

ANNUAL REPORT



2011-2012

**OPTOMETRISTS
ASSOCIATION
AUSTRALIA
VICTORIA**



OPTOMETRISTS
ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA
VICTORIA

98%

**OF OPTOMETRISTS
IN VICTORIA ARE
MEMBERS OF OAA-VIC**

PRESIDENT & CEO REPORT

We are delighted to present this Annual Report for the financial year from July 2011 to June 2012. As the professional Association for Victorian optometrists, we have been working throughout the year for our 1118 members who work in different practices across the state. We have been committed to ensuring our wide ranging activities and services meet the varying needs of our members.

Throughout the year we have had the chance to meet face to face with many members at information, CPD and other events. Our monthly CPR programs have seen a further 170 members certified as required by the new registration standards. Over the year we have provided extensive advice and support to members over the phone, email and face-to-face.

We continue to work with the Association's national office to ensure our members' needs are met through national services. Members have responded well to the programs and activities we have promoted each fortnight in the national e-bulletin.

We continue to meet regularly with key health professions to share information, encourage greater cooperation between health professions and strengthen our voices to government. We have produced a range of resources, information, position statements and policies to support our members.

We have promoted optometry and eye care in Victoria to government, other health professions and institutions and the eye care industry. We continue to work with key eye health organisations, the Australian College of Optometry, the Vision Initiative and Vision 2020. We also work closely and cooperatively with our industry partners.

The OAA-Vic Board continues to provide strong governance and leadership for the Association. Our Directors come from different parts of the optometry world but they do not represent any particular interests. In fact all Directors have a legal duty to solely represent the best interests of the profession. Our Directors contributed significantly throughout the year and we have enjoyed discussion and debate on a range of issues. We also have a strong staff team supporting the important work of the Association.



Melissa Downing
President

Terri Smith
Chief Executive Officer

The Association entered the 2011/12 financial year in a very strong position. This has given us the opportunity to introduce a range of new initiatives over 2011/12. These have ranged from a social member breakfast, travelling Diabetes Workup CPD session, a networking dinner, member policy forums, CPD webinars and the Peer Learning Resource.

Additionally, our substantial member feedback survey was returned by 60% of our members. This has provided a great wealth of information to help us understand our members and plan future member activities. Further research involving qualitative interviews with young members has helped us better understand the needs of our young members.

Please don't hesitate to share your feedback, ideas and concerns with us. We are here to govern the Association for the benefit of all our members.

**60% OF MEMBERS RESPONDED TO
OUR MEMBER FEEDBACK SURVEY**

THE NUMBERS SAY IT ALL

In 2012, 648 OAA-Vic members took time to respond to our very first comprehensive online Member Feedback Survey. As we crunched our way through tables, tabulations and spreadsheets, breaking down data but building up a picture, we were struck by the significance of numbers. It will be no news to optometrists that 'numbers' are important: from refractive error to IOP, from adaptive optics to epidemiology, that's what optometrists do: work with numbers, so patients can see the bigger picture.

So this year, we thought we would use numbers to build a different kind of picture: a picture of your Association, our members, the work we do for you, and the many things we have undertaken over the past 12 months.

Counting down . . .

1,118	our total members
648	members who shared their views via our online member survey
221	the number of individual members provided 1:1 assistance
170	the number of members trained in CPR
100	optometrists and partner organisations at the successful OAA networking dinner
98	the percentage of Victorian optometrists practising in Victoria who are members of OAA-Vic
93	the sum total of CPD points on offer over 2011-12 for Association activities
70	the percentage of members who have been in contact with the Association in the past 12 months
60	the number of points available for SRC
20	places offered in a free public speaking course
8	regional diabetes workshops across Melbourne and the State
6	points per workshop
6	issues of <i>Scope</i>
3	free member webinars
2	member research projects
2	Policy Forums
1	summer breakfast at the Zoo

In sum, it's been a tremendous year. Thanks to the many members who have been a part of our activities. We hope you have benefited from the work of your Association.

**56% OF OUR MEMBERS ARE
UNDER 40 YEARS OF AGE**

THE BOARD

The Association is managed by a Board of Directors elected from our membership. The Board can have up to eight Directors or nine Directors if the National President is a Director. The Board also has the capacity to include up to two Associate Directors.

The Board has an important function to ensure the good governance of Optometrists Association Australia -Victoria. While the Board undertake this important work they enjoy broad ranging discussion about issues affecting our members.

Melissa Downing has served her third term as President. She is supported by Rogan Fraser (Vice-President) and Stephen Jones (Treasurer) and the rest of the Board.

TOP ROW FROM LEFT

Melissa Downing
Rogan Fraser
Stephen Jones
Heather Connor
Andrew Harris



BOTTOM ROW

FROM LEFT
Kylie Harris
Allison McKendrick
Genevieve Napper
Yota Yoshimitsu
Julie Kabov



Over the last year the Board has undertaken an annual organisational risk management exercise and also reviewed the effectiveness of its own operations through an annual board performance survey. We have reviewed our financial delegations and ensured the sound operations of the Association.

The Association held ten Board meetings during the year. Meetings were held in each month of the financial year except January and May.

Seven Directors' terms covered the entire financial year. Of these the following Directors attended nine of a possible ten meetings, Melissa Downing, Rogan Fraser, Andrew Harris, Allison McKendrick and Genevieve Napper attended nine meetings, Stephen Jones attended eight meetings and Yota Yoshimitsu attended seven meetings. Heather Connor attended three out of four possible meetings before she left the Board at the Annual General Meeting in October. Kylie Harris joined the board at the Annual General Meeting and attended five of a possible six meetings. Julia Kabov joined the Board as an Associate Director in March and attended all subsequent meetings.

We appreciate the time and consideration given to the Association by all our Directors.

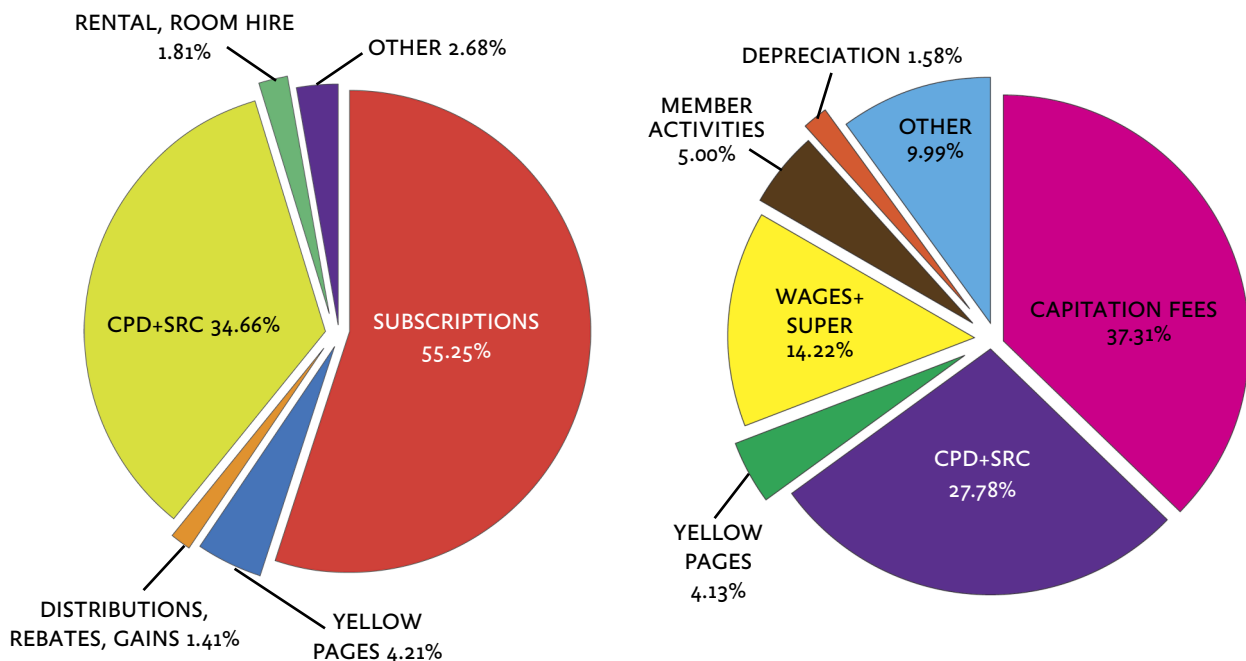
- Melissa Downing *President*
- Rogan Fraser *Vice-President*
- Stephen Jones *Treasurer*
- Heather Connor *Director* (till October)
- Andrew Harris *Director*
- Kylie Harris *Director* (since October)
- Dr Allison McKendrick *Director and appointed National Board Director*
- Dr Genevieve Napper *Director*
- Yota Yoshimitsu *Director*
- Julia Kabov *Associate Director* (since March)

THERE WERE **10** BOARD MEETINGS THIS YEAR

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Association reports an overall profit of \$104,692 for the 2011/2012 financial year. Whilst this is considerably smaller last year's profit of \$449,205 it was in line with the Board's expectations.

Overall income for the Association has decreased 4.96% from \$2,688,853 in the financial year 2010/11 to \$2,555,376 this year. Expenditure has increased (10.16%) from \$2,239,648 in the financial year 2010/11 to \$2,467,127 in 2011/12.



This increase in expenditure reflects a decision made by the Board to undertake a range of member activities throughout the year. The Board remains confident that the Association's reserves are strong and we are committed to maximising member benefits.

Please note the full Financial Statements for 2011/12 are presented as a separate document.



Stephen Jones
Treasurer

PROFIT FOR THIS YEAR
\$104,692

MEMBER FUNDS
\$2,591,064

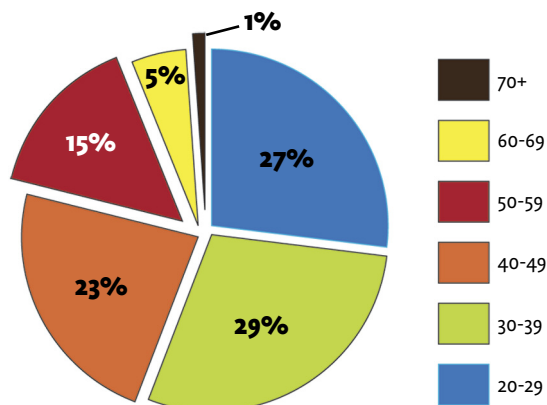
Optometrists in Victoria: *Who we are*

We are the 98%

Optometrists Association Victoria has more than 1100 members, representing 98% of all registered optometrists whose principal place of practice is Victoria.

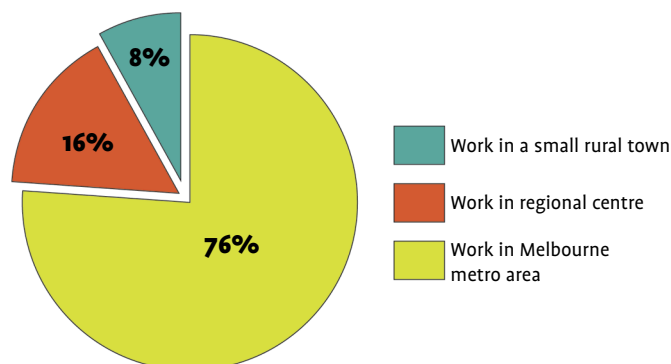
Age range

Our members range in age from 23 to 88.



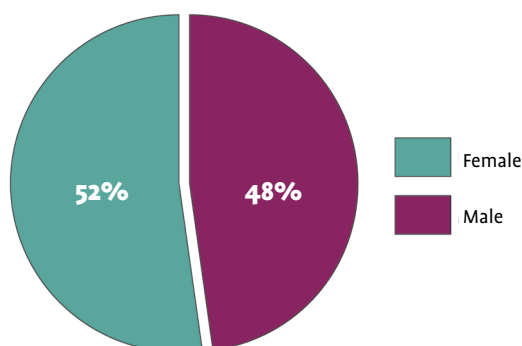
Primary location of practice

Our members work right across Victoria, from Warrnambool in the south west to Lakes Entrance in East Gippsland; from Wonthaggi to Mildura. The majority of our members practice in Melbourne's inner or outer suburbs. In our recent Member Feedback Survey, which captured 60% of Victorian Division members, 77% of members were working in the Melbourne metropolitan area.



Gender

Just over half of OAA-Vic's members are women. This represents a trend in recent years towards significantly higher numbers of women graduating into the profession.



Employment arrangements

Of those who responded to our survey, around 62% practice some or all of the time as an **employee optometrist**. Fifty-two percent work in an **owner or self-employed** category. The overlap shows that a number of members work in more than one kind of employment arrangement, practising some of the time in a self-employed capacity and some of the time employed by someone else.

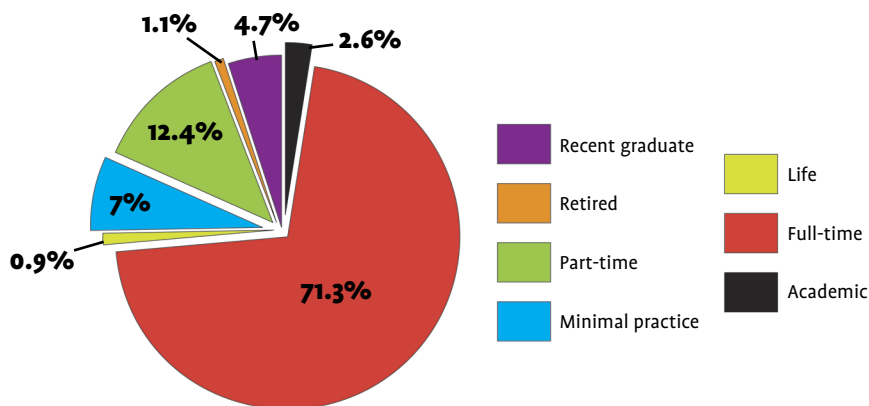
- Around 30% of members **own their own practice**.
- Around 15% do **locum work**.
- There are about 65 members who are **franchisees**.

INDEPENDENT AND CORPORATE OPTOMETRY

- Among our survey respondents, 23% reported being employed in a **corporate practice**.
- 29% reported they were employed in an **independent practice**.

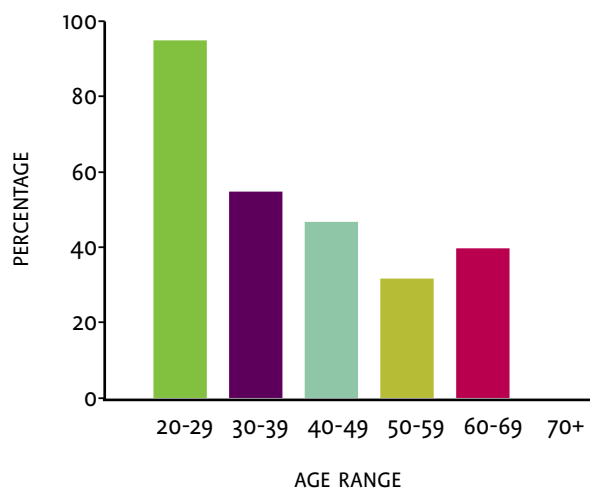
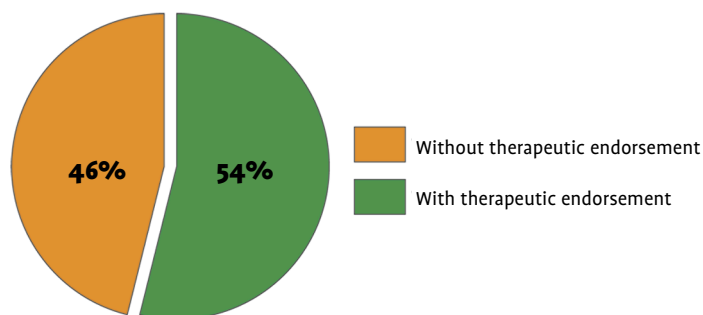
Membership by categories

OAA-Vic has a range of categories corresponding to the different ways in which our members practice. We have ten life members. Consistent with the fact that most of our members work full-time, 72% of members are full members of the Association.



Therapeutic endorsement

Victoria was the first state to introduce legislation to allow optometrists to prescribe Schedule 4 drugs. We have 54% of optometrists endorsed to prescribe, and this percentage increases with each year of new graduates entering the profession.

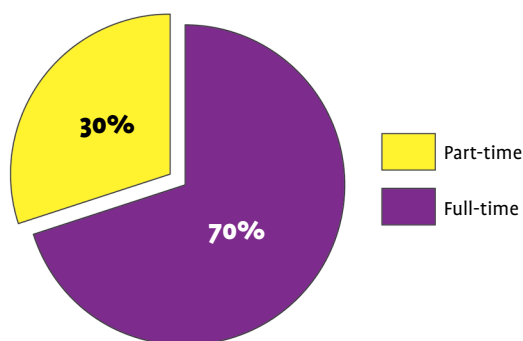


Therapeutics by age range

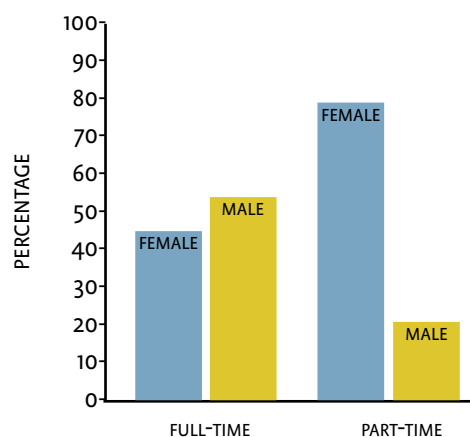
Since 2005, all optometrists graduating from the University of Melbourne have completed optometry training eligible for therapeutic endorsement. Not surprisingly, 95% of optometrists under the age of 30 are therapeutically endorsed.

Work hours

Like many professions, as people balance their work commitments with commitments to children, family or other private or professional interests or passions, there is a definite trend to an increase in part-time work.



You can see from the graph below that a higher proportion of the women who responded to our recent Member Feedback survey work part-time, compared to men.



Major practice specialisations

Many optometrists have particular skills and interests within their practice, and have established their practice around a particular set of specialty interests. They may have additional qualifications to support this, be a member of a professional body such as the Cornea and Contact Lens Society, or see a higher number of certain kinds of patients. Our recent Member Feedback Survey

indicated the following were the top practice 'specialisations'. Some people may have indicated specialising in more than one category.

CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE
Contact lens	43
Ocular Disease	42
Paediatric	38
Ortho-K	10

SPREADING THE WORD

One of the important messages about optometry that we aim to communicate with both the public and other health professions is that our members are very much in the business of providing primary care for eyes. In November 2011, we held a successful Policy Forum, with members from right across the State attending, all of whom have developed practice models centred around the provision of a wide range of general and specialised clinical optometry services, including ocular disease management, contact lens, and children's vision.

Primary care is about not only providing general care, but being able to be the first 'point of contact' for eye issues, and making and scheduling the time to treat acute and chronic conditions. The point of the forums was to identify activities OAA-Vic could undertake to improve awareness of, and uptake of, optometry services in Victoria.

One of the main areas identified by the group was partnership-building and communicating well with the many practitioners with whom members work, from GPs to teachers. We have

been planning and undertaking work to pursue the goal of raising awareness of the scope of optometry.

We attended the General Practice Convention and Exhibition in Melbourne, where a team of Victorian Division members worked over three days to take 176

retinal photos, and 82 eye pressure checks to remind GPs that they, too, need to look after their eyes. Victorian Division staff were on hand to discuss and provide information about optometrists and their role. In February, we had a very successful OAA-Vic Networking Dinner. On a hot evening by Albert Park Lake, we were lucky to be joined by Victorian Health Minister, David Davis (who addressed the dinner), Opposition Health Minister Gavin Jennings, Vision 2020 Australia Chair Barry Jones, and a cast of 100 optometrists and partners in health care across Victoria. President Melissa Downing's speech again emphasised the primary care message.

To make sure our members are best equipped and supported with all they need to practice well, the Victorian Division has also developed position statements supporting a review of



89 STUDENTS ATTENDED OUR THIRD ANNUAL CAREERS EXPO

WE TOOK RETINAL PHOTOS OF **176** GPs AT GPCE



glaucoma prescribing guidelines (to make sure they are flexible enough to allow optometrists to provide the best care they can), and exploring the role of oral therapeutics in future models of care. In conjunction with OAA national office, we have had input into a wide range of policies and policy discussions on issues including: diabetes care, visual fields, Medicare, CPD, national registration arrangements, electronic health records, private health insurance and the optometry workforce. We have also followed the development of Medicare Locals carefully, attending a number of meetings and forums to understand how optometry fits in as they roll out across the State. To support the revised national guidelines on Assessing Fitness to Drive, we ran a webinar in conjunction with VicRoads to ensure members were up-to-date.

Many of our members have expressed a desire for local, accessible and flexible CPD options. To help this, we developed a resource for members to encourage them to think about peer learning in small groups as a strategy to add variety to their CPD options. The resource aimed to show ways optometrists could come together on a regular basis to share ideas, lecture topics, resources, case-studies, or to discuss peer-reviewed journals or research. This is particularly good option for members working part time or off on family or other leave.

6 ISSUES OF SCOPE WERE DISTRIBUTED TO VICTORIAN MEMBERS

Scope continues to be an important and well-read part of how we communicate with members. Not only does it allow us to communicate with members about the many activities we undertook throughout the year (from the Zoo Breakfast to the Careers Expo; from CPR training to aviation eye examiner training), it also provides an opportunity to discuss emerging issues in practice relevant to our members. This year, we've covered topics from CPD points to consumer legislation; developments at the universities; the National Vision Research Institute; careers; therapeutics; professional indemnity; leadership in the profession; and communicating with general practitioners.

Once more this year we offered a post graduate travel scholarship to recognise the importance of promoting excellence and further learning. Joe Zhou was awarded the scholarship this year and travelled to ARVO to present a poster on adaptive optics ocular imaging.

4 YOUNG MEMBERS JOINED A LEADERSHIP COURSE WITH OTHERS FROM SIX DIFFERENT HEALTH PROFESSIONS

NETWORKING DINNER

More than 100 people representing a wide variety of optometry and health services, and partners in eye care delivery, came together for a successful and enjoyable networking dinner on February 24. Health Minister David Davis addressed the dinner, and reiterated the government's commitment to eye care services in Victoria, through the Australian College of Optometry, the Vision Initiative, and the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, all of whom were represented on the night. The Shadow Minister for Health, Gavin Jennings, also attended. A wide variety of members, from Life Members to the current and immediate past student association presidents, joined OAA-Vic Board and committee members, staff from the University of Melbourne and Deakin University, and OAA-Vic staff at the dinner.

The following excerpts from the speech presented by Melissa Downing (President) provide the flavour of the night.

Looking around the room tonight, I'm struck by the number of people here who can claim to have made an immense contribution to the practice of optometry in Victoria. We have distinguished researchers and amazing teachers, incredible practitioners, and experts in vision science, children's vision, low vision, and the management of ocular disease. There are people who have led the way in clinical practice; great advocates who have ensured optometrists are trained to a very high degree to provide the best in eye care; and great advocates who have worked to ensure that optometrists are able to practice to the full extent of that impressive training.

In this short address, I want to focus specifically on that shared goal: great outcomes for our patients, and to reflect a little on how each and everyone here is part of a shared effort toward that goal.

All day, right across Victoria, optometrists are helping people to see better, improving their vision so they can learn better at school, see better at sport, undertake their work safely and effectively, drive, cook, maintain independence . . . in other words, helping them make the best of their lives with clearer eyesight. Optometrists are providing care for people with myopia, hyperopia, presbyopia, low vision, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, corneal ulcers, keratoconus, and the list goes on.

Eyes are a key part of the healthy body and optometrists are an integral part of the primary health system. It is important to have representatives here tonight from both the Pharmaceutical Society and the Pharmacy Guild, the AMA, the Australian Physiotherapy and Dental Associations. We need to continue to work together for the best interest of our patients.

We have worked with the Eye and Ear Hospital to pilot approaches to see if we can find a model that makes the best use of our optometrists as a great community resource: one that assists patients in the



community where practical and appropriate (because it's good care, local and cost-effective and what many patients want), helping free up hospital resources so that they can be used on the patients who really need to be in tertiary care. We know that ophthalmologists don't want to be routinely treating patients who can effectively be treated by optometrists. There's still a need for further education to achieve this but it's an important and we think realistic goal — even it takes some time.

The Australian College of Optometry has been a part of this change process. The College provides essential eye care services for Victorians in a unique model, supported by the Victorian government. The College allows people with low incomes to access primary eye care, from the simple (provision of glasses) to the complex (through diagnosis, treatment and care available at the College's well-equipped clinics, or the laudable outreach programs such as that providing eye care for the homeless).

The College, through the National Vision Research Institute, also supports an important research program: a great resource for obtaining evidence about optometry and eye care. Through PhD programs, the NVRI,

the University of Melbourne, the College, and the Centre for Eye Research Australia have a formidable team of academics, research optometrists and clinical optometrists in research who are helping to provide the evidence base for great patient care: from basic science through to epidemiology, to the bionic eye. Importantly these optometrists work alongside ophthalmologists, orthoptists, vision scientists and others to bring together their skills with the goal of providing evidence to support the best possible eye health outcomes.

We also acknowledge the important links with the Macular Degeneration Foundation, Glaucoma Australia and Diabetes Australia Victoria. The ongoing public education efforts of these organisations help reduce the impact of eye disease. It is so important that we work together.

What I have been trying to show you is that underpinning the best care for patients are many factors, and the purpose of this dinner is to bring

together those involved at all levels: from the universities, which provide the teaching and training to make the optometrists of today and tomorrow — from this year we have two universities training optometrists (the University of Melbourne and Deakin University) and we have senior staff here tonight from both the universities — to the organisations that support and employ them in clinical practice; and those that support and develop practitioners' clinical interests and skills.

I want to finish by reminding you that optometry is a crucial and local component of the eye care system. Whilst many people see the main role of optometrists as prescribing glasses, we know that this is just one component. We need to continually remind the public that optometry is the starting point for good eye health. Even if your vision seems perfect — over 40 years of age — everyone should see their optometrist every two years to be certain that early signs of eye disease are detected before they cause undue damage.





SRC 2012

SRC 2012 was a successful, fun and relaxed conference. Attendees were comfortable with the keypads and assessment process, had access to over 60 CPD points, were confident moving around the venue and appreciated the closer proximity of the Trade Expo to the lecture theatres.

The education program was very well received with consistently high rankings for 27 of the 29 SRC presenters. Both our international and Australian speakers were well received.

Overall, 1112 delegates registered for the conference — approximately 11% lower than last year's unusually high figure 1251. Reduced delegate numbers were expected as last year's 20% jump in attendance was an anomaly due mainly to the new Optometry Board of Australia rules around compulsory CPD.

Our Education Committee members are Andrew Anderson, Luke Arundel, Tim Chung, Amanda Douglass, Laura Downie, Kylie Harris, Amy Higginbotham, May Ho, Genevieve Napper and Yota Yoshimitsu (chair). Together they help us understand what you might want to hear and who you might want to hear from. We thank them for their significant contributions throughout the year. We also thank our Education Consultants, Anthea Cochrane and Bao Nguyen. They keep our speakers in focus and on topic.

Sponsors and exhibitors were also very happy with SRC. The Expo's position directly opposite the glass link to the Convention Centre made an enormous difference to Exhibitor experience of delegate contact. There were 62 exhibitors at SRC — the highest number ever. There were 14 new exhibitors compared to 6 last year.

SYMPOSIUM ATTENDANCE: AN ALL-TIME HIGH

The sponsored symposiums on Saturday morning were exceptionally well attended this year. The Bausch+Lomb Symposium attendance figure of 425 represents around 10% of all optometrists Australia-wide!

The Johnson and Johnson breakfast session kicking off at 8am had 308 attendees — a great number for a sponsored session.

1,112 DELEGATES REGISTERED FOR SRC



A SELECTION OF THE NEW INITIATIVES INTRODUCED AT SRC 2012

- CPD Planning Guide for delegates to plan their time at SRC in order to maximise their CPD points and enjoy the social events.
- The free, web-based SRC App was launched in April and proved hugely popular with delegates.
- An SRC Twitter Feed was also launched in April.
- After several years we finally secured our preferred Exhibition Bays placing the conference and Expo as close as we can go.
- Daily newssheets were professionally designed this year; they looked great.
- Redesigned SRC promotional materials gave the conference a more relaxed and contemporary branding. Consistency of materials across the event gave it a unified, professional air.
- Our friendly low-key security staff wore the SRC t-shirts this year making them appear more like part of the SRC team than security

AND WE CONTINUED WITH PREVIOUS INITIATIVES

- Optional assessment ● International and local speakers ● Round table SRC breakfast
- Free childcare ● Social Activities ● Sponsored activities

“Congratulations to the OAA Vic Div — you are all lovely, friendly people who did a fantastic job at the SRC!”

SRC APP

The free, web-based SRC App gave delegates the option of accessing the SRC Program, CPD points, take notes and leave feedback all on their download device of choice. It was advertised to both delegates and exhibitors.

Overall, 3211 delegates visited the App website. Of these, 1505 were unique visitors that is, 1505 actually downloaded the App. This level of uptake was a fantastic result in its first year and indicates broad iPhone, iPad and smart phone usage amongst SRC delegates.

1,505
INDIVIDUALS
DOWNLOADED
THE SRC APP

62
COMPANIES
EXHIBITED
AT SRC

OPERATIONS

Over the last few years we have improved our use of technology to streamline operating systems so that member's fees can be used to provide services rather than look after our systems. We are delighted with the enthusiastic response from members to the option to register and pay online for SRC and to the option of making their membership payments online. We look forward to further improvements as we work with National office towards a single national data base.

Our governance and operational policies are strong with calendars and checking systems in place to ensure we meet our statutory and governance responsibilities.

The staff at OAA-Vic are all here to assist members. They are:

Terri Smith	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
Laura Grattidge	<i>Operations Manager</i>
Jenny Hall	<i>Database & Accounts Officer</i>
Johanna Hersey	<i>Member Liaison Officer</i>
Kirsty Machon	<i>Policy and Member Services Manager</i>
Helen Papadimitriou	<i>SRC Coordinator</i>
Kathy Roberts	<i>Eye Health Awareness Project Officer (from September 2012)</i>

Bao Nguyen and Anthea Cochrane worked with us as Education Consultants to coordinate the high quality SRC Education program in 2012.

MAKING THE MOST OF OUR GREAT FACILITIES

Over the last year the OAA-Vic facilities — seminar room, Board room and meeting room — have hosted a wide range of activities. It has been great to see the facilities in full swing throughout the year for our wide range of member activities.

The facilities have also been put to good use by other groups and individual members, namely:

- OCANZ meetings
- Public Health Optometry Group Meetings
- International student exams
- ACBO CPD Conference
- Various meetings, interviews and other activities with individual or groups of members.

The facilities are available for commercial hire and have been rented several times at commercial rates.

The rooms have also been used by Autism Victoria for a range of community and organisational activities. We have been happy to be able to support their important work by offering the room for rent at a reduced rate.



Johanna, Laura and Jenny

VISION, MISSION, VALUES & STRATEGIC DIRECTION

VISION

Optometry — the cornerstone of eye care.

MISSION

Optometrists Association Australia (Victorian Division) is the professional organisation for optometrists in Victoria. It exists to assist members and support the development of the profession of optometry.

The Association achieves its mission by:

- providing information services and support to assist members
- acting as an advocate for the profession and the community on matters relating to eye care
- promoting high standards of optometric care, and
- providing leadership for the profession.

VALUES

Optometrists Association Australia (Victorian Division) believes that:

- The eye health and vision care of the community is best served by optometry delivering and coordinating eye care
- Optometry has a responsibility to ensure the Victorian community has access to eye care services and information of the highest possible standard
- Optometry can fulfil its responsibilities by being a vibrant and progressive profession, committed to lifelong learning and excellence.
- Optometry can fulfil its responsibilities by being a profession of integrity and high public standing
- Our role is to support optometrists practicing in diverse clinical settings, locations and professional roles
- We can show leadership in promoting ethical and social responsibility in the practice of optometry.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- Providing information, services and support to assist members in the practice of optometry
- Supporting optometry in diverse clinical settings, locations, and professional roles
- Working with government and strategic partners to advance ethically and socially responsible eye care
- Raising awareness of the skills and expertise of optometrists among the public and other professions
- Fostering professional excellence through knowledge, training and technology
- Ensuring the Victorian Division is a positive driver of national policy and initiatives
- Providing excellent governance and management for the organisation

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