

Support for World Glaucoma Day

To help celebrate the second annual World Glaucoma Day in New Zealand on March 12, several ophthalmology practices and eyecare professionals with the assistance of Allergan offered their support to help increase global awareness of glaucoma and the importance of early detection and successful management.

A joint initiative of the World Glaucoma Association and the World Glaucoma Patient Association, World Glaucoma Day was launched in 2008 to respond to the worldwide increase in glaucoma. By the year 2020, an estimated 80 million people worldwide will have glaucoma, and 11 million of them will be blind in both eyes.

Glaucoma New Zealand (GNZ) supplied the information pamphlets and Allergan supplied the T-Shirts for the ophthalmologists and front-line staff to make it a fun event prompting patients to ask what it was all about.

For Eye Doctors, it was the first time they had gone 'casual' consulting in their Glaucoma t-shirts for the day. The group also decided to make an annual donation

to GNZ to assist with the much needed funds which the organisation depends upon to take its awareness campaigns to the public. Dr Donaldson is a current GNZ trustee.


"Glaucoma is a major problem. Far too frequently I see patients with advanced visual loss, presenting late because they have avoided eye examinations by sneaking off-the-shelf readers from the pharmacy," said Dr Riley.

Dr Dai recalls spending nights on call in Beijing during the winter months doing laser iridotomies for acute angle closure cases.

"The anterior chamber of Chinese is narrower than occidentals so the high incidence of angle closure - this is still an under-recognised risk," he said.

The challenge for eyecare organisations worldwide is to take action to reduce the terrible impact of glaucoma.

Chair of GNZ Professor Helen Danesh-Meyer said approximately 34,000 New Zealanders with glaucoma are unaware that they have the disease.

"Once vision is lost to glaucoma it cannot be restored, but when we detect and treat it early we can often preserve vision so people can maintain active lives." 



At Eye Institute all front line staff wore the Glaucoma t-shirt on World Glaucoma Day. Above: Professor Helen Danesh-Meyer with a patient, some of her team and Allergan staff



Simon Abbott and Jocelyn Oliver from Allergan spent World Glaucoma Day handing out Glaucoma information packs to patients in waiting rooms



Milford Eye Clinic staff having some fun. From left: Pam Andrew, Wendy Simpson-Smith, Mary Kehoe, Rose Allen and Dr Jo Koppens

New look and energy for NZOWA

The NZ Optical Wholesalers Association has undergone a new look and a revitalisation over the last six months with seven new members and a new logo.

With members getting together at the end of the year for a meeting and a Christmas drink it was a great opportunity for them to look forward and to set new challenges for the coming year.

"It's great to see the Association continue to develop and expand and that our industry colleagues see value in joining forces with each other," said NZOWA president Alex Bicheno. "We all have a common goal - offering the very best service we can to each of our clients. Although we may also be competitors we also have the ability to have a great working relationship with each other and work towards assisting the industry as a whole."

Keep a look out for future events hosted by the NZOWA.

Any wholesalers interested in becoming part of the Association please contact Chris Day at

chrisdayoptical@wave.co.nz 

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The new NZOWA logo set to represent a new era for the Association

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