

# vision News

 **Lions Eye Institute**  
CELEBRATING **40** YEARS

Spring 2023

## Revolutionising glaucoma management

Harnessing the power of  
big data and AI

## Children's clinic changing lives

A special partnership transforming  
diabetic eye treatment

## Stem cell robot arrives

WA first for childhood eye disease

Niki, a patient at the  
Lions Eye Institute





## From the Managing Director

Welcome to the Spring 2023 edition of Vision News as we continue to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> birthday.

We are celebrating in more ways than one. Not only does this year mark 40 years of saving and restoring sight to the people of Western Australia, it also marks a significant milestone with one million patient visits since the Institute first started treating patients in 1983.

The first six months of the year saw a number of exciting announcements from our research teams including new research into the cause of diabetic macular ischaemia (DMI). DMI is a significant contributor to irreversible and severe vision loss in people with diabetes.

I am delighted to announce we are launching a statewide photographic competition as part of our 40<sup>th</sup> celebrations. Keep an eye out for more information coming soon.

In a partnership with Google, Lions Outback Vision started researching artificial intelligence solutions to make eye health screening more accessible and efficient, so we can detect eye disease earlier on in the patient journey. Results indicated the machine learning model is superior to specialists at detecting disease.

To other news, we are delighted to have appointed Amanda Williams to the Board of the Lions Eye Institute. Currently partner at PwC Australia, Ms Williams brings a wealth of experience as a board director.

Additionally, I wish to acknowledge Board members who have decided to step down from their roles. Thank you to Peter Forbes (former Chair), Richard Alder and Rudolph Brunovs for your dedication and contributions to the Board over many years. We wish you well as you pursue other endeavours. Congratulations to Tony Joyner on being appointed as new Board Chair.

In this edition of Vision News, learn about the revolutionary progress we are making in management of glaucoma. Find out about the initiative that will save the sight of Western Australian children diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. Don't miss an inspirational story about the arrival of the state's first and only stem cell robot, and how it will be a gamechanger for the treatment of inherited retinal diseases.

Thank you for your support over the last 40 years, and for continuing to be our champions of better vision for all. I am excited to see what the remainder of 2023 brings and for the next 40 years of sight saving discoveries.

Best wishes

Bill Morgan MB BS, PhD, FRANZCO  
Managing Director, Lions Eye Institute

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## A prestigious honour for life's work

Professor Mariapia Degli-Esposti from the Lions Eye Institute and the Monash Biomedicine Discovery Institute has been elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science, Australia's most esteemed recognition for significant contributions to science.

Professor Degli-Esposti has dedicated her research career to understanding the complexities of the immune system, including those that affect the eye. She is an internationally renowned immunologist and expert in the field of viral immunology.

Professor Degli-Esposti has been Head of Immunology at the Lions Eye Institute since 2003. Throughout this time, her team has dedicated extensive efforts towards understanding the intricacies of the immune system, with the aim of utilising this knowledge to create impactful therapeutic approaches. Her research is focused on unravelling the fundamental mechanisms that govern the delicate balance between sustaining protective immune



Professor Mariapia Degli-Esposti

responses while restraining inflammation which may contribute to various diseases.

Professor Bill Morgan said Professor Degli-Esposti's most recent honour was well deserved. Professor Degli-Esposti has made a significant impact not only in discovery science but also in translational research," he said.

### New population of 'natural killer' immune cells discovered

Recently published research from Professor Degli-Esposti's team has improved understanding of how the immune system is regulated to prevent disease, identifying a previously unknown role of 'natural killer' immune cells.

The study identified a new subset of natural killer cells known as tissue-resident memory natural killer (NKRM) cells. NKRM cells were found to limit immune responses in tissues thereby preventing autoimmunity, which occurs when the immune system is misdirected to attack the body's own tissues or organs.

While additional research is required, the discovery provides important information that may ultimately be used to develop new treatments for autoimmune diseases like Sjogren's Syndrome and possibly other chronic inflammatory conditions.

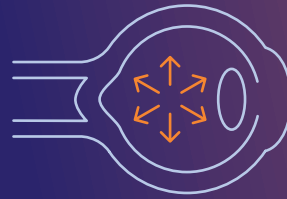
### Groundbreaking research

In addition to the studies on natural killer cells, Professor Degli-Esposti's research has also led to groundbreaking discoveries into improving the outcomes of viral infections in bone marrow transplant recipients. Using a world-first pre-clinical model, developed in collaboration with Professor Geoff Hill, this research found a novel approach to better manage cytomegalovirus, one of the most common life-threatening viral infections impacting bone marrow and organ transplant patients.

This discovery will guide new treatments to ensure patients can more safely receive lifesaving transplants. The research was published in 2019 in the highly regarded journal *Science* and was awarded The Australian Museum's esteemed Eureka Prize for Scientific Research.



# Revolutionising the diagnosis and monitoring of glaucoma



Visual field testing is critical to the diagnosis and monitoring of glaucoma. However, the current test is time consuming, tedious and has a number of limitations. There have been very few improvements to the test since it was developed over 30 years ago. Until now.



Professor Andrew Turpin

Professor Andrew Turpin is the inaugural Lions Curtin Chair in Ophthalmic Data. His research focuses on technological innovation in early detection of glaucoma and monitoring disease progression.

Visual field tests are used to measure vision in a range of circumstances including after a stroke or injury, and for a number of eye diseases such as glaucoma. During the test, patients spend on average five to 10 minutes per eye, looking straight ahead, clicking a button when they see a flashing light in their peripheral vision. Tests are generally repeated every six months for patients with glaucoma, and ophthalmologists will compare results from multiple tests over a number of years to determine if the disease is stable or progressing. During this time, if untreated, glaucoma may progress quite quickly.

## Customising for the disease and the patient

Professor Turpin's research aims to revolutionise the current 'one size fits all' visual field test. Customising tests to individual patients will provide ophthalmologists with more accurate information. This will allow for earlier diagnosis and treatment of glaucoma, and assist in determining sooner if current treatments are effective.

According to Professor Turpin, the current test has limitations. "If a patient is known to have vision loss in a certain area of their visual field, the current test will continue to test there, even though we know that the patient can't see any of the lights. Also, when vision is quite poor in certain areas we know current tests don't get very reliable results," he said.

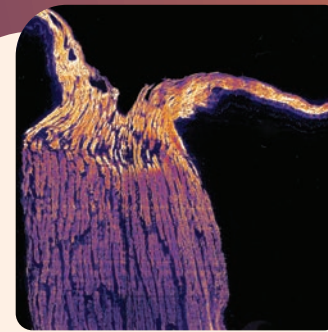
"As part of our research we will focus testing in areas on the edges of existing vision loss where changes due to glaucoma are more likely to occur."

"The current test uses 52 locations spaced six degrees apart. If the area of blindness is growing at one degree per year, it will take five years to find it," he said.

“By adding extra test points in between the area where there is still good vision and where it is blind, it may only take two or three years to find that blindness has increased.”

## Using artificial intelligence for enhanced results

Optical coherence tomography (OCT) is an imaging tool that helps to diagnose and monitor the progression of vision loss in glaucoma patients. OCT provides high resolution images of cellular layers in the retina, in particular the retinal nerve fibre layer, and helps to detect early signs of glaucoma-related nerve changes.



## About glaucoma

Glaucoma is a disease of the optic nerve and is often associated with high pressure inside the eye. It is known as the 'silent thief of sight' as it is often painless, with virtually no symptoms, and can go undetected until well advanced. Glaucoma usually initially affects peripheral vision, with central vision affected in late stages.

“If you lose some peripheral vision in one eye, your brain might automatically compensate for the loss and often you won't even notice. It's only when you lose the same area of vision in both eyes that you might become aware of that loss,” explains Professor Turpin.

Pictured top left: A healthy optic nerve  
Pictured bottom left: The optic nerve of a patient with glaucoma, where many of the nerve fibres have been lost

OCT and visual field testing play complementary roles in the diagnosis and management of glaucoma. However, obtaining a direct correlation between visual field tests and measures of nerve fibre damage is not currently possible across the whole retina.

"This poses a challenge for ophthalmologists who must reconcile the OCT data and the visual field data manually during a consultation to make decisions on changes or risk in the progression of vision loss in glaucoma patients."

Professor Turpin and his team plan to use artificial intelligence image processing and other machine learning techniques to assist ophthalmologists in making connections between the two measurements, leading to more efficient and accurate diagnosis and treatment decisions.

## Clinical trial

The new visual field testing technology has been proven to work on a small scale. The next step is to complete a large scale study to provide the evidence needed to put this much more efficient visual field test into practice.

Professor Turpin and his colleagues, including Professor Allison McKendrick, Professor Bill Morgan and Dr Geoffrey Chan, are planning a clinical trial to commence in October 2023. The trial will run over three years and involve around 200 glaucoma patients to test this innovative approach to visual field testing.

### Did you know?

- Glaucoma is the **leading cause of irreversible blindness** in Australia and worldwide.
- **Over 50%** of people with glaucoma don't know they have it.
- It is estimated that there are **300,000 Australians** living with glaucoma.
- **Glaucoma can be hereditary** – you are 10 times more likely to have glaucoma if you have a direct family member with the disease.
- Glaucoma **cannot be self-detected**. The only way to diagnose glaucoma is with a complete eye exam by an optometrist or an ophthalmologist.



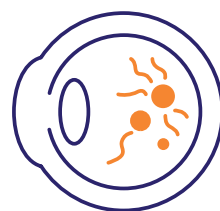
## Your support is powering our research

Niki is a 44 year old mother of three who faced the prospect of going blind due to undetected glaucoma. She is now under the care of Professor Bill Morgan, who monitors the progression of her glaucoma every six months. For people with glaucoma, every minute counts. Your support of our research can help people like Niki preserve her vision for as long as possible.

Every minute counts for people like Niki who lives with glaucoma



# The children's clinic transforming diabetic eye treatment



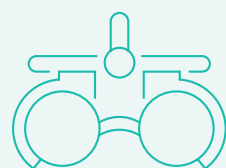
An initiative set up to screen for diabetes-related vision loss in children, undertake research and find new treatments is already making an incredible impact at the Lions Eye Institute. Known as the Perron Paediatric Retinopathy Initiative, the clinic is transforming the way diabetes-related vision loss is managed in Western Australian children.

Type 1 and 2 diabetes are a major cause of severe and irreversible vision loss in children and adolescents globally, with a peak onset in 11 to 12 year olds. It is recommended that children with type 1 diabetes are screened for diabetic retinopathy five years after they are first diagnosed, and regularly thereafter. Most children will not display any symptoms until irreversible retinal structural damage has already occurred in the form of microaneurysms and haemorrhages, which is why screening is key to tackling this major health concern.

## New screening clinic ensures early detection

Led by Professor Chandra Balaratnasingam, in 2021 the Lions Eye Institute established the state's first screening and treatment clinic for children with diabetes to combat the growing concern they were missing out on the necessary screening.

In collaboration with Perth Children's Hospital and Diabetes WA, at risk patients are identified and immediately referred to the Lions Eye Institute's paediatric screening clinic for testing of diabetes-related vision loss. At the first signs of diabetic retinopathy, patients are provided with a management and treatment plan. To date, 192 patients have been screened.



Professor Chandra Balaratnasingam

## Identifying new ways of detecting diabetic retinopathy

Exploratory research is also underway to develop new ways to detect early retinal vascular dysfunction prior to vision loss occurring. This research is being led by Professor Balaratnasingam and Professor Dao-Yi Yu AM, an internationally renowned expert in the field of retinal vascular diseases.



Professor Dao-Yi Yu AM

Professor Balaratnasingam said as part of the research project, imaging data is collected from patients at each screening appointment. This includes high-resolution optical coherence tomography (OCT) based structural measurements of retinal layers such as nerve fibre layer and nuclear layer. Structural information will be coupled with novel OCT-angiography-based functional measurements of retinal perfusion that have been developed by the research group.

"We are now recruiting additional patients from general paediatric clinics, of similar age but without diabetes or retinal disease to serve as a control group. Imaging data from these patients will be used as a comparator to the measurements of the patients with diabetes," he said.

The next step is to analyse associations between changes in these measurements due to the influence of diabetes. The hope is to identify new imaging-based biomarkers that will pinpoint retinal damage from diabetes at an earlier stage than is currently possible.

## Thank you for helping us accelerate medical advances for our children



Thanks to the Stan Perron Charitable Foundation, and to our supporters, children and adolescents with diabetes have access to an ophthalmic screening clinic along with the hope that research may lead to new cures and treatments.

## Using the eye as a window to the body

Professor Balaratnasingam said that data from the new screening program has already resulted in the submission of a manuscript to the highly prestigious journal, **Investigative Ophthalmology and Visual Science**, sharing the team's findings with others in their field.

Concepts that inform the hypotheses explored by this research program was published by this research group in 2023 in the highest ranked journal in vision science, **Progress in Retinal and Eye Research**.

As the natural course of retina and renal disease is intrinsically linked in diabetes a principal aim of this research program is to identify new ways to detect renal dysfunction using ocular biomarkers.

"We have made significant advances in measuring retinal blood flow using OCTA. We will now apply this method to investigate if changes in retinal blood flow can predict the development of not only diabetic retinopathy, but also diabetic kidney disease in children with type 1 and type 2 diabetes."

### Did you know?

- Diabetic retinopathy is a **complication of diabetes** which can damage the tiny blood vessels inside the retina at the back of the eye.
- Australia has one of the highest rates of type 1 diabetes in the world, with nearly 2,500 new cases each year – **an average of seven new cases a day**.
- The best way to prevent or slow down diabetic retinopathy is to **manage overall health**, including blood sugar levels. However the only way to detect diabetic retinopathy is through a full eye examination.
- Nearly 100 per cent of children with type 1 diabetes will eventually develop **diabetic retinopathy**.
- Children who develop diabetic retinopathy could face **vision loss and blindness by their 20s**.



Early detection ensures that no child in Western Australia will lose their eyesight due to diabetes.

## Early screening vital for nine-year-old Joshua

Nine-year-old Joshua was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at age four. He recently attended the screening clinic at the Lions Eye Institute after his optometrist noted a change in his vision. His mum explains.

"Diabetes was not something I ever considered for a child of mine. One summer Joshua began drinking a little more, however we didn't suspect anything at the time due to the season. He then lost a lot of weight in a short period of time and began to look ill. At this point we took him to the doctor for blood tests. That night the doctor rang and told us to take Joshua straight to emergency where he was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes.

**"On initial diagnosis things were quite overwhelming, however Joshua has accepted it pretty well considering what he goes through on a daily basis."**

"It wasn't until we undertook training in the hospital that I realised we had to be mindful of the impact of diabetes on his eyes and other potential complications. We first heard about the screening clinic at the Lions Eye Institute from Joshua's treating endocrinologist at Perth Children's Hospital. We had been to see Joshua's regular optometrist who flagged an unexplained change in Joshua's vision even though his retinal scans were clear. **We opted for the Lions Eye Institute as we knew the risk of diabetes and its impact on the eyes so did not want to delay Joshua being seen.**

**"Having the early screening gives you peace of mind. It allows any early signs to be detected which is reassuring as a parent as it is not something you are able to see with the naked eye. It is important for me to know we are identifying any changes early so that interventions can be put in place if required."**



# Our 40 year journey of sight saving discovery

In 2023 the Lions Eye Institute celebrates 40 years of working towards a world that is free from the devastating impacts of vision loss and blindness.

As part of that celebration, we recently released our 40 Years of Impact Report. The report is a tribute to the tireless work of the Lions Eye Institute's founder and Patron, Professor Ian Constable AO.

Relocating from Boston, USA, to Perth in 1975 when it was a small town, Professor Constable quickly realised the enormous need for equitable access to quality eye health care in Western Australia.

We will never stop, because the need for research never stops.



**Powered by philanthropy**

The Lions Eye Institute was founded on innovation and scientific excellence, and powered by philanthropy. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

**Learn more:** Read more about the Lions Eye Institute's 40 year journey of sight saving discovery. View the 40 Years of Impact Report by visiting [lei.org.au/our-impact](https://lei.org.au/our-impact).



## Lions Eye Institute established

Professor Constable established the Lions Eye Institute in 1983 with a vision to ensure all Western Australians had access to specialist eye care and could benefit from first-class medical research. His vision was shared by several key philanthropic supporters, notably Lions Clubs of WA and the Lions Save-Sight Foundation (WA) Inc.

It is with the generosity of these supporters that the Institute flourished, going on to produce some of our biggest scientific breakthroughs, inventions, treatments and gene therapies.

## Forty years of impact

To name just a few success stories over the last 40 years, the Lions Eye Institute:



- Invented the world's first artificial cornea
- Discovered gene therapy to treat wet age-related macular degeneration
- Invented the XEN® Gel Stent, a surgical treatment for glaucoma
- Created the Barrett Universal II Formula used in cataract surgery
- Developed surgical systems such as the CRVO laser bypass surgery
- Made a significant scientific discovery into cytomegalovirus which was awarded the Australian Museum Eureka Prize for Scientific Research.

None of this would have been possible without the ongoing generosity of our dedicated supporters, who share our aspiration to provide better vision for all.



You can positively impact the future without taking away from today.

## Leaving a lasting impact

Sarah (pictured with her family) is losing her sight and could be legally blind within 10 years

## Imagine if you had the power to save sight.

A gift in your Will could help shape the future of medical research and for future generations to come.

It is a simple, but powerful, way for you to support our vision for the future – a vision of a world free of blindness and eye disease.

For 40 years the Lions Eye Institute has been combining cutting edge scientific research into the prevention of blindness with the highest level of eye care delivery, supported by the generosity of people like you.

Your support enables our internationally recognised, dedicated researchers and ophthalmologists to make great advances in eye health – advances which continue at an accelerating pace – driven by our research and innovation.

As a not-for-profit organisation, we simply could not do it without your support. Currently around a quarter of all donation income we receive is from gifts in Wills. Every contribution, big or small, plays a crucial role in transforming lives and fostering a better tomorrow.

Join us in our fight against preventable blindness and sight-related challenges. Your gift in Will, no matter the size, holds the power to bring hope and brighter futures to those facing vision loss.

For more information about leaving a gift in your Will or for a confidential chat please call Darren Nicholls on (08) 6382 0551 or email [darren.nicholls@lei.org.au](mailto:darren.nicholls@lei.org.au).

No gift is too big or too small. Simply making the decision to give offers hope for generations to come.



**“I still marvel at the brilliance of the colours I see.**

The Lions Eye Institute restored my eyesight to a degree that was better than it ever was before. I still marvel at the brilliance of the colours I see. The research, treatment, care and friendliness of all the people there make them all my heroes. They gave me my eyesight back. My husband and I changed our Wills to leave a substantial bequest to the Lions Eye Institute to help with the wonderful work they do. We both really appreciate all the Lions Eye Institute has done for us.”

Doreen (right) with husband Robin



# Gamechanger robot poised to transform research landscape

Scientists at the Lions Eye Institute were thrilled to recently take delivery of Western Australia's first and only stem cell robot, a gamechanger for medical research into inherited retinal diseases.

The stem cell robot arrived in Perth from Switzerland in June 2023. It will enable the Lions Eye Institute's research teams to find treatments for the many children living with inherited retinal diseases including 2020 Little Telethon Star, Eamon.

“With this vital piece of medical equipment, we will have one of the best systems in the country to expediate our stem cell research,” said Dr Sam McLenachan, a leading researcher in genetic eye disease at the Lions Eye Institute.

The Doak family



Thank you to Telethon, Rhonda Wyllie and the WA community for keeping hope alive for children like Eamon and Kealan.

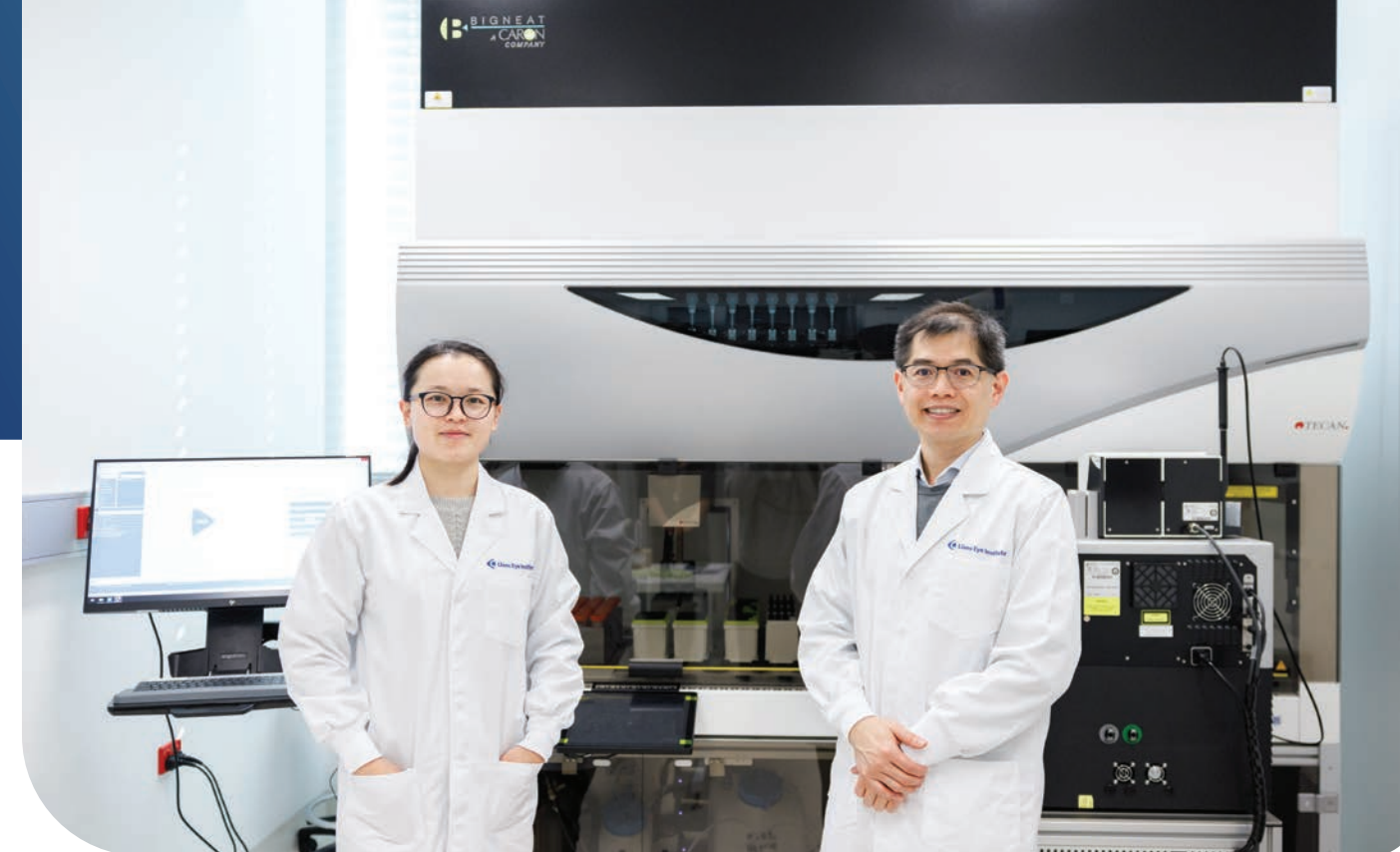
## Race to save sight

At the 2021 Leeuwin Lunch for Telethon, Bronwyn Doak was invited to be the special guest speaker. Bronwyn shared her devastating family tragedies. In 2011, Bronwyn lost her two eldest daughters in a plane crash, and then in 2018 her two youngest sons, Eamon and Kealan, were diagnosed with Usher syndrome. Usher syndrome is a rare and cruel disease where babies are born deaf and as they grow into their teens, they gradually lose their eyesight.

“My beautiful little boys weren't born blind. They'll have this wonderful experience of sight, only to have it taken away from them,” said Bronwyn.

Upon hearing the family's story, Perth businesswoman Rhonda Wyllie immediately responded by donating \$750,000 towards a cutting-edge piece of equipment, a stem cell robot, the only chance left of saving Eamon and Kealan's sight.

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY  
**telethon** 7



Research Associate Di Huang with Associate Professor Fred Chen and the stem cell robot

## How the stem cell robot will help

Stem cells can be grown into many different human tissues in the laboratory, allowing scientists to study the causes of diseases and develop new treatments, drugs and personalised medicines. This includes generating mini organs from human stem cells.

These mini organs can be used as models for studying human diseases in the affected tissues, as well as for screening potential treatments. The robot will automate this stem cell work, accelerating the rate at which scientists can study the causes of disease and develop new treatments and cures.

Associate Professor Fred Chen said it is critical to develop treatments for Eamon and Kealan now, to stop the degeneration of their retina.

The stem cell robot is named “MooAlle” in memory of the Doak family's two eldest children, Maddison and Alexandra, who were affectionately called “Moo” and “Alle” by their family. In a recent television interview with 7NEWS, Bronwyn Doak said the stem cell robot was a gamechanger for the whole world.

“The robot will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We estimate we are five years away from crucial scientific discoveries that could save Eamon and Kealan's sight.”

The stem cell robot is a multi-purpose machine that can be used for research into a large number of childhood diseases including cancer, diabetes and inherited diseases like cystic fibrosis and inherited retinal diseases. The robot is the first in Western Australia to be used for stem cell research into eye related disorders.





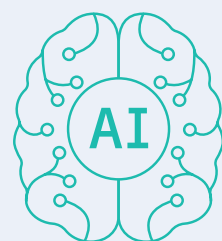


The Lions Outback Vision team regularly travels to remote communities bringing eye health care to patients like Bruce



Associate Professor Angus Turner in Broome (photo credit: The West Australian Newspaper)

## Lions Outback Vision finalists in *The Challenge*



Lions Outback Vision was chosen as one of 10 finalists from almost 100 global submissions in a worldwide search to improve the delivery of healthcare in the vast Pilbara region.

The project will target chronic disease care on Country, using outreach screening incorporating artificial intelligence (AI). A region-wide screening program will be implemented that leverages AI, run from a mobile four-wheel-drive van and operated by a diabetes educator and an Aboriginal health worker. Other specialists will also provide care through telehealth services and regular site visits.

Associate Professor Angus Turner, McCusker Director of Lions Outback Vision, said that research has proven AI to be superior to specialists at detecting disease.

"For this project, we will introduce Australia's first retinal camera with fully integrated AI in a mobile vehicle that can travel off road to any community," he said.

"The AI can detect more than just eye problems, it can also pick up issues with the heart and lungs, meaning we can screen for a multitude of diseases with one visit."

"The final piece of the puzzle is a Vision Jet, which would enable an all-in-one team to deliver treatment directly to patients in their own communities."

Finalists were determined by a rigorous judging panel to ensure solutions were fit for purpose and met the needs of people living in the Pilbara. Each of the 10 finalists has been awarded \$200,000 to develop their concept over 12 months. The most outstanding solution will be awarded \$5 million in October 2024.

Lions Outback Vision is grateful to Rio Tinto, BHP and the State Government Future Health Research and Innovation Fund for the opportunity to demonstrate how this project can revolutionise health outcomes in the Pilbara, and provide better vision for all.

The Challenge is a State Government competition to develop a world-leading and innovative medical research solution to resolve health service delivery issues in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. Learn more at [thechallenge.health.wa.gov.au](https://thechallenge.health.wa.gov.au).

### Recognised for outstanding leadership

Congratulations to Janet Richardson for being recognised for **Outstanding leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health** at the 2023 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health (NATSIEH) Awards.

Janet is an Aboriginal Eye Health Worker with Lions Outback Vision and has been involved in eye health for many years. She is a respected elder of Baard and Yawuru Ooranyg/Ngala Jandu (Salt Water woman) Heritage from the Dampier Peninsula in the West Kimberley Region.

Janet plays an important role in connecting her community to the eye care pathway.

"A healer has a special place in the community, is a promoter of health who will always regard persons who have taught them their craft, from this I have learnt and carried throughout my whole life the responsibility and honesty to maintain confidentiality entrusted to me for my job performance," she says.



Janet Richardson

## They trained, they participated and they conquered all for sight saving research!

Our congratulations and gratitude go out to nine of our community supporters. On Sunday, 21 May 2023 at the HBF Run for a Reason they laced up their running shoes, faced the chilly weather, and crossed the finish line all in the name of research.

### Hear from two of our amazing community supporters, Irene and Daniela

"Having your sight means having independence. It is key to enhancing one's quality of life. I am happy to have raised much-needed funds for eye care research and hope that it will continue to provide hope to people with eye disease," Irene, completed the HBF Run for a Reason half marathon.



Irene

"My daughter and I enjoyed the event and shared our story with many lovely people on the track. We were pleasantly surprised by how much we've raised from our amazing supportive family, friends, and colleagues. A close relative of ours is living with retinitis pigmentosa (RP) and we'd like to continue supporting research into RP," Daniela and her daughter, Maya completed the HBF Run for a Reason 12km.



Maya and Daniela



### Special thanks

A special thanks to Ben, Yoke, Khine, Carolyn, and Sheldon and family, who also fundraised and completed the 12km and 4km events.

### Would you like to become a community supporter?



Have a special event coming up? Why not fundraise for the Lions Eye Institute in lieu of gifts? Whether it's celebrating an anniversary, a birthday, or doing a personal challenge, creating a fundraising page is simple. Visit [lei.raisely.com](https://lei.raisely.com) to start today. Alternatively, get in touch with Yoke Lim at [yoke.lim@lei.org.au](mailto:yoke.lim@lei.org.au) to discuss your fundraising idea.



# Volunteering back on track at the Lions Eye Institute

The Lions Eye Institute is welcoming volunteers back to its Nedlands clinic after a brief hiatus.



Lions Eye Institute volunteer Ross

Volunteers are the lifeblood of the community. At the Lions Eye Institute, our volunteers are an essential part of the team, providing information and assistance to the thousands of people who come to us for help with their eyesight each year.

Ross started volunteering with the Lions Eye Institute in 2015. A chance visit to the Lions Eye Institute clinic in Nedlands saw him introduced to the Concierge Program.

"Around eight years ago I happened to walk into the Lions Eye Institute clinic and saw the Volunteers desk. I asked what they did at the clinic and once they explained I knew I wanted to help," said Ross.

**"Some people can understandably be quite nervous before their appointment. As a volunteer one of my jobs is to sit with patients before their appointment and have a chat, offer a hot drink, and just be a friendly ear," he said.**

"Over the years I have learned a lot about the different eye conditions and procedures. Some patients are unable to drive after their appointment. Another important job of the volunteers is to call for a taxi or family member to pick patients up and help them outside once their lift has arrived."

Ross has a background in health and safety, having spent a number of years contracting to local government.

After retirement, Ross was keen to build meaningful connections with others and give back to his local community.

"I enjoy volunteering my time at the Lions Eye Institute. It gets me out of the house and keeps me mentally and physically active. I learn new things every day and interact with people from all walks of life. It's very rewarding."

## The Concierge Program

The Concierge Program is one of our most valued volunteer services and is aimed at making a visit to the Lions Eye Institute clinic a seamless experience.

Easily recognisable in their vibrant red vests, our Volunteer Concierges assist patients in a variety of ways – from escorting patients to their appointment, arranging and safely conveying patients from treatment areas to their transport, or making a cup of tea while they wait in the clinic.

It is a service that patients and visitors greatly appreciate.

To find out more about volunteering at the Lions Eye Institute, visit [lei.org.au/volunteer](http://lei.org.au/volunteer) or email [recruitment@lei.org.au](mailto:recruitment@lei.org.au).



# Save the date for these exciting events



22 October 2023

## Join us at this year's Telethon Family Festival!

The Lions Eye Institute is delighted to be part of the 2023 Telethon Family Festival.

This free family event will see Wellington Street in Perth come alive on Sunday, 22 October with entertainers, food trucks, rides and plenty of activities to entertain the whole family.

Dr Jessica Mountford and Dr Sang Yoon Moon with Lions Eye Institute mascot Iris



Inside RAC Arena the festival will continue with more stalls and activities, and the live Telethon broadcast.

Be sure to visit the Lions Eye Institute stall where you can meet our scientists and friendly mascot Iris.



**DATE** Sunday, 22 October 2023  
**TIME** 10am to 4pm  
**LOCATION** RAC Arena

**This is a free family event!**



## 2023 Ian Constable Lecture

Understanding glaucoma through imaging of single cells

16 November 2023



Professor Balwantray Chauhan

In the Lions Eye Institute's 40<sup>th</sup> year, please join Professor Balwantray Chauhan as he reveals how imaging is revolutionising the management of diseases such as macular degeneration and glaucoma.

Professor Chauhan is a Mathers Professor and Research Director of Ophthalmology and Visual

Sciences, Professor of Physiology and Biophysics and Professor of Medical Neurosciences at Dalhousie University in Canada. His research interests centre on glaucoma.

**DATE** Thursday, 16 November 2023  
**TIME** Lecture commences at 7pm  
**LOCATION** The University Club of WA  
**TICKETS** Free though Eventbrite  
<http://bit.ly/IanConstableLecture2023>



## Become a Sight Saver today

**90%** of vision loss is preventable or treatable. Together we can be the solution.

By becoming a Sight Saver, and donating to the Lions Eye Institute each month, you can help uncover research breakthroughs, transform lives and give hope to people facing blindness and eye disease.

Sight Saver members receive:

- research updates
- event invitations throughout the year
- a tax deductible receipt at the end of each financial year

Giving monthly allows the Lions Eye Institute to plan ahead for future sight saving research with the knowledge that your support is ongoing.

### Setting up your regular donation is easy.

- You choose the donation amount.
- All donations over \$2 are tax-deductible and a receipt is sent automatically at the end of each financial year.
- You can opt out or change your donation amount at any time.

Please fill out the form below (indicating monthly payment) and return it to our reply paid address, or call Carolyn McAdam in fundraising on (08) 6382 0566 to set up your automatic monthly donation.



## Yes I want to save sight

Please accept my donation of \$..... (Donations over \$2 are tax deductible)

☐ Please make my donation monthly, I want to be a Sight Saver

Please find enclosed my ☐ cheque ☐ money order OR, please debit my ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express ☐ Visa

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Cardholder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Tax receipt details:

Name: .....

Address: .....

Suburb: ..... Postcode: .....

Telephone: ..... Email: .....

☐ I would be interested to learn more about how I can include the Lions Eye Institute in my Will.

☐ I have already provided for the Lions Eye Institute in my Will.

☐ I would like to be included in donor recognition.

*We recognise the generosity of donors on our donor recognition board, website and in our annual report.*

**Be a  
sight  
saver**

**Your  
donation  
helps eradicate  
blindness**

Mail to:  
Lions Eye Institute  
Reply Paid 62815  
Nedlands WA 6009  
(No stamp required)  
Or call (08) 9381 0777