



June 3, 2014

Indigenous eye health an important focus for new LEI Chairman.

A special interest in the eye health of Indigenous Western Australians has culminated in Stephen Pearce assuming the role of Chairman at the Lions Eye Institute (LEI).

Mr Pearce, the Chief Financial Officer at Fortescue Metals Group, is only the third Chairman in the LEI's 31-year history and replaces former Western Power Chief Executive David Eiszele in the role.

He joined the Board as a Director in April, 2012.

Announcing the appointment today, LEI Managing Director Professor David Mackey said Mr Pearce would bring strong leadership to the Board during a time of growth and change.

"The LEI is in a period of dynamic development," Professor Mackey said.

"We have just moved in to new state-of-the-art research laboratories at the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research, our clinical services are about to undergo further expansion and we are implementing a new strategic plan with a focus on growth, funding mechanisms and long-term financial sustainability."

Mr Pearce said it was the Board's role to provide the direction and oversight needed to ensure the LEI remained one of the world's great eye research institutes.

He said current research projects which promised major benefits to patients included human gene therapy for wet Aged-Related Macular Degeneration, genes in myopia and ocular immunology.

“I also have an interest in the work being undertaken by Outback Vision, led by Associate Professor Angus Turner,” Mr Pearce said.

“Outback Vision is looking at ways to provide high-quality, equitable eye health services to patients living in rural and remote areas of the State.

“Fortescue works closely with indigenous communities in the Pilbara and I’m proud to be involved with another organisation that is changing the lives of Aboriginal people.”

Both Professor Mackey and Mr Pearce praised the work of Mr Eiszele, who was a member of the LEI Board for 12 years – including eight as Chairman.

“David presided over an exciting period at the LEI, culminating in the recent move into the new Harry Perkins building and a highly successful capital campaign that has left us in a very strong position,” Mr Pearce said.

“The Board and everyone involved in the LEI would like to thank David for the style and grace in which he chaired the Board and for devoting so much of his time to the cause of saving sight.”

Media Contact: Francesca Robb – 0409 102 556