

## An Exciting New Initiative Targeting Preventable Blindness

### Overview

Centre for Eye Health (CFEH) is an initiative of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and The University of New South Wales (UNSW). From November 2009, the Centre will provide state-of-the-art eye imaging and visual system diagnostic services to the general community, at no charge.

CFEH is unique in that it features an extensive range of the most advanced eye-examination equipment in one location. It is also Australia's first eye-health facility to offer such a comprehensive service free of charge to the general public and health-care practitioners. In doing so, the Centre will bring greater efficiency and increased access to the diagnosis and management of eye-health conditions in NSW and the ACT.

As a client focused facility, the Centre will provide a very high quality of service in a supportive and friendly environment. To visit CFEH, individuals will require a referral from their health-care practitioner and at all times they will remain the patient of the referring practitioner.

Early changes caused by certain eye diseases are now detectable using the advanced equipment available at CFEH. The Centre therefore aims to reduce preventable blindness by identifying eye disease before irreversible vision impairment occurs and assisting health-care practitioners to better manage their patients.

The facility will be staffed by optometrists and consulting ophthalmologists and its inaugural director is prominent vision researcher Professor Michael Kalloniatis.



**The problem is many conditions exhibit no obvious symptoms in their initial stages. It is therefore vital that the broader community has access to equipment with the ability to identify many conditions before they have an impact.**

**Professor Michael Kalloniatis,  
Director, CFEH**

### Why CFEH was developed

Eye disease and vision impairment have considerable financial and social impacts on the Australian community. The most recent figures from Access Economics show that vision impairment costs Australia \$9.85 billion per annum.

Fortunately, vision loss caused by eye diseases like glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration can be prevented, or at least minimised, if diagnosed and treated early. This is the primary objective of CFEH.

## ■ CFEH history

The idea for CFEH originated from a survey of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT clients. In this survey, Guide Dogs clients indicated their strong support for the expansion of the organisation's services into the area of prevention, in addition to the Orientation and Mobility services it has always offered.

After extensive research, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT committed \$40 million over the next ten years to establish CFEH at UNSW, and fund its operations.

**With the establishment of this Centre, we are making a significant investment towards reducing the incidence of preventable blindness in the community. Economic circumstance should be no barrier to accessing the best eye-testing and diagnostic facilities available.**

**Mr Barry Stephen, Chairman, CFEH and Guide Dogs NSW/ACT**

## ■ Accessing the Centre

CFEH is located in Sydney's eastern suburbs on the Kensington campus of The University of New South Wales. The facility offers its services to residents of NSW and the ACT free of charge, with special assistance available for people living outside of Sydney.

Individuals must be referred to the Centre by their optometrist, ophthalmologist or general medical practitioner, who will specify the tests required. Test results will then be sent back to the referring practitioner in their preferred format. To learn more about CFEH or to make a referral, visit [www.cfeh.com.au](http://www.cfeh.com.au).



## ■ Location

CFEH is located at The University of New South Wales Kensington campus in Sydney. Situated on the ground floor of the south wing of the Rupert Myers Building, the Centre is most conveniently accessed via gate 14 on Barker Street. Allocated parking is available.



# Centre for Eye Health

A joint initiative of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and The University of New South Wales.



[cfeh.com.au](http://cfeh.com.au)