



A message from the CEO

After two false starts due to COVID-19 it was third time lucky with OCANZ Members, Directors, and staff from across Australia and New Zealand finally getting together in person for our annual meeting. An August day in Melbourne was spent discussing the past year's achievements, our projects for the next year, and future directions.

There was a lot of creative energy in the room as 22 delegates shared their experiences, ideas and passion for ensuring OCANZ continues to be innovative in its mission of assuring the quality of optometric education and assessing trained optometrists in protecting the eye health of the public.

New curriculum improving Indigenous eye health

There was consensus that finalising and implementing the *Optometry Māori Health Curriculum Framework* is a major priority.

Due by March 2023, this initiative builds on the *Optometry Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework* OCANZ implemented in January 2019.

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We understand the power that cultural safety education programs can have on Indigenous eye health outcomes. The final phase of this project will be to recognise the cross-Tasman relationships and describe how to bridge the two curriculum frameworks in optometry education programs delivered in each country.

It reinforces the benefits of collaboration between Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand as we share ideas, experiences and programs across the Tasman Sea. Our approach strives to explore and implement reform and innovation to improve the eye health for all communities.

We will be holding an OCANZ Directors' planning day in February next year to build on the ideas from the 2022 meeting. Both gatherings will help inform our next Strategic Plan, due to be released in July 2023.

Raising cultural safety awareness

Continuing the theme of cultural safety, we have been delighted with the uptake of our cultural safety workshops.

In July, 30 staff from eight optometry schools attended a cultural safety workshop, where OCANZ took the opportunity to launch its commitment statement to work with First Nations Peoples to improve eye health outcomes for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori Peoples. I encourage you to read about our commitment to First Nations Peoples Health at: <https://www.ocanz.org/commitment-to-first-nations-peoples-health/>

We also had a great response to the Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) Cultural Responsiveness training program in May, with 27 OCANZ staff, Directors and committee members enrolling in the program. 21 people attended the OCANZ interactive online cultural awareness workshop, which was also held in July.

OCANZ has engaged Wingaru, an Aboriginal-owned education company, to draft the learning objectives for three teaching videos that model culturally safe care in an optometric setting. They will be available



Susan Kelly - OCANZ CEO

early next year for optometry education programs and inclusion in our online cultural safety program for overseas trained optometrists.

In May, OCANZ was pleased to support three staff members and one Indigenous Strategy Taskforce member to attend the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference on Larrakia country in Darwin.

Improving eye health with our partners

I'm excited about the road ahead and I'd like to thank our dedicated staff and partners working on our many projects to help protect the eye health of Australian and New Zealand communities by establishing and applying optometry education and training and assessing overseas trained Optometrists. This includes:

- Reviewing the OCANZ Postgraduate Ocular Therapeutic Accreditation Standards, due for completion February 2023
- Implementing new OCANZ entry-level accreditation standards which come into effect from January next year
- Reviewing the Competency in Optometry Examination for overseas-trained Optometrists, following the findings of the 2021 report on the viability of remotely assessing clinical competence.

Commitment to First Nations Health

Powered by its Indigenous Strategy Taskforce, OCANZ is taking positive steps towards an optometry workforce and services that are culturally safe for First Nations People in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand.

In an exciting initiative towards achieving this goal, OCANZ's new Entry-level Accreditation Standards, which come into effect January 2023, include a standalone Domain on cultural safety to ensure Optometry students can provide culturally safe care for First Nations Peoples.

A core piece of this work is the development of trans-Tasman health curriculum frameworks that accurately represent the unique Indigenous cultures of Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia and support the embedding of the frameworks into the eight Optometry programs across the two countries.

Significant progress has resulted in developing two separate health curriculum frameworks: an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander framework (released in 2019) and a Māori framework (due for release in 2023).

In another commitment towards a culturally safe optometry workforce, OCANZ committee members, Directors and staff undertake cultural safety training and assessments through online learning programs. These include the Safer Healthcare for Australians First Peoples (Griffith University, 2019), Māori Healthcare & The Treaty of Waitangi (Mauriora Health Education Research, 2021) and Cultural Responsiveness Training, levels 1-3 (Indigenous Allied Health Australia 2022).



Auckland-based Māori Optometrist Renata Watene is passionate about improving health equity for Māori, particularly when it comes to eye health.

As one of the very few Māori in the industry, for the past 18 years Renata has used her voice on boards, committees and forums advocating for change in improving the eye health outcomes for First Nations Peoples.

As Co-chair of the OCANZ Indigenous Strategy Taskforce, Renata's passion and experience in Indigenous eyecare has spread across the Tasman.

Renata is guiding the design of the *Optometry Māori Health Curriculum Framework*, which is due to be finalised by OCANZ early next year.

The new Māori curriculum builds on the *Optometry Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework* OCANZ implemented in January 2019.



Meet Renata Watene – our Indigenous Strategy Taskforce Co-Chair

“Too many Māori are waiting until they have vision problems before they see an optometrist. More Māori optometrists is a powerful way to increase the number of Māori getting eye tests earlier to avoid devastating eye diseases” Renata says.

“The new Māori curriculum will help future optometrists explore the negative health statistics that First Nations Peoples face and how to provide culturally appropriate and safe services to encourage early and regular eye checks.”

Renata says OCANZ has been a leader in implementing positive steps with the goal of achieving a culturally safe optometry workforce and a health system that is free from racism and discrimination.

“In addition to developing First Nations optometry curriculum frameworks in Australia and New Zealand, OCANZ requires all staff and board and committee members to undertake cultural awareness training,” she says.

“The work of OCANZ recognises the responsibility of everyone in the organisation to address healthcare inequities, racism in healthcare and their own perceptions, biases and assumptions.

“OCANZ has been extremely conscious of nurturing respectful relationships throughout all its work in the Indigenous space.

“While some situations have been uncomfortable, First Nations Peoples have always led these discussions. As a result, this work has created a much larger network of people who have felt safe to have a voice to help guide and facilitate future work and conversations.

“There is a sense of genuine interest and urgency of change throughout Australia and New Zealand with regard to cultural safety.”

Renata says she has been extremely privileged to be part of the planning and development of the curriculum's essential pou (pillars).

“Whaowhia te mete mātauranga” – “Fill the basket of knowledge,” she says.



Assessment workshops hit the mark

As part of an initiative to help promote best practice in assessment, OCANZ has part-funded a series of assessment workshops available to Schools of Optometry in Australia and New Zealand.

Fourteen to 20 academics from Optometry Schools at Deakin University, Flinders University, Queensland University of Technology, University of Melbourne and the University of NSW attended each workshop.

Topics included principles of quality assessment, developing written examination questions (multiple choice, extended matching, and short answer

questions), assessing clinical skills with the OSCE format, promoting validity through peer review and statistical analysis and formal standard setting of pass scores.

The workshops were an opportunity for Optometry educators to consolidate and refresh their knowledge of quality assessment design and practical implementation, and an opportunity to discuss common assessment issues and challenges.

Designed by OCANZ Examination Committee member Mr Neville Chiavaroli, the workshops were

co-delivered with members of the Examination Committee – committee chair Associate Professor Isabelle Jalbert, Dr Simon Backhouse, Associate Professor Anthea Cochrane, Dr Geraint Phillips and Associate Professor Katrina Schmid. Neville, a Principal Research Fellow at the Australian Council for Education Research, has been a member of the OCANZ Examination Committee since 2016.

The OCANZ Question Writing Guide for MCQ and SAQ was made available to each School to support further development in assessment practice.

Some OCANZ highlights in pictures



Photo – Associate Professor Maria Markoulli, Emeritus Professor Joyce Kirk, Dr Melisa Rangitakatu, Susan Kelly The Flinders University Reaccreditation site visit in March 2022. The university’s College of Nursing and Health Sciences leadership team thanked OCANZ for conducting the accreditation in person, the first since March 2020 for any discipline at Flinders University.



Susan Kelly, Kelley Baldwin and Lisa Vella represented OCANZ at the 2022 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference in May. “It was an absolutely fantastic conference made more special by finally getting to catch up with each other and other attendees in person” – *Kelley Baldwin*.



Both co-chairs of the OCANZ Indigenous Taskforce, Renata Watene and Mitchell Anjou, at the 2022 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Awards. Mitchell received an allyship award for contribution to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health sector. “We all came back even more inspired to continue OCANZ’s work in improving the contribution of optometry accreditation functions to better health outcomes for Indigenous Peoples in Australia and New Zealand” – *Lisa Vella*



Photo - Assessment Workshop at UNSW OCANZ and education providers jointly funded an assessment workshop run by Neville Chiavaroli. The UNSW workshop was held in May, the Flinders workshop in June and the joint Deakin/University of Melbourne workshop in July. Feedback has been extremely positive.