



Media Release

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Lions Outback Vision Outreach Eye Health program in the Pilbara proudly supported by Quadrant Energy and Santos, Joint Venture Partners in the Devil Creek Gas Plant.

Quadrant Energy and Santos, Joint Venture Partners in the Devil Creek Gas Plant are supporting Lions Outback Vision to provide eye health training, education and capacity building for local health workers in the Pilbara region. The intent is to work seamlessly with primary health workers, Aboriginal Liaison Officers, Aboriginal Medical Services, general practitioners and other health workers during scheduled outreach visits. The program will maximise collaboration, training and shared knowledge to ensure the best possible eye health outcomes for Pilbara communities.

Lions Outback Vision, a division of Lions Eye Institute, offers services to meet increasing demand from regional and remote health professionals for specialist support for diagnosis and treatment recommendations for eye health issues.

McCusker Director, Dr Angus Turner said, "These community champions for eye health are the core of the Lions Outback Vision model of care. A constant need for improved education, awareness and capacity building of health workers is required to address health issues such as diabetic management where early intervention, education and regular monitoring can reduce the incidence of vision related impacts."

David Parker, Quadrant Energy Director Government & Public Affairs is "pleased that the Devil Creek Gas Plant joint venture partners are able to contribute to local community eye health improvement in the Pilbara."

The program will launch later this week in Karratha when the Lions Outback Vision Van visits the Nickol Bay Hospital.

Attached photograph: McCusker Director, Dr Angus Turner, on the Vision Van.

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Background Information

Devil Creek Gas Plant

Named after the creek which runs adjacent to the onshore facilities, the Devil Creek Gas Plant is located on the Mardie Station pastoral lease, approximately 45 kilometres southwest of Dampier in Western Australia's northwest.

Gas to supply the Devil Creek facility is extracted from the Quadrant Energy operated Reindeer field approximately 80 km northwest of Dampier on the Northwest Shelf. Gas is brought to the mainland via the unmanned Reindeer Wellhead gas production platform and a 105 km offshore and onshore raw gas supply pipeline.

The Devil Creek gas plant and Reindeer gas field are a joint venture between Quadrant Energy and Santos. Production began in December 2011 and today provides a reliable and independent supply of gas for Western Australia through the Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline. All of the plant's produced gas feeds WA's domestic gas market, and underpins the resources sector and associated industries.

Lions Outback Vision

Lions Outback Vision builds on a long history of outreach eye health services by the Lions Eye Institute that began in the 1960s with the first mass screening programs for glaucoma in Western Australia.

Lions Outback Vision offers services such as Visiting Optometry Services, Outreach Ophthalmology Visits, a mobile clinic through the Lions Outback Vision Van, Tele-ophthalmology Services and Diabetic Retinal Screening Support.

Meeting higher demands for service can be supported by building capacity with local health providers and educating patients to better manage their conditions.

The focus of Lions Outback Vision is a service delivery model that genuinely integrates collaboration between public/private enterprises, clinicians and health service professionals, to increase productivity and efficiency. Outback Vision is committed to working with local communities in a way that builds local capacity where and when needed in a culturally appropriate way.

McCusker Director Lions Outback Vision, Dr Angus Turner

Dr Turner completed medical training at the University of Western Australia, before studying at Oxford University and completing a Masters of Evidence Based Medicine. He underwent Ophthalmology training in Melbourne. He is an Associate Professor at UWA, a consultant at Fremantle Hospital and an ophthalmology lecturer for the Rural Clinical School WA.

In 2009, he assisted in the establishment of a comprehensive eye care service at Zithulele hospital in South Africa . He has made a number of return visits to Zithulele

to train health workers in surgical procedures and fundraises prior to his visits so that he can take equipment and medicines with him.

In 2010, he established Lions Outback Vision to integrate three streams of eye health: retinal screening, optometry and ophthalmology. The unit aims to eliminate blindness by improving access to eye health services in regional and remote areas.

Dr Turner established a daily telehealth service at LEI connecting an ophthalmologist with GPs and optometrists in regional and remote areas. He was able to secure funding from the WA Country Health Service for a State-wide telehealth coordinator, a fellowship position in outreach ophthalmology and an optometrist to coordinate outreach services.

Australian Eye Health

Australia is a vast continent with more than one third of the population (34.1%) living outside its major cities. Of this non metropolitan population, almost 20% is dispersed across more than 1500 rural and remote communities with fewer than 5000 residents.

These communities are often too small to support traditional models of health care delivery. As a result, rural and remote residents often travel significant distances in order to access appropriate care from larger regional and urban centres. This involves the inconvenience of time away from family and employment, which is often associated with further emotional and financial impacts.

Outreach services aim to address some of these unique issues by providing more equitable access to quality health care services within the local setting. It is generally accepted that outreach programmes represent an important part of delivering efficient, effective, and sustainable health care to rural and remote communities.

- Indigenous Australians suffer from three times the level of blindness, are 12 times more likely to have cataract-related blindness and 14 times more likely to have diabetes-related blindness (cw the general population)..
- In remote WA, specialist coverage is up to 19 times lower than in urban Australia and rural residents are three times less likely to have seen an ophthalmologist.
- While most vision loss can be corrected overnight, 35% of indigenous adults have never had an eye examination.
- Vision disorders cost Australia an estimated A\$9.85 billion in 2004.
- A\$4.8 billion is the loss of wellbeing (years of life lost as a result of disability and premature mortality)
- Vision disorders rank seventh and account for 2.7% of the national loss of wellbeing
- Direct health costs total A\$1.8 billion
- Direct health costs have increased by A\$1 billion over the last 10 years and will increase a further A\$1-2 billion in the next 10 years
- Cataract, the largest direct cost, takes 18% of expenditure

- The health system costs place vision disorders seventh, ahead of coronary heart disease, diabetes, depression and stroke.
- Indirect costs, A\$3.2 billion, include carers' costs, low vision aids, lost earnings and other welfare payments and taxes.
- Five conditions – age related macular degeneration, cataract, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma and undercorrected refractive error cause over 80% of vision impairment and 78% of blindness.