies confirm that Australia’s optometry workforce is in oversupply. However, they also point to the need for strong workplace practices, which support practitioner wellbeing and protect the integrity and clinical autonomy of the profession, as well as opportunities to increase awareness of and access to optometry care in under-served communities.

For OV/SA, these insights will help guide future initiatives focused on workplace reform, career development and a robust future for the profession.

### **Promoting optometry and elevating our voice**

This year, we have continued to raise the visibility of optometry — in the media, across government, and within the broader health sector. Through strong storytelling and consistent messaging, we have championed the role of optometrists as leaders in preventative eye care and essential partners in Australia’s healthcare system.

Our marketing and communications approach evolved significantly, integrating OV/SA updates into the national

Snapshot newsletter to deliver more streamlined, targeted communication to members. Across our channels — from social media to media relations — our focus has been on celebrating member achievements, amplifying advocacy messages and promoting eye health awareness.

The national Myopia Awareness Campaign has been a key platform for public engagement, with OV/SA supporting extended campaign impact across South Australia and Victoria.

### **Building a strong and enduring organisation**

Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen our foundations, modernise systems and improve efficiency through closer integration with Optometry Australia. This integration has allowed us to streamline processes, unify communications and enhance the member experience.

Our partnerships with sponsors, industry stakeholders and event collaborators have also grown, laying the groundwork for the next phase of our conference and education strategy. These relationships are vital to the continued success and sustainability of our programs and our profession.

### **Looking ahead**

As we look to the year ahead, our focus remains on representing, supporting and elevating optometrists across Victoria and South Australia. I want to thank our members for their continued confidence and engagement, our State Leads for their outstanding leadership, and our dedicated Board for their many contributions behind the scenes.

**Timothy Lo**  
President



# Treasurer's report

Our financial result for 2024–25 was a surplus of \$468,766. This strong result was largely driven by robust membership renewals, substantial sponsorship revenue from our events, and effective cost containment. During the year, Optometry Victoria South Australia (OV/SA) also made a significant investment in the consumer-facing Myopia Awareness Campaign, a key initiative to improve public understanding and early intervention in myopia management.

This was the first full year in which the OV/SA Board oversaw the operational integration with Optometry Australia, which supported cost efficiencies and delivered significant savings to budget. The strong financial performance in 2024–25 has enabled the Board to approve a distribution of profit back to members in the 2025–26 financial year.

Capitation fees paid to Optometry Australia (the national organisation) remain our primary expense (\$2,189,139). Services supported by these fees continue to provide strong national value and complement our state-based activities. These services include a Professional Services Help Line offering members free one-on-one advice across all areas of practice and employment; comprehensive Professional Indemnity Insurance; a wide range of free, live, and on-demand continuing professional development opportunities; and national advocacy on key issues such as scope of practice, Medicare reform, and workforce sustainability.

Both of our major conferences, Blue Sky in South Australia and SRC Mini in Victoria, were successful and profitable. The surplus generated from these events will be reinvested into future member programs to support education, engagement, and the long-term sustainability of the association. In addition, numerous smaller member and student events were delivered across both states, continuing our strong tradition of community and professional connection.

Our investment portfolio performed positively, providing dividends of \$63,678, and despite market volatility, achieved capital growth of approximately \$38,000 (around 4%). The property at 28 Drummond Street, Carlton (Victoria) was revalued to \$6,795,000, providing a revaluation surplus of \$280,496 net of tax.

Our annual audit was completed by Nexia Sydney Pty Ltd, with an unqualified opinion received in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001. The Financial Reports are available to members on the OV/SA AGM webpage, and the auditor will attend the AGM in November 2025.

I would like to acknowledge the diligent work of our Optometry Australia's finance and operations team, our CEO, Skye Cappuccio and the Board's Audit and Risk Committee for their oversight and commitment to transparency and sound financial management.

Looking ahead, OV/SA remains in a strong financial position. In the coming year, the Board's focus will be on making thoughtful, member-focused reinvestments that continue to deliver real value to optometrists across Victoria and South Australia. We will continue to manage our finances carefully, while ensuring that members see the benefits of a stable and well-run organisation through high-quality education, advocacy, and professional support.

**Kristin Guppy**  
Treasurer



# Board of Directors



**Timothy Lo**  
President



**Dr Anne Weymouth**  
Vice-President



**Kristin Guppy**  
Treasurer



**Simon Hanna**  
Director



**Laura Carson**  
Director



**Stephanie Callisto**  
Director



**Andrew Anderson**  
Director



**Sophie Pym**  
Associate Director  
*Appointed 08/04/2024*



**Meghraj Thakkar**  
Director



**Isaac Curkpatrick**  
Associate Director  
*Resigned 20/11/2024*



**Elise Pocknee-Clem**  
Director  
*Resigned 09/12/2024*

# Strategic Pillar 1: Engage

*Engage optometrists, provide valued member services.*

## Conferences

OV/SA's Blue Sky 2024 and SRC Mini 2024 conferences continued to deliver high-quality education and connection for members across Victoria and South Australia.

Blue Sky 2024, held on 13–14 September 2024, welcomed 219 delegates, including optometrists, sponsors, exhibitors and speakers. With six sponsors and 12 exhibitors, the event featured respected speakers and practical clinical content, reinforcing Blue Sky's reputation as a leading CPD event for South Australian optometrists. The program featured respected speakers and practical clinical content, reinforcing Blue Sky's reputation as a leading CPD event for South Australian optometrists.

SRC Mini 2024, held on 17 November 2024, attracted 147 delegates and 12 sponsors and exhibitors. The event combined concise, high-value CPD with strong peer engagement and served as the platform for OV/SA's annual awards presentation.

Together, the two conferences brought 366 total delegates and 30 sponsors and exhibitors, reflecting strong industry support and member participation.

Blue Sky and SRC Mini have now been retired to make way for an exciting new integrated national conference calendar from 2025 and beyond. This refreshed approach brings together state divisions to deliver collaborative, high-quality events that maximise impact and accessibility for members. The new calendar includes the upcoming Optometry Clinical Conference (OCC), hosted jointly by Optometry Victoria South Australia, Optometry Queensland Northern Territory, and Optometry Tasmania, as well as an Interactive Conference series.



## Member Support Services

This year, OV/SA focused on deepening engagement with members at every career stage. From proactive member support to professional development, our efforts reflected a commitment to relevance, responsiveness and long-term member connection.

Member enquiries reached record levels. Nationally, frontline staff handled 9,028 unique queries in 2024–2025 — up nearly 50% from the previous year. OV/SA members accounted for 53% of all state division queries and 53.9% of all professional services enquiries, despite comprising a smaller share of total national membership. This demonstrates the high trust OV/SA members place in our support services.

Of the 1,902 professional queries handled nationally, 1,026 came from OV/SA members, with clinical advice and HR matters (contract reviews, employment issues and career guidance) representing the top themes. Employees accounted for more than 80% of all HR-related queries, reinforcing the importance of practical workplace support and independent advice.

Member satisfaction remained exceptionally high. Of the 146 members who provided feedback after receiving advisor support, 96% rated the service positively, with 83% saying their needs were met “extremely well.”

Proactive outreach continued through the Member Call Project, where our optometrist advisors or state leads contacted more than 1,400 members under 45 years old across both Victoria and South Australia. Calls provided valuable insight into workforce concerns such as job availability and workplace conditions.

## Education and Engagement Initiatives

Education and networking continued to thrive. Across the 2024–2025 year, OV/SA delivered 36 member events, including a strong program of peer networking dinners, regional seminars, CPR, early-career events, and retired optometrists' lunches across metropolitan and regional areas.

Student engagement remained a priority, with 14 student engagement activities delivered across the University of Melbourne, Deakin University and Flinders University. These included career expos, professional practice lectures, student society events and sponsorship of key student milestones. Optometry Australia also continued to sponsor student leadership programs, providing professional pathways for future optometrists.

University engagement remained strong, with staff delivering presentations on workplace readiness, contracts, and career planning, and hosting advocacy placements for students from all three Victorian and South Australian universities.

Other continuing professional development events held in Victoria and South Australia through the 2024-2025 period included an extensive Regional Series of events, tailored ECO events, and Peer Mentoring.

OV/SA Event Engagement	
Event type	Number held
Regional Series	12
University Student Presentations	10
CPR Refresher	7
ECO Peer Mentoring	4
ECO Seminar	6
ECO Webinar	2
Immediate Graduate Evenings	3
Careers Expo and Industry Days	4
Retired Optometrists Lunch	2
Conferences	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>

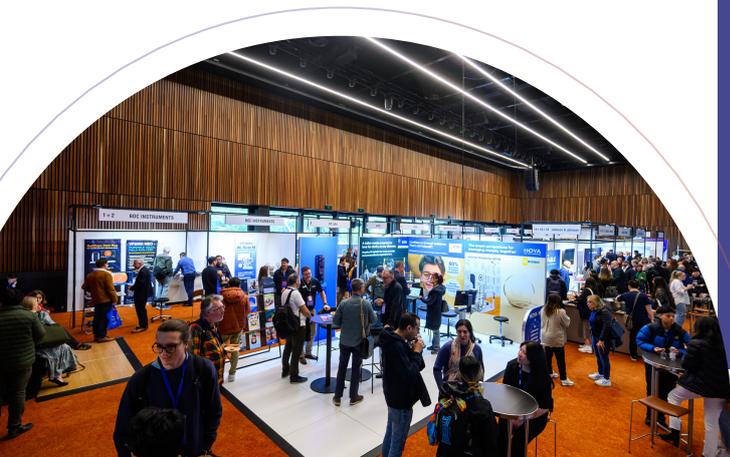
OV/SA also celebrated excellence in optometry through its annual awards, presented at SRC Mini in November 2024:

- Life Memberships: John Farmer and John Bartlett
- Optometrist of the Year: Dr ZhiChao Wu
- Rising Star Award: Mohammed Al Alebrahimi

Committee engagement evolved this year. The OV/SA CPD Committee concluded its work and will be succeeded by two new committees—the National CPD Advisory Group and the Academic Advisory Group. These groups will meet regularly to guide educational content, recommend speakers, and ensure Optometry Australia's CPD program is informed by the latest evidence-based research.

### KEY METRICS

- ✓ **9,028** total national queries handled; **53%** from OV/SA members.
- ✓ **1,902** professional support cases; **1,026** from OV/SA.
- ✓ **2** conferences delivered.
- ✓ **36** member events delivered.
- ✓ **14** student engagement activities held.
- ✓ **96%** positive feedback on advisory support.



# Strategic Pillar 2: Lead

*Lead the profession, realise the preferred future.*

## Advocacy and Collaboration

In 2024–2025, OV/SA strengthened its role as a trusted and influential voice for optometry in Victoria and South Australia. Our advocacy was underpinned by emerging national workforce research, which continues to inform our advocacy priorities across both states, and shape how we understand and support the profession's future.

To this end, alongside Optometry Australia we have focused on calling for workplace reforms that ensure optometrists can thrive within supportive, sustainable professional environments – and for investment in equitable access to eye care across all communities. We have also advocated for enabling optometrists to practise to their full scope, improved access to children's eye care, and expanded collaborative models that better integrate optometry into the broader health system.

We also strengthened our parliamentary relationships. A myopia awareness briefing for South Australian parliamentarians, hosted with the SA Greens in late 2024, resulted in several MPs pledging to become Myopia Champions. A Victorian parliamentary breakfast is scheduled in August 2025, followed by advocacy delegations in both states to reinforce messages around paediatric vision, oral prescribing, and collaborative care.



In South Australia, we continued to advocate for improvements to the GlassesSA scheme, informed by direct member feedback and a detailed proposal presented to government. We also provided ongoing advice to the Department of Transport and Infrastructure on applying the Assessing Fitness to Drive (AFTD) guidelines to binocular visual fields, helping ensure optometrists and patients experience a clear, consistent process.

As the 2026 South Australian and Victorian state elections approach, OV/SA began coordinated pre-election planning to ensure optometry is visible on the electoral agenda. This includes collaborative initiatives on children's vision screening with the Women's and Children's Hospital and key ophthalmology and orthoptic leaders in South Australia, and a Victorian stakeholder roundtable in July 2025 to guide a joint policy proposal ahead of the election year.

We also advanced interprofessional relationships between optometry, pharmacy and general practice, including the development of joint educational events and exploration of shared care opportunities through Primary Health Networks.

Nationally, the Strategic Advisory Committee Victoria South Australia and Tasmania (SACVSAT) provided vital input throughout the year, identifying workforce dissatisfaction, scope-of-practice barriers and improved collaboration between disciplines as top priorities. Their insights informed Optometry Australia's national advocacy strategy and workplans.

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- ✓ Strengthened engagement with both state governments and health departments.
- ✓ Advocated for oral prescribing endorsement and children's vision screening reform.
- ✓ Presented member-informed recommendations to improve the GlassesSA spectacle subsidy scheme.
- ✓ Supported interprofessional events such as Pharma-See and PrescEYEbing, bringing together optometrists and pharmacists.
- ✓ Initiated pre-election strategies for both South Australia and Victoria to position optometry in health policy discussions.

# Strategic Pillar 3: Promote

*Promote eye health, embed optometry.*

## Member Services Promotion and Communications



This year marked a pivotal shift in how OV/SA communicates with members and the broader community. Building on the national integration model, all OV/SA updates are now delivered through tailored dynamic content within Optometry Australia's **Snapshot eNewsletter**. This approach has reduced duplication, improved consistency and driven stronger engagement, with Snapshot achieving an average **open rate above 71%** and **click rate over 7%** for OV/SA content.



We retired the standalone OV/SA newsletter and introduced promotional **SMS communications**, allowing time-sensitive updates with full compliance and member opt-out control. This added immediacy to event and renewal campaigns, increasing participation and conversion rates.



Throughout 2024–2025, OV/SA continued to achieve strong media visibility, securing over **30** mentions across Victorian and South Australian **radio, print** and **online** outlets, in addition to **15** pieces in national eye health media such as **MiVision** and **Insight**. This coverage showcased advocacy achievements, community engagement and professional development initiatives.



Our **social media** channels — Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram — continued to grow steadily, reflecting consistent, high-quality content focused on eye health awareness, member achievements and event highlights.



Marketing efforts for OV/SA conferences and events were refined to align with national strategy, ensuring cohesive messaging across platforms while maintaining a distinct local identity.

### KEY METRICS

- ✓ Snapshot average open rate: 71%  
click rate: 7%.
- ✓ 30+ media mentions across mainstream and trade media.
- ✓ Social media audience continued steady year-on-year growth.

### KEY OUTCOMES

- ✓ Fully integrated and streamlined communication approach across channels.
- ✓ Increased member engagement through personalised, data-led content.
- ✓ Improved efficiency and resource alignment within the national MarComms team.

## Growing Awareness and Visibility

In 2025, Optometry Australia launched the nation's largest eye health initiative — a multi-channel Myopia Awareness Campaign designed to educate parents about the growing risks of childhood myopia and the importance of regular eye examinations. Running from April to July, the campaign spanned radio, digital, social, search, YouTube, audio and outdoor advertising, uniting optometrists and industry partners in a shared mission to protect children's vision. More than 40 million impressions were delivered nationwide, supported by 99,000 visits to the Good Vision for Life website, positioning optometry at the centre of Australia's eye health conversation.

***Good vision for life™***



In Victoria and South Australia, the campaign was further amplified through a dedicated state-based advertising uplift. Additional investment across Meta, Google, YouTube and Nexus digital display ensured greater visibility in metropolitan and regional centres, particularly in high-traffic retail environments. The creative, centred around the message “Off Screens. Outside. Optometrist.”, resonated strongly with parents — driving exceptional engagement, high video completion rates, and strong search activity leading to eye test bookings.

These state activations not only extended the national message but also deepened local impact, ensuring families across both states were reminded of the critical role optometrists play in safeguarding children's vision and long-term eye health.

### CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

-  40M+ media impressions nationwide
-  99K+ visits to Good Vision for Life website
-  93% video completion rate on YouTube
-  36–49% lower cost per click/landing page view than industry benchmarks

# Strategic Pillar 4: Strengthen the Organisation

## *A Robust Organisation – Now and for the Future.*

Optometry Victoria South Australia remains in a strong organisational position, supported by continued integration with Optometry Australia and a focus on sustainable operations.

This year, structural improvements and system enhancements delivered measurable efficiency gains across administration, finance, events, and member support. Notably, OV/SA were able to provide a \$200 distribution of prior year's profits to members. This was delivered via a reduction of 2025/26 membership fees.

Streamlined membership renewals and single-touch resolution of member queries have enhanced the member experience, while unified finance operations, consistent event delivery, and a coordinated sponsor interface have improved efficiency and strengthened partnerships. Standardised event evaluation is now embedded across all activities, with member and sponsor insights directly shaping programming, logistics and exhibitor engagement. Notably, sponsors have commended the efficiency of a single national point of contact across states, and the early success of OCC 2025, which exceeded its sponsorship target, is a clear signal of industry confidence in the integrated model.

Internally, OV/SA continued to strengthen its governance, systems and performance frameworks. Board and committee policies were refreshed to align with contemporary best practice, and data-driven reporting continues to underpin decision-making across digital, social and event performance. These improvements have created a clearer view of member engagement and impact, allowing the organisation to anticipate needs and continuously refine its delivery. Federation-wide strategic planning is also underway, ensuring OV/SA's future priorities align seamlessly with national reform and that members continue to benefit from a unified, forward-focused association.

Efficiency gains across administration, events, finance and operations have freed capacity to focus on what matters most - delivering value to members and amplifying the voice of optometry across Victoria and South Australia. With a stronger foundation, clearer governance, and more cohesive systems, OV/SA is now better positioned to think nationally, act locally, and invest strategically in the capabilities that will sustain member impact over time. The organisation moves forward as a model of collaboration and modernisation - agile, accountable and ready for the future.





**Optometry**  
VICTORIA  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

