



Sheila's Team: A family united in care

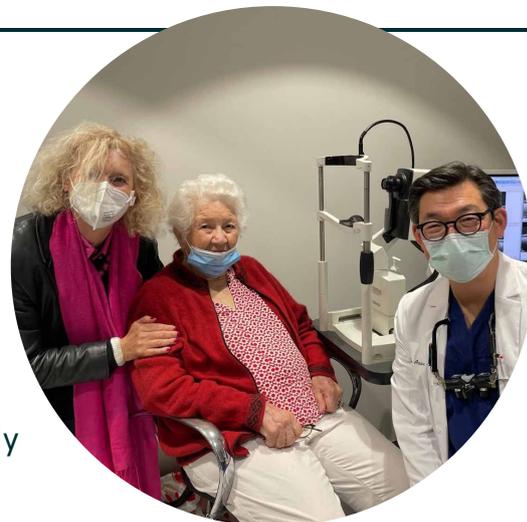
At nearly 98 years old, Sheila is a beloved matriarch whose strength has kept her family close through life's challenges. This year, Sheila faced a serious health scare that united her family in a powerful display of love.

Sheila has been under the care of Professor Andrew Chang at the Sydney Eye Hospital for over a decade, receiving vital injections for macular degeneration. "Without those injections, my mum would have been completely blind years ago," says her daughter Belinda. However, after a routine injection in August,

Sheila developed an infection in her left eye. Recognising the urgency of this rare complication, Belinda promptly contacted Dr Chang for a follow-up appointment.

Timing was critical; Sheila needed emergency surgery, which Dr Chang performed that very night. After this ordeal, Sheila returned to her nursing home, but complications arose. When Dr Chang informed the family that Sheila needed another operation, it felt like they could lose her.

Despite her significant pain, Sheila rallied, responding



Sheila with her daughter Belinda and Dr Chang

to the expert urgent care that made all the difference. Belinda expressed her gratitude, saying, "I can't thank the Sydney Eye Hospital enough. They were so caring, thoughtful, professional, and considerate of caring for Mum as a whole person, and for the whole family."

FROM THE CEO

With great pride, we officially opened the Gadigal Eye Clinic in partnership with Sydney Eye Hospital on 23 October. This new clinic is dedicated to improving access to eye care for all outpatients, with a special focus on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families from regional and remote areas of NSW.

This milestone was made possible through the generosity of our community, who raised \$200,000 at events in 2022 and 2023. The clinic's design honours the Gadigal people incorporating culturally sensitive elements

and a Family and Carers Room to provide respite for families traveling long distances.

In addition, we've completed a three-year strategic plan to enhance eye health across NSW. With over \$1 million raised in 2024, we're proud to announce new funding to help meet the growing demand for eye services.

Thank you for your ongoing support—your generosity makes all of this possible.

Linda Fagan
Chief Executive Officer
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Your impact: Advancing eye care in 2023



Image L-R: Jessica Belle Sy, Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation's first Glaucoma Neuro-Ophthalmology Fellow is pictured with her colleagues, Dr Josefina Herrera and Dr June Artaechevarria.

Since 1981, the Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation has supported Australia's oldest hospital by funding programs that enhance patient experience and advance world-class eye care.

Meeting growing demand

By 2031, Sydney Eye Hospital expects a 27% increase in inpatient admissions and a 25% rise in outpatients, with the greatest growth in patients aged 80 plus. As our population ages, demand for eye care is set to intensify, with conditions like cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration becoming more prevalent. Your support helps preserve vision and quality of life for these patients.

Financial overview

In 2023, the Foundation raised nearly \$1.5 million, with over \$1 million from generous donors. A total of 15 grants, amounting to \$833,703, were awarded across four key funding areas.

Key highlights

Fellowship Program Expansion:

The Fellowship Program received \$517,533 to train nine ophthalmology specialists, including a new Glaucoma-Neuro Ophthalmology fellowship, addressing growing patient needs.

Ophthalmic Specialist Nursing Program:

Two nurses received \$6,000 for clinical placements in ophthalmic nursing, developing critical skills that improve patient care. As one patient shared, "It means a great deal to have a nurse with specialist knowledge who can answer my questions clearly."

Technological Advancements:

Key investments included a new Ellex IntegrePro laser, a handheld retina camera for outreach, and the development of the Ophthalmic Pharmacopoeia App, now used internationally to improve patient safety.

Equitable Access Initiatives:

Six grants supported projects improving eye health access, especially for regional and remote patients, and boosting eye-health literacy through programs like the Sydney Eye Drop Project and I-Share. These initiatives help gather valuable patient feedback to improve care and outcomes.

Looking ahead

As Foundation Chairman, Professor Andrew Chang noted, "Community support is essential in helping us meet the increasing demand for eye care. With your ongoing generosity, we are ready to face the challenges of the next decade."

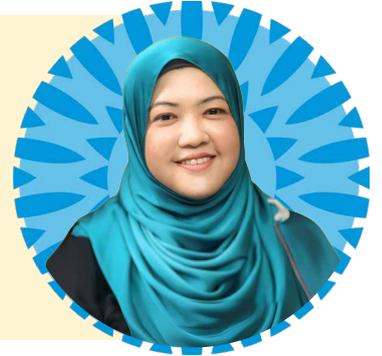
Thank you for your continued support, it is making a lasting difference in eye health.

Meet our new 2024 Fellows

You're helping to train doctors from all over the world! We are thrilled to welcome five distinguished new Fellows to our team as part of our mid-year intake. Each of these experienced specialist ophthalmologists brings a wealth of knowledge, willingness to learn and dedication to advancing patient care with us. Join us in giving them a warm welcome!

Vitreoretinal Fellow: Dr Ainal Adlin Binti Naffi, Malaysia

Dr Adlin Binti Naffi, a pioneering ophthalmologist from Malaysia, graduated with her medical degree in 2009 and an ophthalmology degree in 2017 from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. As a clinical ophthalmologist and lecturer, she aims to elevate vitreoretinal services upon completing her fellowship, showcasing her dedication to advancing healthcare.



Medical Retinal Fellow: Dr Yasemin Kapucu, Turkey

Dr Kapucu completed her medical degree with honours at Hacettepe University and completed her ophthalmology residency there. As a Medical Retina Fellow at Sydney Eye Hospital, she aims to advance her expertise and contribute to ophthalmic care through research and collaboration.

Glaucoma Neuro-Ophthalmology Fellow: Dr Pichaya Kulniwatcharoen (Nicky), Thailand

Dr Kulniwatcharoen graduated with First Class Honors in Medicine and completed Fellowships in uveitis and glaucoma at Chiang Mai University. With the support of world-renowned consultants at Sydney Eye Hospital, Nicky's goal is to become one of just three neuro-ophthalmologists serving Northern Thailand's six million people.



Honorary Corneal Fellow: Dr Aishah Aldhanhani, UAE

Dr Aldhanhani, an ophthalmologist from the United Arab Emirates, graduated from the Abu Dhabi Ophthalmology Program, focusing on clinical skills and surgical techniques. She is eager to participate in cutting-edge research while expanding her knowledge in complex corneal diseases and challenging cases during her fellowship.

Oculoplastic Fellow: Dr Dareen Khawjah, Saudi

Dr Khawjah is excited to further her oculoplastic training at Sydney Eye Hospital. Passionate about the field, she finds joy in helping others feel and look their best. She aims to learn new techniques, collaborate with experts, and engage in research while exploring more of Sydney and Australia.





L-R: Jennie Barry, General Manager, Prince of Wales Hospital and Sydney/Sydney Eye Hospital (SEH); Dr Pauline Rumma, Director of Clinical Services, SEH; Skye Parsons, SESLHD Director Aboriginal Health; Natalie Maier, Director of Nursing SEH.

Gadigal Eye Clinic opens its doors

On 23 October 2024, Sydney/Sydney Eye Hospital officially opened the Gadigal Eye Clinic, a pioneering facility within the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District. Formerly the Bicentennial Clinic, the new clinic provides culturally safe and accessible eye care for all outpatients, with a special focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as residents from regional and remote areas of NSW.

The Hospital Executive highlight the clinic's commitment to culturally sensitive care, honouring the Gadigal people, the traditional custodians of Sydney's land. Landscaping by Wildflower

– Gardens for Good features cultural markers and native plants, while local artist Billy Reynolds' artwork, "Totem Dreaming", serves as a cultural focal point.

The Family and Carers Room offers a quiet space of respite particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families travelling from remote areas.

Generous donations to the Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation, alongside the support of regional partners Pius X Aboriginal Medical Service Moree, have made the clinic possible, transforming eye care access while celebrating First Nations heritage.

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