

Broome eye clinic to deliver brighter outlook for the Kimberley

Sunday, 20 September 2020

McGowan Government invests \$4.7 million for the Kimberley's first permanent resident eye clinic

Lions Outback Vision to provide ophthalmology, retinal surgery, on-call emergency and state-wide on-call telehealth service

Services to include outreach to six towns across the Kimberley - ensuring patients can be cared for on country and close to home

The McGowan Government has invested \$4.7 million towards the first permanent Lions Outback Vision (LOV) eye clinic in the Kimberley.

The funding is part of the \$110.9 million Kimberley Recovery Plan, which the McGowan Government has committed to as part of the WA Recovery Plan, to drive economic and social recovery, and create a pipeline of local jobs.

The first permanent eye clinic will enable residents across the Kimberley to receive treatment and prevention services for serious eye diseases on country and close to home.

The LOV Northwest Eye Hub will include ophthalmologists, optometrists, Aboriginal health workers and nurses to provide care for residents with cataracts, trachoma and glaucoma as well as those with low vision and permanent blindness.

It will also provide screening and management of diabetic retinopathy, a serious disease responsible for 14 times' greater incidence of vision loss for Aboriginal Australians than non-Aboriginal Australians.

The clinic will also provide outreach services to Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Kununurra, Wyndham and Warmun with specialists travelling from Broome to treat patients in their local hospitals or clinics.

Comments attributed to Premier Mark McGowan:

"I am pleased we've invested in this initiative as part of our WA Recovery Plan, which highlights how we put patients first and continue to deliver health services closer to home.

"In particular this is about ensuring we can keep providing these services to more remote and vulnerable communities.

"I'd like to thank our Kimberley MLA Josie Farrer for her advocacy in ensuring a permanent hub of this nature is available to the benefit of the Kimberley community.

"This is a fantastic example of how robust partnerships between governments and service providers can work even harder to improve the health of country Western Australians."

Comments attributed to Health Minister Roger Cook:

"Our \$4.7 million funding for this initiative delivers on our commitment to the Vision 2020 Close the Gap Roadmap.

"We know that 94 per cent of vision loss is preventable, and more than one third of Aboriginal people have never had an eye examination.

"The LOV Northwest Eye Hub will ensure improved access to eye health treatment and disease prevention for some of our most vulnerable communities.

"The LOV team will work in partnership with WA Country Health Service's hospitals, primary health team, Aboriginal health workers, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and GPs to improve health outcomes across the board for Kimberley communities."

Comments attributed to Kimberley MLA Josie Farrer:

"This is a project close to my heart and one that I have been a strong advocate for since it was first raised with me.

"I am extremely pleased to see the vision of establishing a Northwest Eye Hub of the Lions Outback Vision in Broome become a reality. The benefits of having a facility of this nature permanently based in the Kimberley will be far reaching on many levels but especially health wise. With easier access and less travel, more people will be able to access treatment.

"I congratulate all of those involved with Lions Outback Vision for never losing sight of their goal to set up the first permanent eye clinic in the Kimberley. The dedication, passion and determination of those people is to be commended and I am proud to have been able to help them in this achievement."

Premier's office - 6552 5000

Health Minister's office - 6552 6500