

Update from the Ophthalmology Network – cataract survey policy changes

Prof Lisa Keay
Ms Kerrie Martin
Dr Michael Hennessy

Cataract related vision impairment

In older Australians (50+ years) prevalence 2.7% or >243K people
(Keel et al 2019)

29% of non-Indigenous and 80% of Indigenous Australian rely on public hospital surgery
(AIHW 2017-18)

*~250,000
surgeries/year*

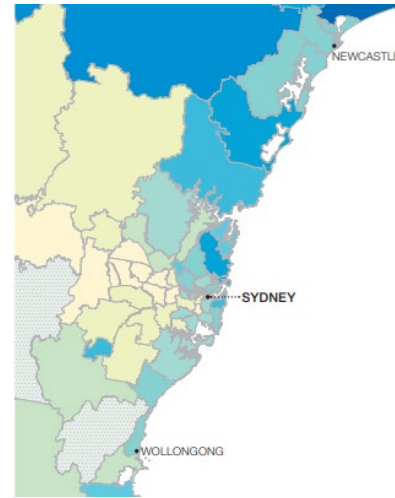
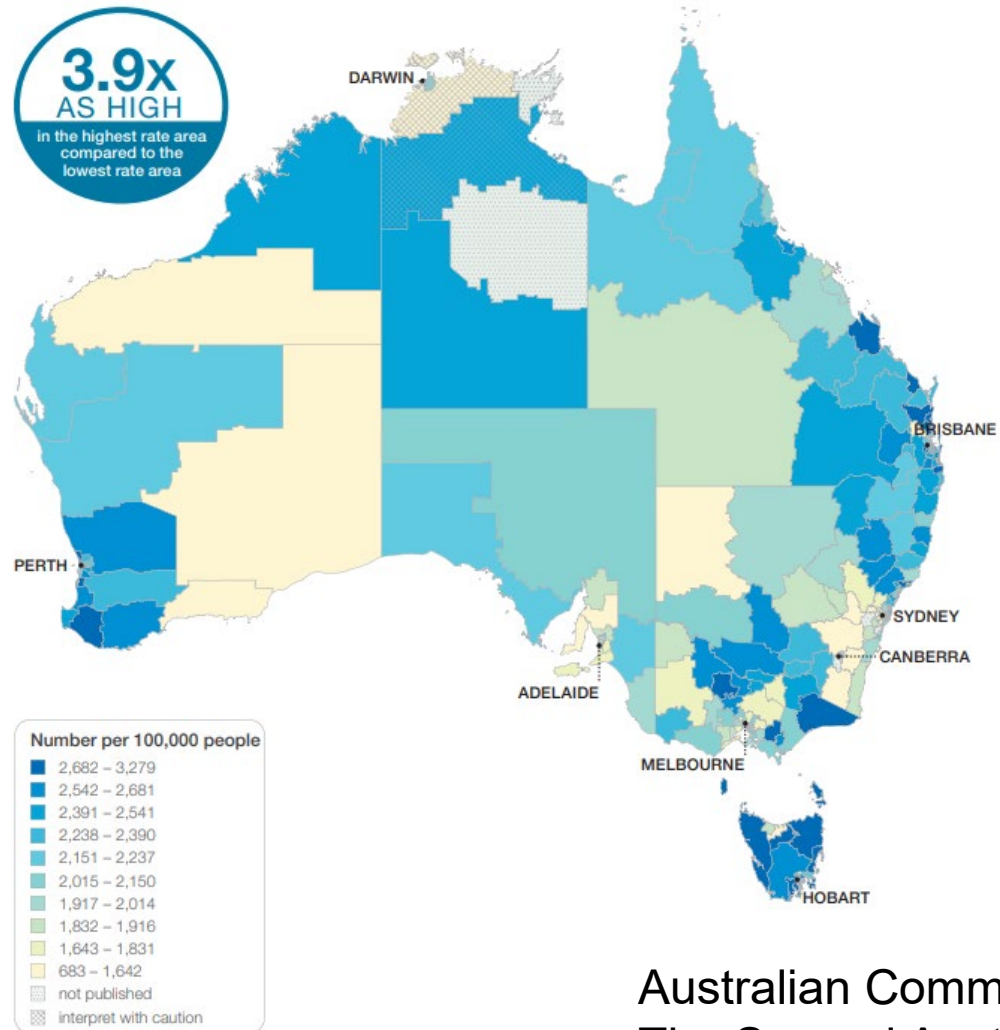


Falls rate is higher in older people with cataract
McCarty 2002, Ivers 1998, Palagyi 2017



Cataract surgery hospitalisations 40 years and over

Figure 4.40: Number of hospitalisations for cataract surgery per 100,000 people aged 40 years and over, age and sex standardised, by Statistical Area Level 3 (SA3), 2014–15: Australia map

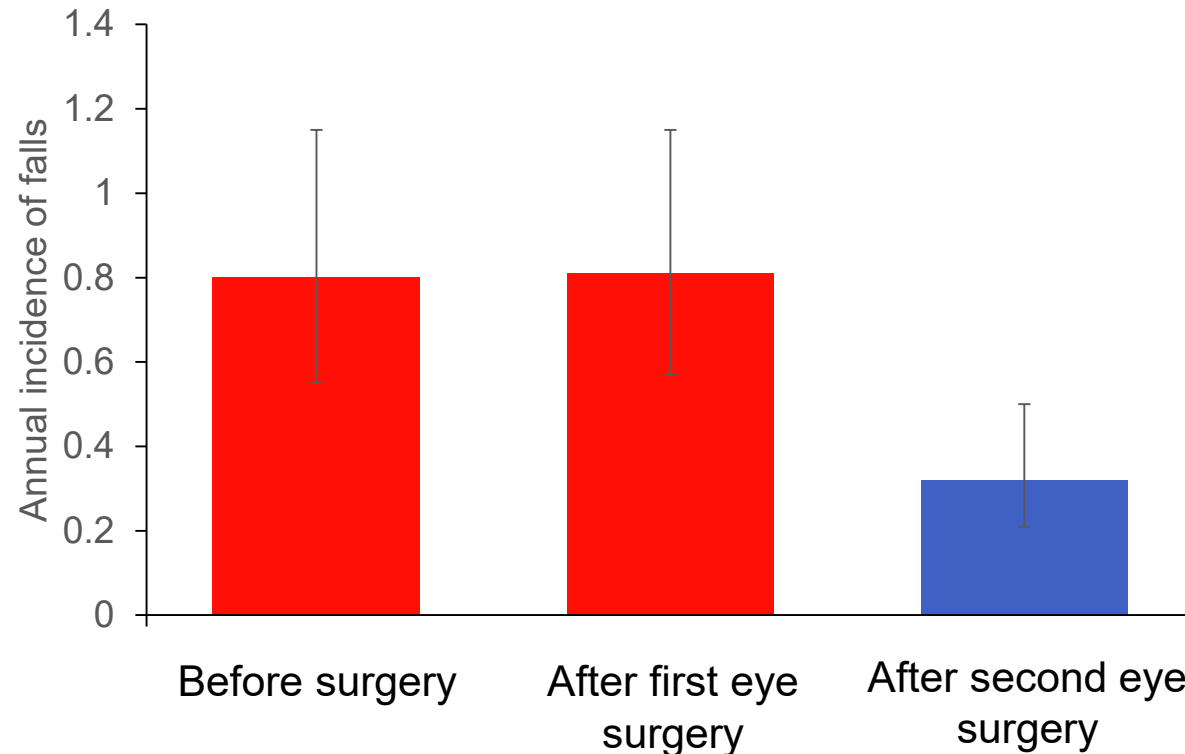


High variation in rate of cataract surgery

Waiting lists can be long for 1st and 2nd eye public hospital cataract surgery

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
The Second Australian Atlas of Healthcare Variation

Research evidence



Incidence of falls in older adults decreased after 2nd eye cataract surgery from 0.81 to 0.32 falls per year.¹

1. Keay et al. Medical Journal of Australia (2022)

Modelling estimated that:

Reducing wait times **from 12 months to 3 months** would result in **\$6.6 million of savings** to the health system by **preventing 50,679 falls.**²

2. Huang-Lung et al. Public Health Research and Practice (2022)

Second eye cataract recommended categorisation changes

1 July 2024 - policy change will come into effect (surgery within 90 days)

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care
Cataract Clinical Care Standard 2021

Quality Statement 6 – Second eye surgery

- Options for a patient with bilateral cataract are discussed when the decision about first-eye surgery is being made.

