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STRATEGIC PLAN

2013 - 2018

Patron:
Hon. Dame Catherine Tizard
ONZ, GCMG, GCVO, DBE, QSO, DStJ

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STRATEGIC PLAN

ABOUT VICTA:

VICTA was established in 2013 to address the unmet needs of the approximately 84,000 New Zealanders disabled by irreversible vision loss who are ineligible for assistance from the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind. VICTA's Patron is Dame Catherine Tizard. VICTA's founding trustees are Associate Professor Gordon Sanderson (chair), Dr Don Brash, Dr Lynley Hood and Kerry Buchan.

BACKGROUND:

- Approximately 95,000 New Zealanders are disabled by vision loss that cannot be corrected by glasses, contact lenses, medicine or surgery, and which is severe enough to impair their ability to perform the sort of everyday tasks that most people take for granted like reading, driving, and shopping.
- Only 11,500 New Zealanders are blind enough to qualify for membership of the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind. For the remainder, comprehensive, accessible low vision rehabilitation services are scant, or non-existent.
- There used to be ten low-vision clinics in New Zealand public hospitals. Now there are only two.
- Poor vision affects a wide range of people from infants, to school-age children, to adults in full productivity with major family responsibilities, to energetic older folk actively engaged with their businesses, professions, families and communities.
- Currently, the most common cause of vision loss, macular degeneration, is neither preventable nor curable (but early detection and appropriate treatment can prevent blindness).
- Irreversible vision loss is twice as common as dementia. Since the incidence of sight loss increases exponentially with age, with our growing elderly population the problem is bound to get worse.
- People with poor vision usually live to a normal old age. Without rehabilitation, their quality of life will fall, and their helplessness and dependency will rise.
- Among the elderly, falls are a leading cause of injury, hospitalisation and death. Without rehabilitation, visually impaired people are at much higher risk of falls than their sighted peers, and at much higher risk of being admitted to hospital or a nursing home as a result.
- Low vision rehabilitation is cost effective. It transforms people with high support needs into independent and productive citizens.

OUR VISION:

A society in which all New Zealanders disabled by irreversible vision loss receive the information, assistance and support they need.

OUR MISSION:

To facilitate the independence, integration and well-being of people disabled by irreversible vision loss in New Zealand, and, in particular, of people disabled by irreversible vision loss who are ineligible for assistance from the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind.

OUR VALUES:

As an organisation we believe it is important to treat all people with respect, to value a diversity of views, ideas and cultures, and to be collaborative, innovative, effective and accountable in our work.

OUR GOALS:

- To provide a voice for New Zealanders with low vision, from childhood to adulthood, in all areas of public life.
- To facilitate the development of a range of practical initiatives to provide New Zealanders disabled by vision loss with the information, assistance and support they need.
- To establish a strong, effective, sustainable, responsive and flexible organisation dedicated to achieving these goals.

OUR STRATEGIES:

- To seek a parliamentary inquiry into the need for accessible, comprehensive low vision rehabilitation services in New Zealand.
- To work for the restoration of comprehensive, accessible low vision clinics in public hospitals.
- To establish a Low Vision/High Visibility road safety campaign.
- To develop a one-stop web resource for visually impaired New Zealanders, their families and caregivers with news, information, expert advice, daily living tips and directories of helpful products and services.
- To seek expert advice and funding to establish VICTA as an effective and innovative organisation long term.
- To facilitate the provision of ratings for appliances, products and services for ease of use by people with low vision.
- To raise funds to provide ongoing support for, and research into, all aspects of visual impairment in New Zealand.