

# Optometry Australia Annual Report

2023-2024



# Table of contents

President's report	2
CEO's report	4
Treasurer's report	5
Board of Directors	8
Pillar 1: Lead	10
Pillar 2: Engage	12
Pillar 3: Promote	14
Pillar 4: Enduring Organisation	16

## President's report

I am pleased to open the Optometry Australia Annual Report for the year 2023-24 with an overview of progress and key achievements during this period.

We are proud to represent and support over 85% of the profession across the country. We remain dedicated to supporting members and we continue to strive to ensure a robust optometry workforce now and into the future.

This represents the final year of Optometry Australia's 2021-22 to 2023-24 Strategic Plan, which focused on four key pillars; to lead, engage and promote the optometry sector while ensuring the organisation's enduring success.

Following extensive advocacy, this year we welcomed the Federal Government's response to the MBS Review Taskforce's recommendations regarding optometry items, outlined via the 2023-24 Budget. The changes included an additional item and improvements to existing items, which will take effect from March 2025. Looking forward, we continue to advocate for enhancements to the optometric Medicare schedule, and have also re-invigorated our political engagement, with a focus on

building political awareness of the community benefits of enabling therapeutically endorsed optometrists to prescribe both topical and oral medications, as clinically appropriate, and the need for action to enhance community awareness of childhood myopia and opportunities for myopia prevention and management.

In 2024 we also launched our Advanced Practice Recognition program, kicking off with a pilot focused on glaucoma management. The program provides a pathway for members to differentiate themselves and receive appropriate recognition for excellence in primary eye care. We are most grateful for the many members who have lent their expertise in varying ways to supporting the development of the program and look forward to its expansion and impact.

We also continue to work to meaningfully engage you, our members, and one of the cornerstones of our success has been your active engagement and participation in our work. Our diverse range of continuing professional development (CPD) offerings continue to be highly valued by members, as evidenced by high attendance rates.

We are also proud of the ongoing support we are able to provide for members via our Optometry Advisor Help Desk, that provides members with access to professional information, support, and guidance from an optometrist peer. We are grateful that members trust our team to walk beside them through their professional challenges. We also continue to support our members with comprehensive Professional Indemnity Insurance that meets and exceeds regulatory requirements. Further, members continue to provide advice and guidance through a diverse array of advisory groups, across our Engage and Lead portfolios. We are always grateful for your passion and input.

We also welcomed the operational integration of Optometry Victoria South Australia (OV/SA) and Optometry Tasmania (OTas) during the year. Effective from 1 November 2023, whilst continuing to provide national services to members across the country, Optometry Australia has also been providing local services to members in these states. In early 2024, we also entered into an arrangement with Optometry Queensland Northern Territory (OQNT) to support aspects of their operational function, prior to entering a longer-term arrangement to support their operations from 1 September 2024. I congratulate the Optometry Australia staff team on how smoothly these changes have been affected, and on achieving greater alignment and efficiencies without interruption to member services.

In April 2024, following member and stakeholder engagement we launched, our refreshed vision for optometry 2040. This built on work undertaken in partnership with members in 2018, to identify plausible and preferred futures for optometry, optometrists, and community eye health, and key actions necessary to help realise preferred futures and avoid dystopian ones. The preferred future for optometry in 2040, recognises the potential to utilise a growing, highly skilled optometry workforce, to better meet the unmet eye health needs of an ageing population, by embedding optometrists across the health care system, and supporting them to provide care in multiple different settings, often with advanced clinical skills in specific areas or as part of multi-disciplinary care teams, and supported by improved data sharing and analysis and evolved funding models. We are already seeing the impact of some of the trends identified by Optometry 2040 and are working to shape these into a positive and robust future for the profession.

We move into the next year with a refreshed Strategic Plan informed by this future vision. This retains a focus on engaging and supporting our members, leading the profession toward a robust professional future, promoting the profession and maintaining a strong organisation. I am grateful for the input from my colleagues across the State Divisions of the association in shaping this plan and ensuring alignment between the direction taken nationally and across state and territories.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our CEO, Skye Cappuccio, and the Optometry Australia team for their commitment to delivering exceptional service for members, whilst actively working to pursue a robust future for our profession.

I offer my thanks to my fellow Directors on the Optometry Australia Board for their dedicated contribution to the association and ongoing commitment to ensuring the good governance of the organisation. During the year we were pleased to welcome new co-opted Directors, Ramy Aziz and Jenny Mikakos, who bring extensive, relevant experience to the Board. Ramy and Jenny joined our member-elected Directors, Theo Charalambous, Albert Lee, Kevin Sun, Lee Baumwol and Shuvagata Bose.

This will be my final annual report as President of Optometry Australia. I feel very privileged to have been able to serve the profession through this role, and proud of what we have achieved as an association. Alongside my fellow Directors and the staff team, I thank the breadth of colleagues and stakeholders who have enabled the last few years to be a time of positive evolution.

Finally, I extend my gratitude to all our members for their ongoing support. It is through our collective efforts that we can drive positive change and continue to shape a positive future for optometry.

Margaret Lam  
President



# Chief Executive Officer's report

In a period of some change for the organisation, I am pleased to share that we have delivered successfully against our goals for the year, with a focus on delivering for members.

We have continued to lead the sector through ongoing advocacy and political engagement, with a focus on ensuring optometrists can add maximal value to community eye health through full, and expanded, clinical scope. Our specific focus has been directed toward securing change to enable therapeutically endorsed optometrists to prescribe relevant oral medications, increasing implementation of effective collaborative care models that enable optometrists to work to the fullness of their clinical scope whilst enhancing system efficiency and patient access, and the need for action to enhance community awareness of childhood myopia and opportunities for myopia prevention and management. This important work continues.

Through integrating with Optometry Victoria South Australia and Optometry Tasmania from 1 November 2023, we have also welcomed opportunity to drive aligned and state-specific advocacy efforts across those jurisdictions, yielding positive results, most notably in South Australia with increased investment in the subsidised spectacle scheme.

Engagement with our members is of utmost importance to us. We work diligently to provide education and communications that are highly relevant and valuable to members. Through ongoing evaluation, we have retained high open results across all our newsletters. We are pleased that the high level of member engagement via our diverse national CPD offerings continues. This offering includes monthly webcasts, interactive workshop discussions, our annual online conference, *Optometry Virtually Connected* – that this year attracted over 2,200 registrants – as well as our education magazine, *Optometry Connection*.

Our Communities of Practice and Education (COPE) initiative continued throughout the year, providing opportunities for members to connect and engage at deeper level in a facilitated peer-learning environment.

Following positive evaluation of the offering, we launched an additional fourth group in June 2024, with further planned.

Partnering with Optometry Victoria South Australia and Optometry Tasmania from 1 November 2023, we have also stepped into the provision of local, engagement and education events and were pleased to deliver quality, face-to-face events for members spanning from students to retirees.

Our one-to-one professional support for members remains a valued service. During the year our Optometry Advisor team responded to over 1,300 professional queries, supporting members with employment contract reviews, Medicare interpretation, employment issues, and clinical issues. 89% of members suggest our advisors meet their needs 'extremely well'. We retain a focus on critically evaluating our service offerings and identifying opportunities for improvement, which has seen us offer booked appointments and out-of-hours time slots.

We continue to invest to nurture emerging leaders, supporting 18 students to participate in our National Student Leadership Program, and facilitating leaders of Early Career Optometry networks across the country to come together and help inform our national agenda. Among other important issues raised by these young leaders, their discussions resulted in the development of key initiatives related to burnout and mental wellbeing.

Promoting the value of optometry to the wider community remains a core focus, and we have again had continued success with earned media. A priority this year has been establishing the foundations for a larger scale *Good vision for life* consumer awareness campaign, intended for launch in early 2025.

As we operationally integrated with OV/SA and OTas, we welcomed the majority of their staff to the OA team. A key focus has been on integrating function and processes to enhance efficiency and integrating teams to retain a positive, dynamic and high performing culture. The integration process has been smooth, and we are pleased to have delivered efficiencies and to have been able to maximise value through alignment of national and state-based activities.

We have an exceptional team, and I am immensely grateful for their commitment, professionalism and kindness, which has enabled us to successfully integrate the operations of two state Divisions, without disruption to member services, and whilst retaining a highly engaged staff.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our members for their continued support, including the many who directly contribute to our work and to the many more who inspire us with their passion for delivering quality eye care.

Skye Cappuccio  
CEO



## Treasurer's report

I am pleased to report that Optometry Australia's audited financial statements for the financial year ending 30 June 2024 highlight that Optometry Australia is in a sound financial position, with a healthy cashflow and strong balance sheet.

The financial year 2023/2024 coincided with the final period of the Shared Strategic Plan 2021-2024. The plan has key goals to drive the maximisation of expenditure on direct member services and support.

Astute management and focus on raising revenue from alternative sources, allowed Optometry Australia to enhance services to members considerably.

In November 2023, Optometry Australia entered into an operational integration with Optometry Victoria South Australia and Optometry Tasmania. In February 2024, Optometry Australia provided operational support to Optometry Qld/NT. As of these dates, Optometry Australia also deliver state-specific member services, including providing CPD activities and member engagements events, undertaking local advocacy and keeping members across Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland and Northern Territory up to date on key professional issues.

Despite the current economic climate, Optometry Australia created exceptional member value. A profit was reported in the profit and loss. This profit was due to Clinical and Experimental Optometry journal royalty payments coming in above expectation along with strong cost control.

Optometry Australia holds two portfolios, managed by First Financial, one of which returned 5.54% and the other 5.31%, net of fees, compared to the relevant Morningstar Category average return of 13.44% and 10.04% respectively. This was predominantly due to the portfolios having an increased exposure to Australian Shares compared to the Morningstar Category benchmark in a period where International Shares outperformed Australian Shares. It should be noted that Australian Shares are targeted due to providing superior dividends and minimising currency risk.

The organisation made a profit against a forecast break-even budget position for FY2023/2024. This profit particularly relates to royalty payments that came in above expectation. The other notable deviation from budget was meeting costs that came in substantially under budget.

## Operating results

In our 2023-member survey, most members cited the following services as being 'very valuable' to them:

- professional indemnity insurance;
- online CPD, including webcasts and online conferences;
- professional advice;
- advocacy and representation to government, and
- face to face CPD.

Members were also asked to rank what roles they felt it most important that Optometry Australia perform. The top 5 roles of most importance to members were:

- advocating on behalf of the profession;
- leading the profession to a robust and sustainable future;
- supporting individual members with professional issues; and
- providing CPD.

The non-member revenue has predominantly come from the active pursuit of advertisers, sponsors, and financial partnerships, with the aim of improving the services from which the membership benefits, without them being subjected to further financial impost.

Overall expenses for the year were contained to budget which has been achieved by ongoing consideration and review of expenditure associated with all initiatives before they are instigated.

## Statement of financial position

For FY2023/2024, there was an increase in total equity for the year of 4%. This figure is reflective of the increase in the value of the organisation's investment portfolios and cash on hand.

The asset allocation policy establishes the investment parameters for the organisation's investment portfolio managed in cooperation with First Financial. The organisation maintains a balanced portfolio, allocating up to 25% to defensive assets and the remainder in equities and managed investment funds. This diversification provides a risk-based approach to the portfolio while still allowing opportunity for the realisation of increased investment returns. Over the investment cycle these returns have historically been higher than they would have been had funds been invested in standard bank accounts or term deposits.

Optometry Australia maintains a set level of reserve funds that ensures sustainability and surety for the future.

The organisation's operational cash holdings, excluding cash held within our investment portfolios, are up 5% from last year. Notably, cash not required for operational purposes is reinvested into our investment portfolios. The increase in the cash position is due to the profit incurred and the reinvestment of portfolio income back into to the financial assets.

## Financial management and the future

As noted above, Optometry Australia has a significant portion of its assets in shares and managed funds. This position is monitored closely at each Optometry Australia Board meeting and by the board's Finance, Risk and Audit Committee.

During the FY2023/2024 the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee was comprised of the Treasurer, President, Vice-President and two board directors. The principal representative of Optometry Australia's portfolio manager, First Financial, was an advisor to the Finance Committee as were the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer.

As a member-based organisation, the Optometry Australia board is acutely aware of the need to provide services and to support directly to grassroots members, on behalf of and in conjunction with state divisions, while remaining within our financial means.

## The year ahead

During the year ahead, FY2024/2025, Optometry Australia will:

- continue to provide a comprehensive program of online CPD for members and enhance the Learning Plan to support improved interaction for members;
- continue to provide members with ready access to one-on-one professional support and guidance;
- advocate for the ongoing evolution of optometric scope of practice and the better alignment of MBS items to contemporary practice;
- continue the delivery of the awareness campaign, *Good vision for life*, seeking to enhance its impact through industry partnerships;
- provide comprehensive professional indemnity insurance for member;
- Ensure members are connected and updated with key information for their profession through electronic newsletters, social media platforms and websites;
- deliver our flagship publication Optometry Connection and world-class journal, Clinical & Experimental Optometry;
- deliver initiatives to develop leadership capability throughout the professions, such as the Student Leadership Program, early career optometrists' Think Tank, LOOK international travel scholarship program;

- continue to offer human resources legal support for all members;
- continue to offer 3 free counselling sessions for all members;
- continue to provide deliver state-specific member services, including providing CPD activities and member engagements events, undertaking local advocacy and keeping members across Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland and Northern Territory up to date on key professional issues
- continue the program for recognition of advance practice in optometry; and
- ensure we grasp the opportunities identified in the Optometry 2040 transformational strategy for optometry.

Albert Lee  
Treasurer



# Board of Directors



**Margaret Lam**  
President



**Theo Charalambous**  
Deputy President



**Albert Lee**  
Treasurer



**Jenny Mikakos**  
Director



**Kevin Sun**  
Director



**Shuvagata Bose**  
Director



**Lee Baumwol**  
Director



**Rami Aziz**  
Director



# Strategic Pillar 1: Lead

Lead members and the profession through market and sector evolution and change to achieve the preferred future identified in Optometry 2040.

## Advocacy and Collaboration

Over the last year, Optometry Australia has remained steadfast in its commitment to advancing the profession and advocating for optometry, optometrists and community eye health. Our efforts have been multifaceted, reflecting a strong emphasis on collaboration, evidence-based practice, and addressing emerging challenges in the eye health sector.

In May 2024, we welcomed the Federal Government's support of our advocacy with the Federal Budget announcing a number of positive changes to optometry MBS items and the implementation of a new MBS item from March 2025 for a third visual field test in a 12-month period for patients with a high risk of glaucoma progression. This followed sustained advocacy from Optometry Australia throughout the MBS Review process.

Throughout the year, we maintained a focus on advocating for the integration of optometry into broader healthcare pathways and strengthening collaborative care between optometrists and ophthalmologists. We have comprehensively mapped the various collaborative care models in place across the country, enabling clear identification of barriers and challenges to further implementation, and have participated in a series of workshops hosted by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO), ensuring the discussions consider opportunities to maximise the utilisation of optometrists in eye care pathways.

In parallel, we have actively engaged with approximately 50 state and federal parliamentarians and key decision makers via meetings and hosted parliamentary briefings, to raise awareness of opportunities to better use Australia's world-class optometrists to ensure equitable access to quality eye care services, including by enabling them to prescribe oral medications where clinically appropriate, for all Australians; and securing bipartisan political support for raising community awareness of myopia.

We have also continued calls for action to support optometrists' evolving scope of practice, and actively contributed to the Federal Government's Unleashing the Potential of our Health Workforce: Scope of Practice Review, ensuring optometry's voice was well-represented in consultations, with the final report released in late 2024.

With an eye to a positive future for the profession, we also launched a pilot program for Advanced Practice Recognition in Glaucoma – on track to launch to all members in early 2025 – marking the first steps toward broader credentialing opportunities in advanced optometric care.

Recognising the transformative potential of technology in eye health, Optometry Australia took significant strides in digital health. Establishing the Advisory Committee on Digital Health in Optometry, we initiated work to enhance the adoption of e-referrals and e-prescribing within the profession; and alongside sector experts, finalised an initial position statement on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Optometry. Ongoing collaboration with the Australian Digital Health Agency and the Department of Health has ensured that optometry remains a priority in allied health digital transformation.

Optometry Australia has also continued to prioritise sustainability and equitable access in eye care. Our commitment to supporting First Nations eye health was underscored by regular engagement with key organisations such as the First Nations Eye Health Alliance (FNEHA), Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA), and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO). This included launching a new bursary to support First Nations optometrists and students attending the IAHA conference in 2025. The conclusion of the A Place for Mob and A Place for Me in Optometry project was marked by public recognition at the 2024 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference, with additional funding under consideration to implement its recommendations through to December 2024.

Following operational integration with OV/SA and OTas we were able to streamline and target our advocacy efforts, securing key wins at state levels. In South Australia, our efforts contributed to announcements in the 2024-25 Budget to enhance the GlassesSA program, and in Tasmania, we engaged with state leadership to raise awareness of childhood myopia and collaborative paediatric eye care. We remain actively involved in outreach forums across the country to refine the Visiting Optometrists Scheme (VOS), particularly in rural and remote communities.

In 2024, Optometry Australia advanced professional standards by developing position statements on Artificial Intelligence and Myopia Management, providing guidance on ethical AI implementation and evidence-based myopia care. Associate Professor Lauren Ayton also presented updates on the AMD clinical practice guidelines, highlighting emerging treatments and referral pathways to ensure optometrists remain at the forefront of eye care innovation

These achievements reflect a year of strategic action, collaboration, and advocacy. By recognising and addressing sector challenges, while embracing opportunities for growth, Optometry Australia continues to work towards a robust future for the profession, ensuring optometrists maintain their pivotal role in delivering eye health care for the benefit of all Australians.



# Strategic Pillar 2: Engage

Efficiently and effectively deliver an essential suite of member services that are tailored to meet the specific needs of specific groups within the membership.

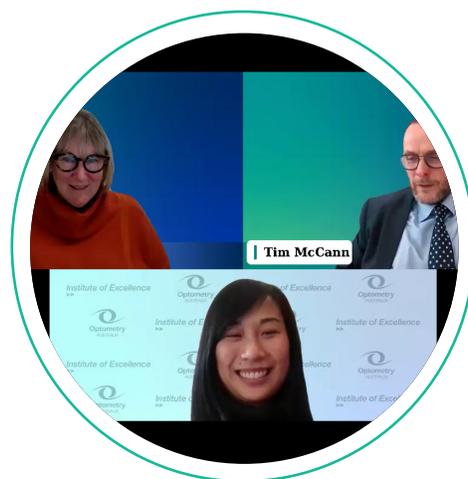
## Conferences, Events and CPD

### Optometry Virtually Connected

The *Optometry Virtually Connected* (OVC) 2024 conference was attended by 2,127 participants over two days in June.

The conference showcased 28 live lectures across two streams, focusing on critical areas such as neuro-optometry, anterior eye, therapeutics and technology & eye health. The sessions combined to offer up to 40 hours of quality-assured education, emphasising both theoretical and practical applications in modern eye care.

Among many highlights in an informative and inspiring program were Dr Evgenia Konstantakopoulou's keynote presentation 'Clinician, researcher or academic – the New Optometry is now!' which outlined the crucial role optometry plays in various healthcare systems and contexts around the world, and Adjunct Associate Professor Alex Hui's Principles for Practical Prescribing in Paediatric Patients, which addressed the challenges specific to paediatric prescribing.



**4,797 learning goals entered in 2023 CPD year**



**12 webcasts delivered**



**9 Interactive Discussion Workshops delivered**



**600 quality assured CPD activities**



**59,415 CPD hours awarded**

### Australian Vision Convention

Under agreement with Optometry Queensland Northern Territory, we also supported the successful implementation of Australian Vision Convention (AVC) attended by over 400 delegates at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre and online from 6-7 April 2024.

## Committees and Advisory Groups

We extend our thanks to the members of our committees for their dedication and expertise throughout the year. Your work continues to shape the future of our profession and ensure that optometry remains at the forefront of delivering exceptional care to communities across Australia.

<b>Digital Health in Optometry Advisory Committee</b>
Madeline Baker, Joelene Cheah, Amanda Edgar, Rhonda Hoang Tan, Peter Larsen, Angelica Ly, Astha Rai, Jason Ren, Jared Slater, Algis Vingrys, Michelle Waugh, Zhichao Wu and Pauline Xu
<b>Optometry in Aged Care Advisory Group</b>
Demi Gertig (Chair), Anthea Cochrane, Sam Depasquale, Paul Graveson, Jacqueline Henwood, Katy Klaff, Robyn Main, Paula Monaco, Serena Ng and Samraj Sekhon
<b>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Eye Care Advisory Group</b>
Mitchell Anjou (Chair), Khyber Alam, Gary Cerie, Sinead Denny, Jose Estevez, Matthew Gregory, Jack Guan, Ben Hamlyn, Luke Higgins, Lauren Hutchinson, Nilmini John and Kate Pecar
<b>Advanced Practice Oversight Committee</b>
Demi Gertig (Chair), Nicola Anstice, Ben Ashby, Darrell Baker, Anthony Chapman-Davies, Adrienne Farago, Allison McKendrick, Sephora Miao, Katrina Schmid, Ann Webber and Katrina Yap

<b>Glaucoma Clinical Advisory Committee</b>
Demi Gertig (Chair), Cameron Dyson, Damon Hannay, Inez Hsing, Patricia Kiely, Thi Thi Nguyen, Mary Travis and Henrietta Wang
<b>Transport and Vision Standards Working Group</b>
Amanda Douglass, Tony Gibson, Vanessa Honson, Josiah Murphy, Neil Murray, Sharon Oberstein, Ho Wah Ng and Joanne Wood
<b>Standards Australia Working Group</b>
Annette Hoskins, David Stephensen and Nicole Carnt
<b>CPD Advisory Group</b>
Christina Ly (Chair), Alex Craig, Anna Delmadoras, Tina Huynh, Tina Jong, Nicola Mountford and Angie Trinh

## Member Support and Engagement Initiatives

We received over 5,700 enquiries regarding the profession and our member services, 1,300 of which were members who we supported with expert advice on clinical, professional and HR-related matters.

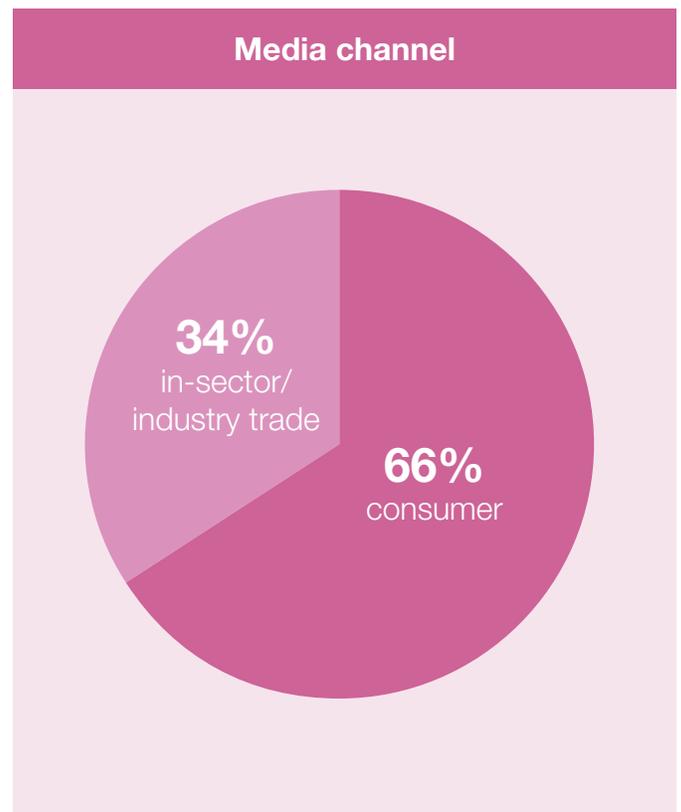
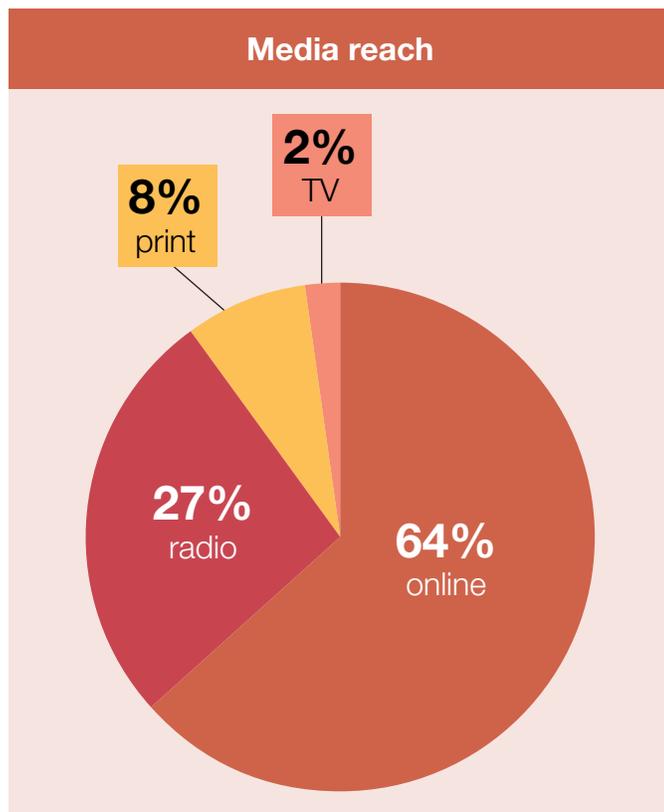
# Strategic Pillar 3: Promote

Ensure that Optometry Australia is the 'go to' organisation in eye health and that optometrists are the first port of call for eyes.

## Growing Awareness and Visibility

Our media presence has been robust, with a total of 241 media mentions and appearances in media outlets, targeted at raising awareness of eye health, optometry and the importance of regular eye examinations.

In addition to this national coverage, we secured five pieces of coverage specific to OV/SA and three specific to OQNT, highlighting our commitment to raising awareness at state and territory level.



We laid substantial groundwork for the Myopia Awareness Campaign, a pivotal initiative aimed at enhancing national awareness and understanding around the management of myopia. This foundational phase included extensive consultations with industry and key stakeholders, resulting in universal support integral to the campaign's success. We continue to work hard to bring the campaign to life.



# Strategic Pillar 4: Enduring Organisation

Collaborate, work effectively, share resources and capability to ensure consistency of services for all members through efficient and effective models that uplift the profession.

Throughout the year, we have:

- Cultivated leadership and maintained high performing teams
- Focussed on data-driven excellence and continuous improvement
- Supported the profession to reduce our overall environmental footprint
- Optimised the structure of our organisation and taken steps to modernise the federation

## Summary of Endure Achievements: 2023/24

Our annual student leadership program took place with an innovative format that promoted engagement, networking, and self-reflection. The program provided opportunities for students to learn from established leaders in optometry, and it saw the successful completion of 18 students. The upcoming Optometry Australia Student Leadership Program will be held in February 2025.

We continue to collaborate with the Optometry Student Society of Australian and New Zealand (OSSANZ) with particular focus on supporting their annual Aus/NZ Optometry Student Conference (ANZOSC) held online, as well as their new podcast strategy.

Hosted our annual Early Career Think Tank in May 2024, gathering leaders of Early Career Optometrist (ECO) networks in collaboration with each state division. This annual in-person event allowed for in-depth discussions on policy interests, leadership upskilling and exchange of ideas regarding ECO network priorities.

Three successful all-staff, face-to-face meetings were held that included upskilling sessions, knowledge sharing and focused discussions on how we can enhance efficiency and collaboration to best serve our optometry members.

Strategic planning session saw Divisional Presidents, directors and CEOs discuss and develop the strategic plan for the upcoming 3-year period; 2024/25-2027/28

The *Optometry Virtually Connected* event garnered substantial support from trade revenue. Many sponsors expressed eagerness to secure their participation for future events.

The inclusion of the Contact Lens Guide within the September 2023 issue of Optometry Connection contributed significantly to the publication's revenue.

A comprehensive review of our workforce plan has led to multiple changes in our organisational chart, ensuring that we have the necessary capabilities to deliver on our strategic plan.

## Summary of Endure Achievements: 2023/24

Our online booking system for our help desk, enabled members to schedule appointments with our optometrist advisors easily and seamlessly. We have had great success in offering after-hours appointments.

Streamlined the data collected on each member interaction. This enhancement will provide more comprehensive information on each call or email from members, ultimately supporting better member assistance, resource production, and communication output.

In our commitment to data security, we initiated a data and privacy health check, where an external consultant assessed vulnerabilities and provided recommendations for improvement.

We have maintained a strong focus on ensuring good governance of the organisation, including through a rolling review of governance policies and processes.

We refreshed our Optometry 2040 project to acknowledge the professions context has changed since it was first completed in 2018. This refreshed vision will continue to inform our efforts to support a robust future for the profession.

Annual staff engagement survey completed achieving above industry averages in all three areas: Engagement, Wellbeing and Progress.

We transitioned our investment portfolios to an Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) portfolio structure. This shift aligns our financial practices with environmentally conscious principles.

## A Robust Organisation Now, and for the Future

In November 2023, Optometry Victoria/South Australia (OV/SA) and Optometry Tasmania (OTas) operationally integrated with Optometry Australia, following a vote of support from their respective memberships.

The integration process was directed at maximising synergies across the organisation, for the benefit of members, and increasing efficiency. The transition to an integrated model has been realised effectively, with no disruption to member services provided at national or state division level.

In February 2024, Optometry Australia was also contracted by Optometry Queensland/Northern Territory (OQNT) to provide a range of operational services, and subsequently OQNT operationally integrated with OA from September 2024.

force

• **Force** is a research study to assess  
if there are other indicators  
of disease  
• **Contribution**  
• **Comparative** from other  
studies  
• **Impact** will be to help more about  
the disease  
• **Community**  
• **Industry** create more opportunities