

EYE AND EAR SURGICAL SUPPORT (EESS)

APRIL 2021

EESS program expedites access to surgical interventions to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples who require eye surgery and/or ear surgery for conditions resulting from Otitis Media. Patients who reside in MM3 – MM7 locations are eligible for EESS services.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND STATISTICAL AREA 3 (SA3) LOCATIONS 2021-22

The Strategy and Health Workforce Planning Team conducted a needs analysis between February and April 2021. This needs assessment used data from:

- i. The RWAV 2020 GP survey where GPs indicated a need for Ear, Nose and Throat specialists (ENTs), Ophthalmologists and Orthoptists in their local communities. Locations where needs were indicated for these professions by multiple GPs, a need was identified for that location.
- ii. The number of health practitioners by location as we had access to confidential aggregated counts of health practitioners by sa2 location (e.g., 10-20 Ophthalmologists in Bendigo – this is just an example, this data is confidential therefore the example is fictional) from the Department of Health (National Health Workforce Dataset – Medical, 2019).
- iii. Additionally, exactly what health services are available in specific towns was utilised (via the National Health Service Directory) for all professions in the EESS needs assessment.



Determining the priority areas

A need was identified for that SA3 for ENTs and/or Ophthalmologists and/or Orthoptists where:

1. Number of health practitioners by location (ii) and health service availability (iii) was low, and/or
2. a need was indicated via the 2020 GP survey results (i), and
3. There was a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in the SA3.

Priority areas for EESS program

A need was identified for ENTs and/or Ophthalmologists and/or Orthoptists in the following SA3 locations:

- Ballarat
- Campaspe
- Gippsland - East
- Glenelg - Southern Grampians
- Grampians
- Mildura
- Murray River - Swan Hill
- Shepparton
- Wodonga – Alpine

Indigenous Areas	Aboriginal Population (2016)	ENT	Ophthalmologist	Orthoptist
Baw Baw	581			
Bendigo (MMM 5 localities)	2,231			
Campaspe - Shepparton - Moira	4,345			
Castlemaine - Kerang	1,013			
Geelong - Queenscliff (MMM 4 localities)	2,884			
Gippsland	2,338			
Latrobe	1,429			
Macedon Ranges - Moorabool (MMM 3 - 5 localities)	809			
Mildura	2,536			
South Gippsland - Bass Coast	687			
South-West Central Victoria (MMM 3 - 5 localities)	1,539			
Southern Grampians - Glenelg	853			
Swan Hill	1,072			

Indigenous Areas	Aboriginal Population (2016)	ENT	Ophthalmologist	Orthoptist
Upper Goulburn Valley	690			
Wallan - Seymour (MMM 4 - 5 localities)	797			
Warrnambool	674			
Wimmera	773			
Wodonga (MMM 3 - 5 localities only)	2,089			

Additional to the needs identified above, RWAV receives requests for expedited access to eye and/or ear surgical intervention, directly from locations where assessments of eye and ear health are completed. In those situations, the request is examined against the EESS service delivery standards and if criteria are met the need is supported.

EESS will also be planned alongside other RWAV administered programs to enable efficient and coordinated patient care. The programs include:

- Rural Health Outreach Fund (RHOF)
- Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease Program (MOICDP)
- Healthy Ears- Better Hearing, Better Listening (HEBHBL)
- Visiting Optometrists Scheme (VOS)
- Coordination of Indigenous Eye Health (CIEH)
- Ear Health Coordination

Please note:

- Statistical Area Three (SA3) Localities: SA3s are generally designed to have populations between 30,000 and 130,000 persons. They have considerable flexibility in terms of population variability, allowing for the representation of meaningful regional areas for data analysis. In the rural context, SA3s are the functional areas of regional towns and/or cities with a population of at least 20,000 or clusters of related suburbs.
- Indigenous Areas (IARE): IAREs are medium sized geographical areas designed to facilitate the release of detailed statistics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples whilst maintaining the confidentiality of individuals. IAREs provide a balance between spatial resolution and population size, providing the ability to release more detailed statistics.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2016, July 12). Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas. ABS.

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