

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EYE HEALTH CONFERENCE 2026

SEEING OUR WAY

Innovation, Excellence & Healing

11 - 13 MAY 2026 | Naarm/Melbourne – Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Country

CONFERENCE REPORT

CONTENTS

3. **CEO REFLECTION**
4. **CONFERENCE OVERVIEW**
5. **NATSIEHC26 OBJECTIVE AND KEY OUTCOMES**
6. **KEYNOTE ADDRESSES**
9. **JILPIA NAPPALJARI JONES ORATION**
10. **SPEAKERS**
13. **NATSIEHC26 AWARD WINNERS**
15. **SPONSORSHIP AND PARTNERS**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands, skies, and waterways throughout Australia. We acknowledge the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the land and affirm that sovereignty was never ceded.

We pay respects to our elder's past, present and emerging. We thank our elders for their guidance and commitment to the advancement of our communities. We stand in solidarity with the stolen generation and their families, calling for healing and justice for the atrocities suffered by individuals, families, and communities.

Finally, we acknowledge the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have or continue to work tirelessly in eye health and vision care, to close the gap in preventable vision loss in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities so they can be healthy and flourishing.

LOCATION

We gathered on the beautiful lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Naarm/Melbourne, at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Brunton Ave, Richmond, VIC 3002

DISCLAIMER

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this program and other Conference resources may contain images and voices of deceased persons.

ARTWORK

'Connecting Land, Sky and Water', created by contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artist Dennis Golding expresses Aboriginal peoples connection to land, sky and water since time immemorial. Our history shows how our people have cared for Country including the waterways and land that provides us sources for life and culture. This artwork recognises how the First Nations Eye Health Alliance aim to provide pathways, support and care into our community for better outcomes in health and wellbeing. It acknowledges how communities who come from all parts of country including salter water, freshwater regions, to connect and work together as one. The artwork allows people to see the roots of Country, the cultural practices on land, the tracks we mark, the waters we live off and around, and the stories we reflect and connect to from sky Country.

SUPPORTED BY OUR MAJOR SPONSORS

GOLD SPONSOR



SILVER SPONSORS



The Fred Hollows
Foundation

CONFERENCE COVENOR



FIRST NATIONS
EYE HEALTH ALLIANCE

A Decade of Progress, Leadership and Legacy

As I reflect on the 2026 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference, I feel both relieved and incredibly proud. Proud is almost an understatement.

This conference was a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when our sector comes together with generosity, commitment, and a shared vision for better eye health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Thank you to everyone across the sector who contributed their knowledge, expertise, and experience by presenting your work. Your willingness to share progress, challenges, innovations, and successes is what made this conference as inspiring and impactful as it was.

This year marked a significant milestone, celebrating 10 years of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference and two years of the conference being community-controlled and led. That legacy is something we can all be proud of.

We also celebrated a remarkable public health achievement: the elimination of trachoma as a public health problem in Australia. As we reflected on this achievement together, we were reminded that elimination does not mean the work is finished. Maintaining elimination now becomes a key focus, and as a sector, we must continue to strengthen the systems, partnerships, and community-led approaches that made this achievement possible. Congratulations and thank you to our sector for your commitment across the years to eye health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

To our Gold Sponsor, Roche, our Silver Sponsor, The Fred Hollows Foundation, and all of our sponsors - thank you for making this conference possible. We could not have done this without your generous support.

Thankyou also to our bursary supporters, NACCHO and Specsavers. Working with FNEHA, we collectively supported over 20 sector workers in attending NATSIEHC26.

There is so much to be proud of and so much yet still to do. May the next ten years see not only the sustained elimination of trachoma, but also real progress towards achieving eye health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As we look ahead to NATSIEHC27 in Adelaide, I invite you to carry the momentum of this conference forward with purpose, partnership, and a commitment to the legacy of those who came before us. The importance of Indigenous voice, leadership, and participation cannot be overstated. By truly Seeing Our Way, we can build a future of possibility, equity, justice, and cultural strength shaped by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and guided by self-determination.

In unity and strength,



Lose (Rose) Fonua
Chief Executive Officer
The First Nations Eye Health Alliance Limited



CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

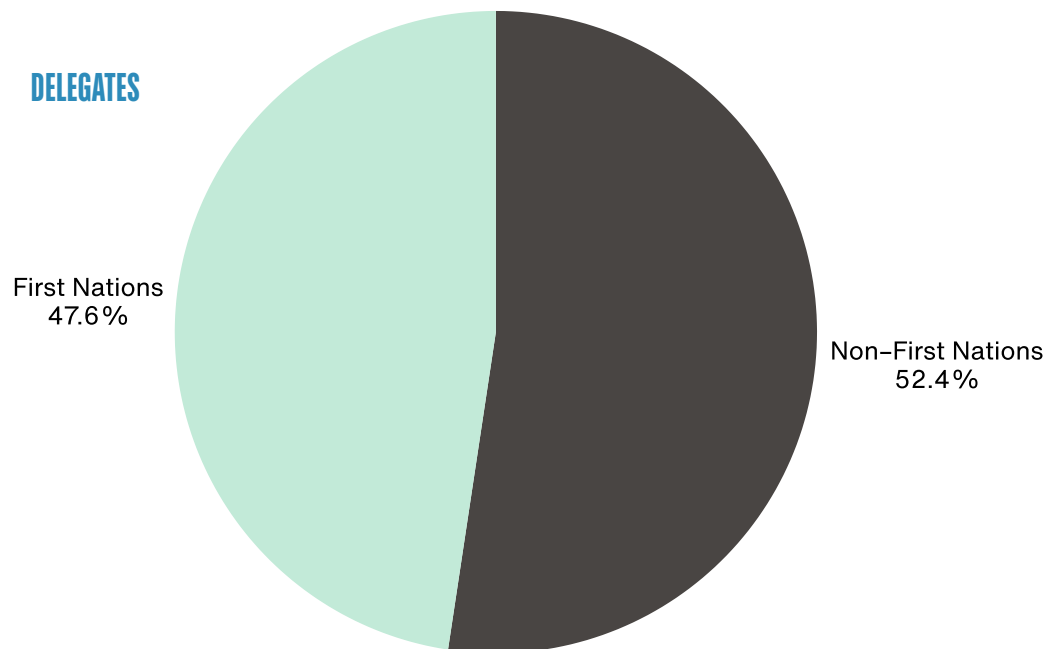
Dates: 11-13th May 2026

Venue: Melbourne Cricket Ground, Naarm

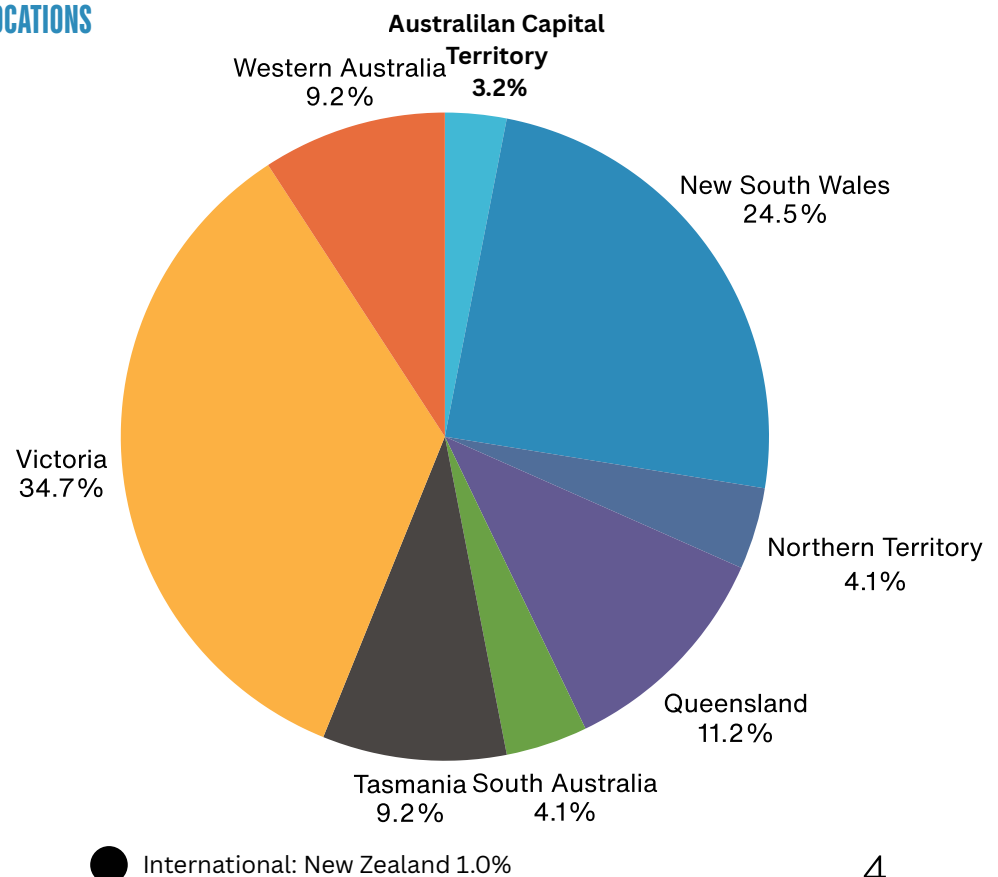
Theme: The 2026 theme, Seeing Our Way: Innovation, Excellence and Healing, recognises Indigenous leadership, honours our past and inspires a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples lead efforts to shape their health outcomes and collective wellbeing. Patrons left empowered, informed, and inspired, emphasising our collective effort to support improvements in eye health outcomes and end avoidable vision loss in communities.

Attendees: over 240 people attended NATSIEHC26

DELEGATES



LOCATIONS



See how this compares to last year here: [NATSIEHC25 Report](#)

NATSIEHC26 OBJECTIVE AND KEY OUTCOMES

Key Purpose

1. Heal and Honour: Reflect on ten years of work and honour those who walked this path before us.
2. Strengthen Community Control: Centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in systems reform.
3. Shift the System: Create a shared plan for action that embeds cultural ways of working across eye care.
4. Build National Momentum: Advance our collective voice at the national policy level and strengthen partnerships with purpose.

Conference Outcomes Summary

NATSIEHC26 brought together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, organisations, state and national ministers of parliament, health professionals, researchers, policymakers, and partners to celebrate achievements, share knowledge, and strengthen action to improve eye health and vision outcomes.

Key Themes

Community Control and Self-Determination

- NATSIEHC26 highlighted the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and voice in shaping policy, programs, and service delivery.
- It also highlighted the critical role of ACCHOs in delivering culturally safe, community-led eye health care.

Cultural Strength, Healing and Wellbeing

- Recognised culture, identity, and connection as central to health and wellbeing.
- Highlighted the importance of cultural safety, healing, and system transformation in achieving equitable outcomes.

Leadership and Resilience

- Celebrated the strength, resilience, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and our allies in the eye care sector
- Showcased leadership across generations and reinforced the importance of supporting future leaders.

Cultural Learning and Connection

- Strengthened understanding through cultural immersion activities of the importance of connection, reflection, cultural exchange, and appreciation of community-controlled models of care.

Excellence and Recognition

- Celebrated outstanding contributions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health through the NATSIEHC26 Awards Program.

Celebrating Progress and Shaping the Future

- Marked the 10th anniversary of NATSIEHC and Australia's achievement in eliminating trachoma as a public health problem.
- Held a roundtable on the next national eye health, progressing the design and development of the next National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health plan
- Reaffirmed a shared commitment to vision equity, community control, workforce development, culturally safe care, and improved eye health outcomes for future generations

Overall Outcome

NATSIEHC26 was a celebration of incredible gains that can be experienced in eye care, when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and allies work together to improve health and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



KEYNOTE ADDRESSES



Key Takeaways

Abe Ropitini spoke about the strength of community controlled models of care and VACCHO's remit of work and its important role in improving health and wellbeing for Mob in Victoria.

Abe Ropitini, Executive Director, Population Health, The Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)

Abe Ropitini is a Māori and Aboriginal man of Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāti Maniapoto iwi (Aotearoa) and Trawlwoolway (Northeastern Tasmania) descent. After growing up in Aotearoa, he has spent his adult life in Australia working across health, social services, policy, and research. He is the Executive Director of Population Health at the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO), the peak representative body for Aboriginal health and wellbeing in Victoria.

Abe is a Senior Fellow in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health at the University of Melbourne and is a PhD candidate in medical anthropology at La Trobe University. His research is focused on correcting deficit discourses by focusing on how Aboriginal families maintain their oral histories through the recollection of treasured memories of happiness and belonging.



Key Takeaways

Kim spoke about the importance of cultural safety in health care and the importance of cultural safety when considering the care of our elderly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Kim Whiteley, Chief Executive Officer, The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing and Aged Care Council (NATSIAACC)

Kim Whiteley is an Aboriginal woman with traditional links to the Warramunga people of the Bogan River area and Wellington (Binjain country) in central-west NSW, Wiradjuri nation.

With more than 40 years' leadership across Education, Health, Justice, and Aboriginal Land Rights — grounded in Policy, Cultural Safety, and improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples — Kim has built a respected national profile as a reform leader and advocate for culturally safe systems change. As CEO of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing and Aged Care Council (NATSIAACC), she works to ensure Elders can age with dignity, respect, and self-determination in community-led services.

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Mr Kahurangi Fergusson-Tibble Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga a Māhaki, Ngāti Uenukukōpako. Waha Tohutohu Matua Principal Advisor Māori



Key Takeaways:

Charismatic and truthful, Kahurangi's talk was grounded in culture, truth and reality of living with vision loss. Kahurangi spoke about the strength of legacy, the determination to be accepted, and the importance of growing into your own path and making your own mark on the world.

Kahurangi descends from the nations of Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga a Māhaki and Ngāti Uenukukōpako. These nations are situated in Te Tai Rāwhiti (the East Coast of the North Island) and Rotorua (the Central Plateau of the North Island) in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Kahurangi is the son of two prominent health warriors, leaders and advocates, Mr Maaka Tauranga Tibble and Roberta Huinga Tibble, nee Cookson, who both worked tirelessly in the areas of disabilities, mental health, and addictions. Kahurangi's late father, Mr Maaka Tibble, was one of the founding members of what was formerly known as Ngāti Kaapo and is now known as Kaapo Māori o Aotearoa (Māori Blind Association), and was a staunch advocate for the rights of blind Māori and disabled Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand. He also created the word that we use here in Aotearoa New Zealand - instead of disability or disabled, to describe our community, we use the word "Whaikaha", which does not translate to disability or disabled. It translates to "have strength", "to have ability" and "to enable".

Kahurangi proudly walks in his parents' footsteps to continue this legacy and leave a better space for his tamariki and mokopuna (children and grandchildren). Kahurangi has also worked in the disability, mental health and addictions sectors in Aotearoa. He continues to work and represent the needs of Tāngata Whaikaha in the Waitangi Tribunal.

Lastly, Kahurangi is an active member of his community and a speaker for and on behalf of his people when called upon. Kahurangi participates in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and currently holds the rank of blue belt. He is a husband to Dr Chloe Fergusson-Tibble and father to Jaxyn and Storm, so just your regular friendly neighbourhood Spider-Man.



Mr Fergusson-Tibble playing a traditional cultural instrument, 2026 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Melbourne Cricket Ground

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Aunty Eva Jo Edwards Mutti Mutti, Boonwurrung and Yorta Yorta woman and survivor of the Stolen Generations



Key Takeaways

Aunty Eva Jo shared her incredible story as a member of the Stolen Generations. Raw and unedited, the story spoke of the impact of government policies on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It spoke of the resilience of Mob and the importance of system transformation to ensure the ongoing healing and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Eva Jo Edwards has spent much of her adult life rediscovering and engaging again in the culture she lost as a child.

After being taken at 5 years old Eva Jo spent the rest of her childhood in State care, splintered from much of her family but emerging as a determined young woman who found work, reconnected with her family and has never stopped exploring her Aboriginal heritage. Eva Jo's tenacity has seen her become a cultural educator who employs performance and public speaking as well as managerial, administrative and teaching skills in her diverse working life.

For the past 20 years Eva Jo, along with her cousin/uncle Kutcha Edwards, ran education workshops titled Banyip Kidjeka (brother/sister) which has led to Eva Jo receiving regular guest speaking roles in both the education and corporate sectors. She also offers Aboriginal cultural sessions at schools, libraries and festivals and most recently has been presenting Aboriginal Story Time as a cultural introduction for the very young.

A milestone in her life was February 13th 2008 when she travelled to Canberra for The Apology to the Stolen Generations where she had a seat in Parliament and met the Prime Minister, Mr Kevin Rudd. A picture of Eva Jo with Mr Rudd appeared the next day on the front page of the Financial Review.

Aunty Sandra Barber, survivor of Stolen Generations



Aunty Sandra Barber, a proud member of the Dja Dja Wurrung people, traces her lineage back to her apical ancestor, Emma Curr. As part of the Stolen Generations, she has reconnected with her heritage through dance over the years. Discovering her roots in the early 1990s profoundly shaped the course of her life.

For the first seven years of her life, Sandra was a ward of the state due to past government policies. Currently, she serves as the Co-Chair of the Stolen Generations Advisory Committee for the Department of Justice, entering her fourth year in this important role.

Despite living with legal blindness for most of her life, Sandra has used her life experiences to enhance her ability to listen more closely to her intuition and to be more aware of her surroundings and their effects on her physical, emotional, and social well-being. During this journey, she discovered a deeper passion for teaching, which has always been a natural part of her story.

Her career began as a teacher's aide in the early 1980s, and she returned to teaching in 2007-2008. Additionally, Sandra works alongside preschool educators and directors delivering Cultural Awareness programs.

Sandra also enjoys sewing and creating children's clothes under her label, The Laughing Kookaburra.

Key Takeaways

Aunty Sandy spoke about the importance of whole-of-life health and wellbeing. Through personal testimony, Aunty Sandy spoke about her journey to health and wellbeing, from a place of brokenness to a place of strength and a testimony of resilience.

JILPIA NAPPALJARI JONES ORATION

Janet Richardson

2026 Jilpia Nappaljari Jones Memorial Oration Speaker

The Jilpia Nappaljari Jones Memorial Oration celebrates the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye care.

The Oration was first introduced at the 2022 Conference and acknowledges the significant contribution Jilpia made to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health, as well as her inspiration for a whole generation of exceptional women leaders in eye health.

The Jilpia Nappaljari Jones Memorial Oration's previous presenters have included:

2022 Jaki Adams

2023 Lauren Hutchinson

2024 Emma Robertson

2025 Anne-Marie Banfield

The 2026 Jilpia Nappaljari Jones Memorial Oration was presented at the 2026 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference by Aunty Janet Richardson.

Aunty Janet is of the Baard and Yawuru Culture, an Ooranyg / Ngala Jandu (Saltwater Woman) Heritage from Broome in the Dampier Peninsula of the West Kimberley Region. Aunty Janet's lifelong passion has been working with Indigenous patients in eye health to minimise unnecessary vision loss.

Aunty Janet's story has been documented through the Seeing Our Way: Life and Legacy, a First Nations Eye Health Alliance storytelling series. This series honours the Elders, leaders and changemakers who have shaped Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye care, health and wellbeing across generations. As the oration speaker, Aunty Janet's story in eye care was launched at NATSIEHC26, and the video can be viewed below. For more information on the project, go to: <https://fneha.com.au/seeing-our-way-life>.

Seeing Our Way Life and Legacy Video 1: Aunty Janet Richardson.



Key Takeaways

Aunty Janet took us on an incredible lifelong journey in eye care, from training to become a nurse to working in the eye health field. Aunty Janet reminded us of the incredible resilience of Mob and the opportunities you can forge when you don't give up. The narrative is ours to write, and the gains for the community outweigh the challenges we may face.

SPEAKERS



Hon Rebecca White MP, Assistant Minister for Women, Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health, Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Australian Labor Party

A/Minister White congratulated the sector on their work across the years, including the recent Trachoma elimination announcement.



Christine Couzens MP, The Parliamentary Secretary for First Peoples, Member for Geelong

Ms Couzens spoke passionately about the Victorian Governments commitment to Closing the Gap and improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Monica Barolits-McCabe, Executive Director, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)

Ms Barolits-McCabe talked about the importance of transition and the many strengths of community control in improving health and wellbeing of Mob.



Associate Professor Julian L Rait OAM, FRACS FRANZCO FAICD, Vice President of The Australian Medical Association (AMA)

A/Professor Rait talked about opportunities across the Australian Health Care System to improve eye care in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including the need for culturally safe models and workforce.

SPEAKERS



Jaki Adams, International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) Indigenous Peoples Special Interest Group

Ms. Adams provided an update on the progress of Indigenous peoples special interest group and the importance of aligning with national and international initiatives in eye care.



Renata Watene, Ngā Puhi, Ngāti Hikairo, International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) Indigenous Peoples Special Interest Group

Co-presenting with Ms Adams, Ms Watene provided an update on the growth of Indigenous eye health globally.



Gavin Brown, Chief Operating Officer, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service

Mr Brown spoke about the great work of VAHS and the importance of the historical significance of the MCG venue site to Aboriginal people.



Professor John Kaldor, University of New South Wales Kirby Institute

Professor Kaldor spoke about Australia's achievement of Trachoma elimination as a public health problem and the future indications to ensure eradication.

SPEAKERS



Councillor Dr Olivia Ball, City of Melbourne

Councillor Ball spoke passionately about the City of Melbourne's commitment to the advancement and improvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing in Victoria.

"It really was a great conference – very inspiring speakers and informative sessions."

NATSIEHC26 Attendee

Congratulations on an excellent NATSIEHC. It was such an honour to attend.

NATSIEHC26 Attendee



Group photo, 2026 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Melbourne Cricket Ground.

AWARD WINNERS

Each year, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference Awards recognise and celebrate the outstanding individuals, organisations and initiatives making a meaningful difference to the eye health and vision outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

From local communities to state, national and international forums, these awards showcase the dedication, innovation and collaboration that drive progress across our sector. The achievements of this year's nominees and winners demonstrate what is possible when we work together in partnership to improve eye health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Congratulations to all nominees and award winners for their remarkable contributions and commitment to advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health. We are proud to acknowledge and celebrate the recipients of the 2026 Awards, listed below.



2026 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference Gala Dinner
Members Dining Room, Melbourne Cricket Ground



Lifetime Achievement Award Shaun Tatipata



Outstanding Leadership Award
Jacqueline Adams



Exemplary Allyship (Individual) Renata Watene



Young and Deadly Award RJ Webb

AWARD WINNERS



Emerging Leadership Award **Harrison Pike**



Dr Assan Sam Emerging Leaders Award
T'Kido Titasey



Exemplary Allyship (Organisation)
Minum Barreng: Indigenous Eye Health Unit



ACCHO Excellence Award
Karadi Aboriginal Corporation

Award definitions:

- **Lifetime Achievement Award:** Recognises an individual whose sustained leadership, service and impact have made a lasting contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health.
- **Outstanding Leadership Award:** Celebrates exceptional leadership that has advanced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health through collaboration, influence and commitment to cultural safety.
- **Emerging Leadership Award:** Recognises a rising leader whose dedication, innovation and community-centred approach are shaping the future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health.
- **Exceptional Contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health (ACCHO) Award:** Honours an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation that has demonstrated excellence in delivering culturally safe eye health services and improving community outcomes.
- **Exemplary Allyship Award:** Recognises a non-Indigenous organisation, program or individual that has demonstrated genuine and respectful allyship, supporting First Nations leadership and delivering meaningful impact.
- **Young and Deadly Award:** Celebrates a young Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person making a positive contribution to eye health, advocacy and community wellbeing through leadership, passion and action.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

GOLD SPONSOR



SILVER SPONSORS



BRONZE SPONSORS



Australian Government
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

BESPOKE SPONSORS



**BUSINESS
EVENTS
VICTORIA**



TRADE TABLE SPONSORS



**The Fred Hollows
Foundation**



Guide Dogs.



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING BURSARIES



NATSIEHC26 provides bursaries to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to take part in this important annual gathering. The applications received come from health workers, emerging leaders, and community members interested in eye health and vision care, seeking this unique opportunity to connect, learn, and share.



This year, we provided over 20 bursaries covering flights, accommodation, registration, and travel support where needed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to attend. Thankyou to the incredible generosity of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and Specsavers for partnering with us to provide this opportunity. Thankyou!



" I am so grateful for the bursary and appreciate beyond measure that I was able to attend the conference due to the generosity of others who know how important attending it is."

NATSIEHC26 Bursary Recipient



Thankyou to the Melbourne Football Club for joining us!
2026 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference, Wurundjeri
Woi Wurrung Country, Members Room, Melbourne Cricket Ground

Partnering for Health Equity: Our Work with First Nations Communities

Roche is deeply committed to reducing health inequities across Australia - and globally. Life-changing innovation is only meaningful if it reaches those who need it. We collaborate with governments, customers, health systems and other partners to remove barriers and advance equitable health outcomes, so patients everywhere have access to the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

We have an organisational commitment to reconciliation and a dedicated focus on the unique healthcare challenges faced by First Nations communities. We aim to establish long term partnerships and seek guidance on where our skills and capabilities can best be applied to help bridge indigenous health gaps. The concept of nothing for indigenous people, without indigenous people guides our approach.



Our Reconciliation Commitment

As an organisation, we are on a journey of reconciliation, building long-term, meaningful relationships with First Nations communities and organisations. We proudly acknowledge and respect the cultural heritage of the lands on which we operate. We are committed to identifying opportunities to empower First Nations communities, promote Indigenous businesses, and support self-determination. In collaboration with First Nations communities, our aim is to proactively advocate for long term, sustainable change.

Deepening our Cultural Awareness:

We recognise that genuine allyship requires a deep understanding and respect for First Nations culture. We have established a bespoke Cultural Awareness Training program within our organisation, featuring an impactful On Country immersion experience for all our employees to help grow their cultural knowledge and understanding. Our partnership with Jawun provides invaluable opportunities for cultural exchange, fostering meaningful relationships and strengthens our commitment to a more equitable future.

Investing in improved health outcomes: Reconciliation and improved health outcomes for First Nations peoples require genuine partnership. At Roche, we are dedicated to building meaningful relationships based on trust, respect, and a shared commitment to addressing the unique healthcare needs of First Nations peoples. We are actively engaging with First Nations communities and organisations to understand health priorities and collaborate on solutions that make a real difference. We are striving to contribute to a future where health equity is a reality for all Australians.

Our Aspiration

“Roche shares one sky with the First Nations Peoples of Australia; we walk on the same land, and in the same time. Our aspiration is to walk, listen, and journey alongside Indigenous Partners with humility, fostering equal energy and power between us.

We endeavor as a company to ensure that our aspirations do not sit parallel to our company’s other strategies, but rather that reconciliation is an integral part of everything we do. Our focus and commitment is to forge equitable outcomes for all Australian patients and the communities that surround them, addressing in particular those gaps in Indigenous Health which align with Roche's expertise, strengths and capabilities.”



The Fred Hollows Foundation

The Fred Hollows Foundation works to uphold Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' right to sight, free, prior and informed consent and self-determination. This is why we partner with community-controlled organisations to enable self-determination and locally led delivery of eye health to their communities.

HOW WE WORK & OUR PARTNERS

To ensure we work alongside the community-controlled sector and utilise our strong presence in the eye health sector to uphold these values, the IAP does not work where we are not invited to ensure community organisations and leaders are calling the shots and we do not accept Government funding to ensure we are not competing with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector for resources.



Our Indigenous Australia Program (IAP)

IAP is guided by our principles to ensure we uphold our commitment to self-determination and work with integrity.

Self-determination - free prior and informed consent

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership
- Equity
- Respect
- Working Together
- Support
- Transparency and Accountability
- Patient Centred Care



2026 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference Gala Dinner, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Members Room, Melbourne Cricket Ground

BRONZE SPONSORS



OPTOMETRY AUSTRALIA

Representing the largest community of optometrists in Australia since 1918, Optometry Australia has been pivotal in uniting the sector to enhance eye health services nationwide.



MINUM BARRENG INDIGENOUS EYE HEALTH UNIT

Established in 2008 at the University of Melbourne, this unit undertakes world-leading research to establish an evidence base and policy framework for Indigenous eye health.



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF HEALTH AND WELFARE

Established in 2008 at the University of Melbourne, this unit undertakes world-leading research to establish an evidence base and policy framework for Indigenous eye health.



BUPA

A health and care company committed to helping customers live longer, healthier, happier lives, Bupa offers a broad range of services, including health insurance and community wellbeing initiatives.



SPECSAVERS

Australia's largest eye health provider, Specsavers has supported The Fred Hollows Foundation's Indigenous Australia Program since 2011, contributing over \$10 million to fund vital eye health projects.



RURAL WORKFORCE AGENCY VICTORIA

Rural Workforce Agency Victoria (RWAV) is a key partner in strengthening the rural and Aboriginal health workforce across Victoria. Through workforce planning, recruitment, training, and support, RWAV contributes to improving equitable access to healthcare for communities throughout the state.

TAILORED SPONSORS



LOWITJA INSTITUTE

The Lowitja Institute is Australia's national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health research institute. It champions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led research to inform policy, practice, and improved health outcomes for communities.



ALCON

Alcon is a global eye care company committed to advancing vision and eye health through innovation, education, and collaboration. As a valued partner, Alcon supports initiatives that strengthen eye care services, build workforce capability, and improve outcomes for communities.



SPECSAVERS

Australia's largest eye health provider, Specsavers has supported The Fred Hollows Foundation's Indigenous Australia Program since 2011, contributing over \$10 million to fund vital eye health projects.



BUSINESS EVENTS VICTORIA

Business Events Victoria is the Victorian Government's agency for attracting and supporting business events across the state. It works to position Victoria as a leading destination for conferences and events that deliver economic, social, and community benefits.

BURSARY SUPPORT



NATIONAL ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH ORGANISATION

NACCHO is the national leadership body for Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations across Australia. It champions community control, cultural safety, and equitable health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



SPECSAVERS

Australia's largest eye health provider, Specsavers has supported The Fred Hollows Foundation's Indigenous Australia Program since 2011, contributing over \$10 million to fund vital eye health projects.



LOOKING AHEAD TO NATSIEHC27 IN TARNDANYA

We're already looking forward to welcoming you to NATSIEHC27 in Kaurna Country Tarndanya!

Next year marks eleven years of this important gathering, a milestone moment for the conference, and the third year it will be fully First Nations-run and led. We're proud of how far we've come, and even more excited about where we're heading. NATSIEHC27 promises to be a powerful celebration of culture, connection, and action you won't want to miss it.

Come be part of the next chapter.

SPONSOR NATSIEHC27

If you or your organisation are interested in sponsoring NATSIEHC27, we'd love to have a yarn. Sponsorship helps us keep this conference accessible, impactful, and community-led, and we want to work with partners who share that vision.

Reach out to us at heyyoumob@fneha.com.au, and we'll chat through your goals, the areas you'd like to support, and the options available. A sponsorship prospectus will be available soon. Feel free to email us now to register your interest in receiving one.

VOLUNTEER WITH US

It takes a village to make NATSIEHC happen and we're always on the lookout for mob and allies who want to lend a hand.

Whether it's being part of the conference leadership team, helping shape the program, sitting on the awards committee, or simply giving your time to help on the registration desk, every bit of support counts. If you'd like to volunteer for NATSIEHC27 you can register your interest [here](#) we'd love to have you on the team.

Tell us what you think



Did you attend the NATSIEHC26 conference in Naarm. Why not provide us with some feedback to help us make any improvements where needed.

Click [NATSIEHC26 Evaluation Survey](#) to complete our survey.





**FIRST NATIONS
EYE HEALTH ALLIANCE**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email
heyyoumob@fneha.com.au

Website
www.fneha.com.au