

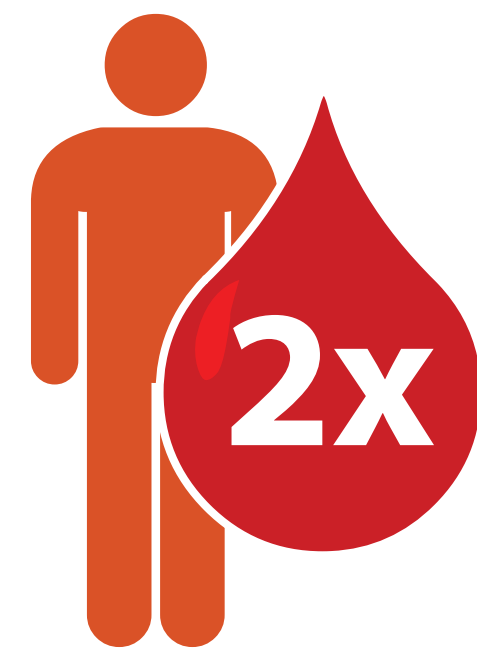
New online resources to support eye care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes

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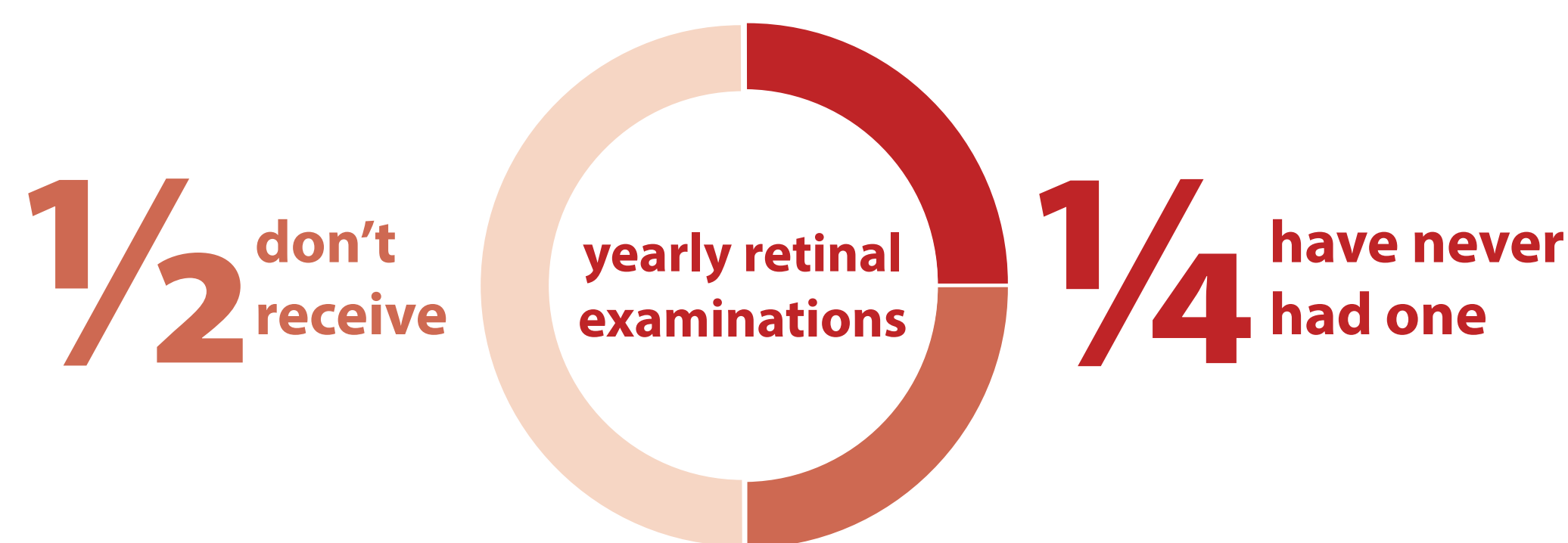
Why is diabetic retinopathy (DR) a problem?

DR is a serious eye problem that can lead to vision loss and blindness among people with diabetes (International Diabetes Federation et al., 2015).

Compared with non-Indigenous adults with diabetes, **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults with diabetes are twice as likely to have vision impairment from DR*** (Foreman et al., 2016).



Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes don't receive recommended annual eye checks (Mitchell et al., 2008; Foreman et al., 2016).



What's the good news?



Almost all severe vision loss and blindness from DR can be prevented if people with diabetes receive recommended eye checks (including retinal examinations) and treatment (Taylor et al., 2009).

New initiatives promise to increase eye checks, leading to early detection of DR and improvements in the eye health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:



MBS item 12325

- **MBS item 12325 is now available** for primary health care clinics to conduct yearly eye checks for DR using a retinal camera
- **equipment and training is being rolled out** to support clinics to conduct these yearly eye checks.

Why are resources about DR needed?



Increasing the uptake of retinal screening promises improvements in eye health. Succinct, evidence-based, readily accessible resources about DR and retinal screening can **support health educators and primary health care providers** to:

- deliver health training and health education initiatives
- implement evidence-based health practice.

Who collaborated to develop the new DR resources?

Since 2016, the Indigenous Australia Program (IAP) at The Fred Hollows Foundation (The Foundation) has funded a collaborative project to expand content on the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet (HealthInfoNet) website. The collaboration includes the creation of new and more accessible knowledge products about eye health. These products are available online to support the eye health workforce.



The HealthInfoNet is a research unit with **20 years of experience in knowledge synthesis and exchange** about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.



The Foundation works through direct **partnerships with local service providers to address gaps** in the current eye health system.

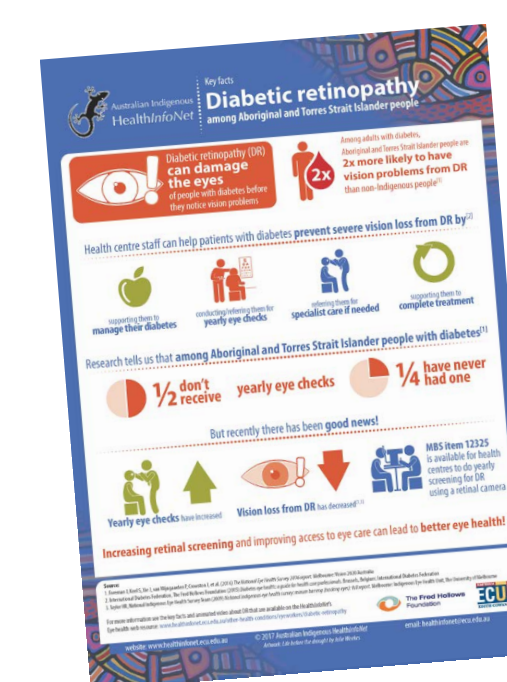
Together, these organisations are sharing skills and knowledge to develop new, evidence-based, online resources to support the delivery of eye care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes.

What resources have been developed?

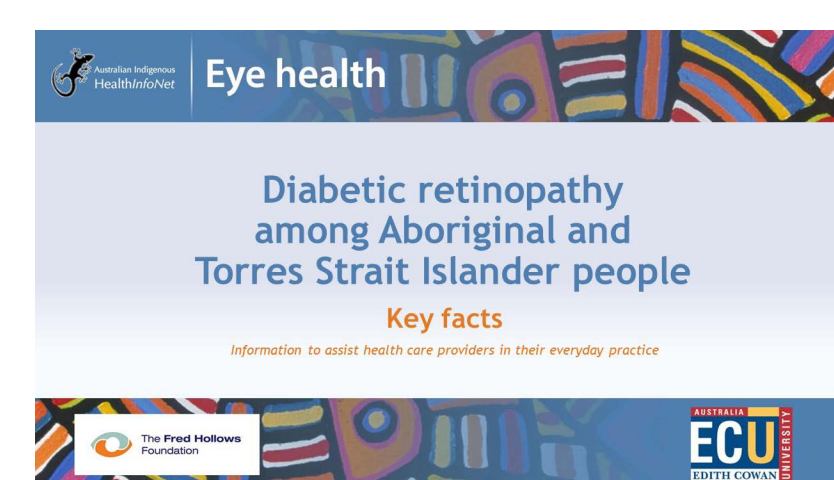
The new DR resources are available online in **multiple formats to meet the varied information needs of primary health care providers** and educators across the country. They include:



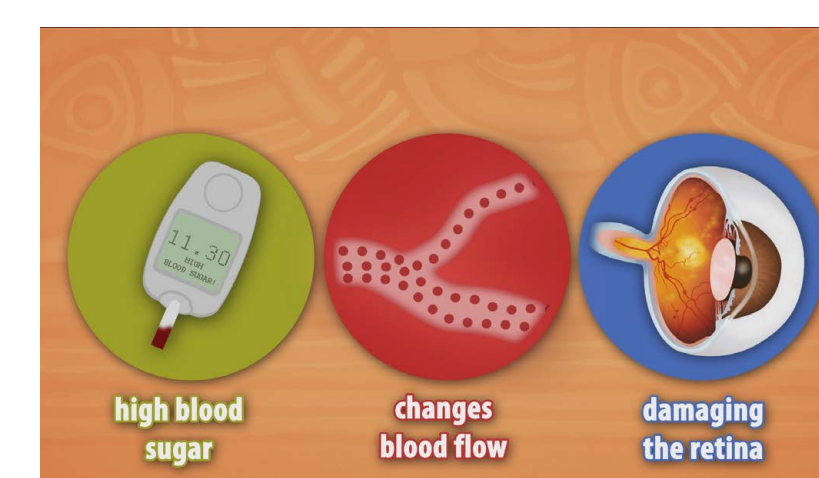
key factsheet



static infographic



PowerPoint presentation



short video (4 mins)

What are some of the key messages?

Primary health care staff can help their patients avoid severe vision loss from DR by: (International Diabetes Federation et al., 2015)



supporting them to **manage their diabetes**



conducting or referring them for **yearly eye checks** (including retinal examinations)



referring them for **specialist care if needed**



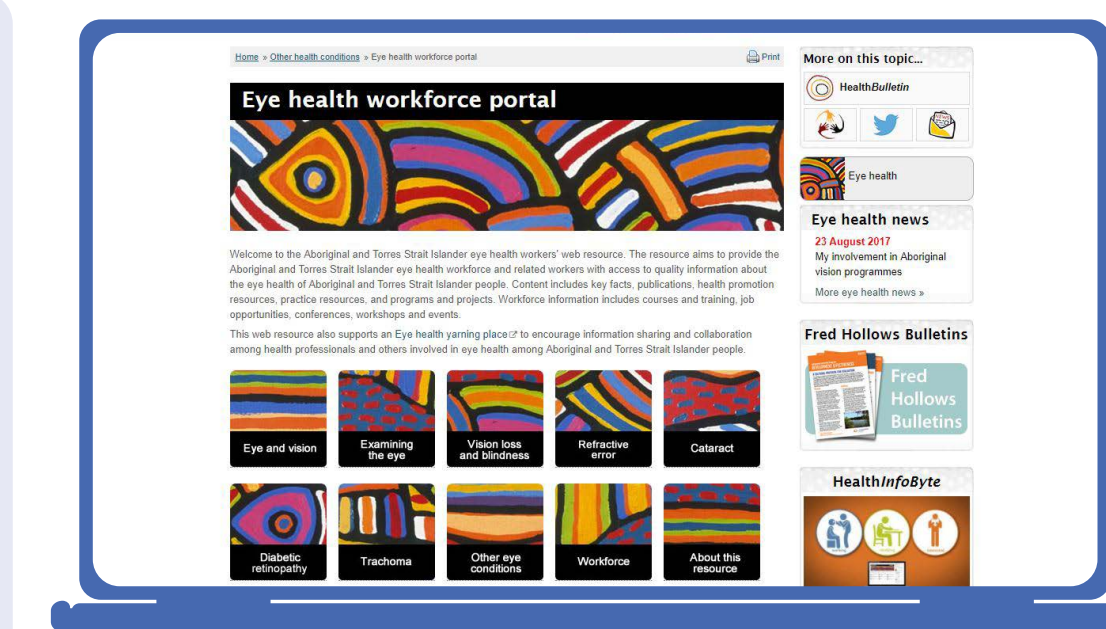
supporting them to **complete treatment**

Where can you find the DR resources?

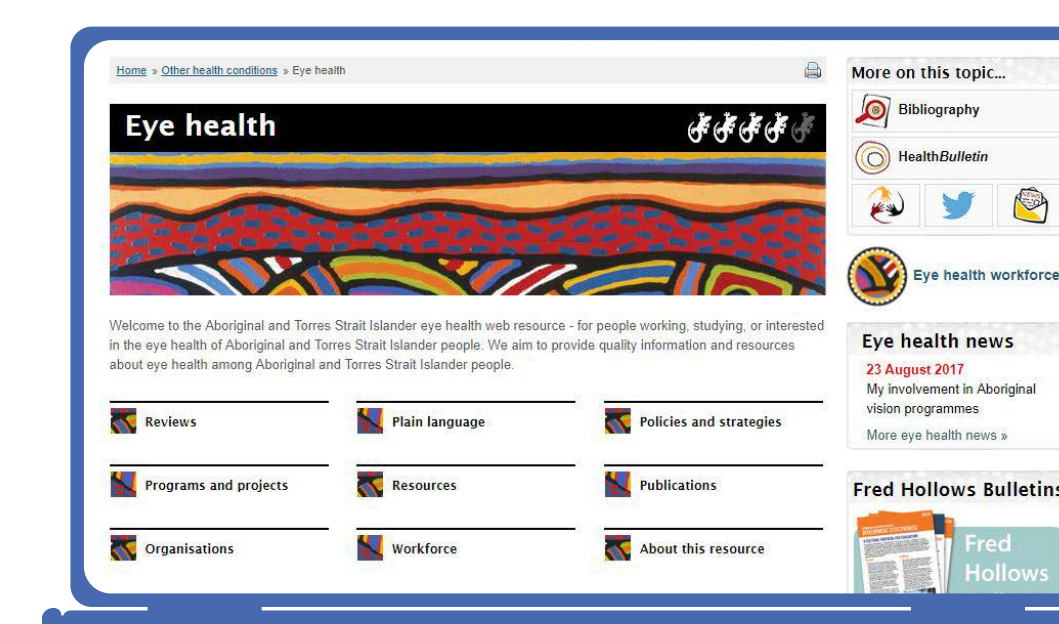
The DR resources are available on the HealthInfoNet's Eye health web resource.

'The HealthInfoNet Eye health web resource makes both accessing and sharing information so much easier. Having the confidence to know we are using the latest available evidence on which to base our project is really valuable.'

Jaki Adams-Barton, Manager of the Indigenous Australia Program at The Fred Hollows Foundation



How can the Eye health web resource help you?



The Eye health web resource (www.eyehhealth.org.au) is an online collection of information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander eye health that **helps busy health professionals keep up-to-date** with the latest information, resources and research.

newsletters

The Eye health web resource also **supports information-sharing and knowledge exchange** by providing:

- online news items, monthly newsletters and a Twitter account (www.twitter.com/aiheye)
- a yarning place (www.yarning.org.au/group/12) to help the eye health workforce across Australia connect via the web.



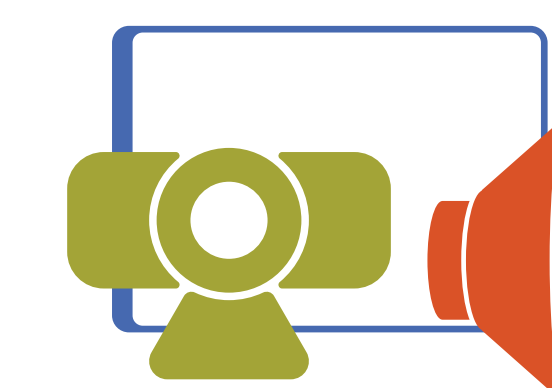
How are the DR resources being used?

The DR resources will form part of new training initiatives for primary health care staff providing eye care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes. This currently includes training **provided as part of the Australian Government's rollout of retinal cameras to primary health care clinics.**



What's next?

The HealthInfoNet and The Foundation will continue to develop innovative online resources to support the delivery of eye care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. **Future resources will include:** webinars, audio files and an eBook.



* Based on crude figures for Indigenous adults aged 40 years and over and non-Indigenous adults aged 50 years and over.

This poster was prepared for the 13th Annual Australian Disease Management Association Conference and 21st Chronic Diseases Network NT Conference, Darwin, 11-12 September 2017.