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
High variation in rate of cataract surgery
Waiting lists can be long for 1st and 2nd eye public hospital cataract surgery
Research evidence

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


Modelling estimated that:
Reducing wait times \textbf{from 12 months to 3 months} would result in \textbf{$6.6 \text{ million of savings}$} to the health system by \textbf{preventing 50,679 falls}.\textsuperscript{2}

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.