

Meet John – a patient whose story drives our mission

John, 31, travels a 16-hour round trip from Forest Hill near Wagga Wagga to the Sydney Eye Hospital for treatment of a serious eye condition. Like many regional patients, he faces the exhausting travel and financial strain of accessing the care he needs.

As a child growing up in the country, John struggled to see the chalkboard in class. Diagnosed with keratoconus—a condition affecting 1 in 84 young Australians—he underwent a corneal transplant in one eye. The other was deemed untreatable.

Years later, in 2021, John developed a severe eye infection. His right eye swelled shut, and doctors warned it could rupture within 24 hours. With no specialist available locally, John endured a painful, overnight wait before being rushed to Sydney for urgent care.

“It was tough getting to Sydney,” says John. “I was in pain, couldn’t see properly, and had to navigate a big, unfamiliar city.”

After receiving sight-saving treatment, John now makes regular 16-hour round trips for follow-up care. To this day, he continues to travel to Sydney Eye Hospital for monthly checkups in a determined effort to save his eyesight.

“It’s not just me—I see elderly patients from Orange and Bathurst on those packed regional trains. It’s tough.”

With your support, we can change this

Funds raised will help deliver rapid diagnosis and treatment by ophthalmic experts in all sub-specialties, helping people around the clock, saving sight, and connecting regional patients like John with specialist care closer to home.

With your help, we can deliver rapid diagnosis and treatment by ophthalmic experts in all sub-specialties, helping people around the clock, saving sight across regional NSW—reducing travel, stress, and delays for those who need sight-saving treatment.

“It’s fantastic that the Foundation is aiming to help reduce the travel burden and make a real difference,” says Dr Alex Hamilton.

John agrees: “A local clinic would remove the hassle and help so many others, too.”

We need your support—because no one should lose their sight. Join us at the exclusive fundraising dinner on 22 May 2026.

Purchase your tickets: <https://www.sehf.org.au/event/sehf-gala/>



Sydney Eye Hospital
FOUNDATION

