



Media Statement

7 July 2015

Western Australian ophthalmologist Angus Turner appointed inaugural *McCusker Director, Lions Outback Vision.*

The Lions Eye Institute today announced the appointment of Dr Angus Turner as inaugural *McCusker Director, Lions Outback Vision.*

The position is an appointment by The University of Western Australia (UWA) and the first academic role within the University to specifically focus on reducing high rates of preventable blindness and vision loss in the Indigenous population.

Compared to the broader Australian community, Indigenous people are six times more likely to be blind, 14 more times likely to have diabetes-related blindness and five times more likely to have refractive error.

Dr Turner trained in medicine at UWA and Oxford University and undertook ophthalmology training in Melbourne. He joined the Lions Eye Institute (LEI) in 2010 and founded Lions Outback Vision (LOV) LEI in 2012, conducting remote area eye clinics and developing teleophthalmology programs to provide specialist medical support in remote areas.

His work establishing LOV, with its mission to eliminate preventable blindness and vision loss in people living in regional and remote Western Australia, was recognised at this year's 40Under40 awards, with Dr Turner being awarded 'first among equals'.

The *McCusker Director, Lions Outback Vision* role is being funded by a donation from the McCusker Charitable Foundation, through a grant from Telethon and UWA.

Foundation Trustee, Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC CitWA, said the role would provide a platform to bring Indigenous eye health issues to the fore.

“In Angus, we have a wonderful champion for the eye health of Indigenous Australians and someone who is deeply committed to providing specialist ophthalmology treatment to people wherever they live,” he said.

LEI Managing Director Professor David Mackey thanked the McCusker Charitable Foundation, Telethon and UWA for recognising Indigenous eye health was a unique public health challenge that required a specialised focus.

“A key part of the new Director’s role includes advocacy and collaboration with State and Commonwealth agencies, stakeholders and partners to promote improved access to eye health services,” Professor Mackey said.

“The role also includes oversight and provision of academic, teaching, research, clinical and funding / grant activities.

“It builds on the work Dr Turner has done in establishing Lions Outback Vision within the LEI and provides another platform for engaging government, health professionals and the community in turning around the current poor outcomes in Indigenous eye health.”

As part of the new role, Dr Turner will oversee the delivery of eye health care services in rural and remote WA, be responsible for managing and leading all operational and clinical aspects of specialist visits, optometry outreach and diabetic retinal screening programs.

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Photos of Dr Turner available on request