

Diabetes Educators' Role in Diabetes Eye Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

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Diabetes is a major cause of vision loss and blindness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- As the incidence of diabetes increases, so do its complications, including diabetic retinopathy.
- 37% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have diabetes, and 13% have already lost vision.¹
- Early detection and treatment can prevent up to 98% of blindness from diabetes.¹
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes require an eye check at diagnosis, and EVERY year after that. Currently only 20% receive this care.²

Eye care is integral to routine diabetes care

- Knowledge and awareness of eye care is crucial for diabetes care and diabetes self management.
- Many people with diabetes are unaware of the critical need for annual eye checks.
- Primary care providers, in particular Credentialed Diabetes Educators (CDE), are at the forefront of supporting people with diabetes to:
 - understand how to look after their eyes;
 - access eye health checks; and
 - facilitate timely referral to eye health specialists for treatment.
- The Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision* makes 42 recommendations to improve Indigenous eye health. 35 recommendations relate to diabetes eye care.³



Local, regional and national initiatives and educational resources have been developed to support primary care providers and CDE's:

Clinical Care

Mandatory 'eye component' included in the MBS 715 Item Annual Health Assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from 2013.⁴



New Medicare Item for retinal photography to start 1 November 2016 for retinal screening.⁵

Diabetes Self Management Education

Training and educational modules and health promotion resources have been developed for primary care providers to improve diabetes eye care assessment and diabetes self management skills.

DIABETIC RETINOPATHY ONLINE GRADING COURSE

This self directed online learning resource is designed to provide training in grading diabetic retinopathy. A certificate of competency is provided after successful completion.

www.drgrading.iehu.unimelb.edu.au

RAHC DIABETES AND EYE HEALTH ONLINE MODULE

This module aims to provide health professionals working in Indigenous communities with an overview of the management of eye care for people with diabetes and will draw on findings from *The Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision*.

www.rahc.com.au/elearning

Patient Self-Management

A suite of diabetes eye care print and multimedia resources, 'Check Today, See Tomorrow', have been developed to support patient knowledge and awareness.⁶



Music Videos



Personal Stories



Promoting Regular Eye Checks

"I didn't listen.
I never realised
diabetes can affect
your eyes"



References:

- Taylor HR, NIEHS Team, et al. National Indigenous Eye Health Survey - Minum Barreng (Tracking Eyes). Indigenous Eye Health, in collaboration with Centre for Eye Research Australia and Vision CRC, 2009. ISBN 978 0-7340-4109-8.
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- Taylor HR, Anjou MD, Boudville AI, McNeil RJ. The Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision: Full Report. Indigenous Eye Health, University of Melbourne. 2012. ISBN 9780734047564
- MBS Mandatory Eye Checks for Health Assessments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adults and Older People. Indigenous Eye Health, University of Melbourne. 2013. http://iehu.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1380997/mandatory_eye_checks.pdf
- Australian Government Department of Health (2016). Medicare Benefits Schedule - listing of photography with non-mydriatic retinal cameras. Accessed from <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/corporate/budget/budget-2016-17/health-matters-and-health-professionals/medicare-benefits-schedule-listing-photography-non-mydriatic-retinal-cameras>
- 'Check Today, See Tomorrow' resources. Indigenous Eye Health, University of Melbourne. www.iehu.unimelb.edu.au

