



Innovations for equity-oriented eye care in rural and remote areas

A case example from Lions Outback Vision, Australia





Indigenous Australians: Eye Health Status

3x higher rates of vision impairment

3-6x higher rates of diabetes: **1 in 10** have late-stage diabetic eye disease

>90% of vision impairment cases are avoidable



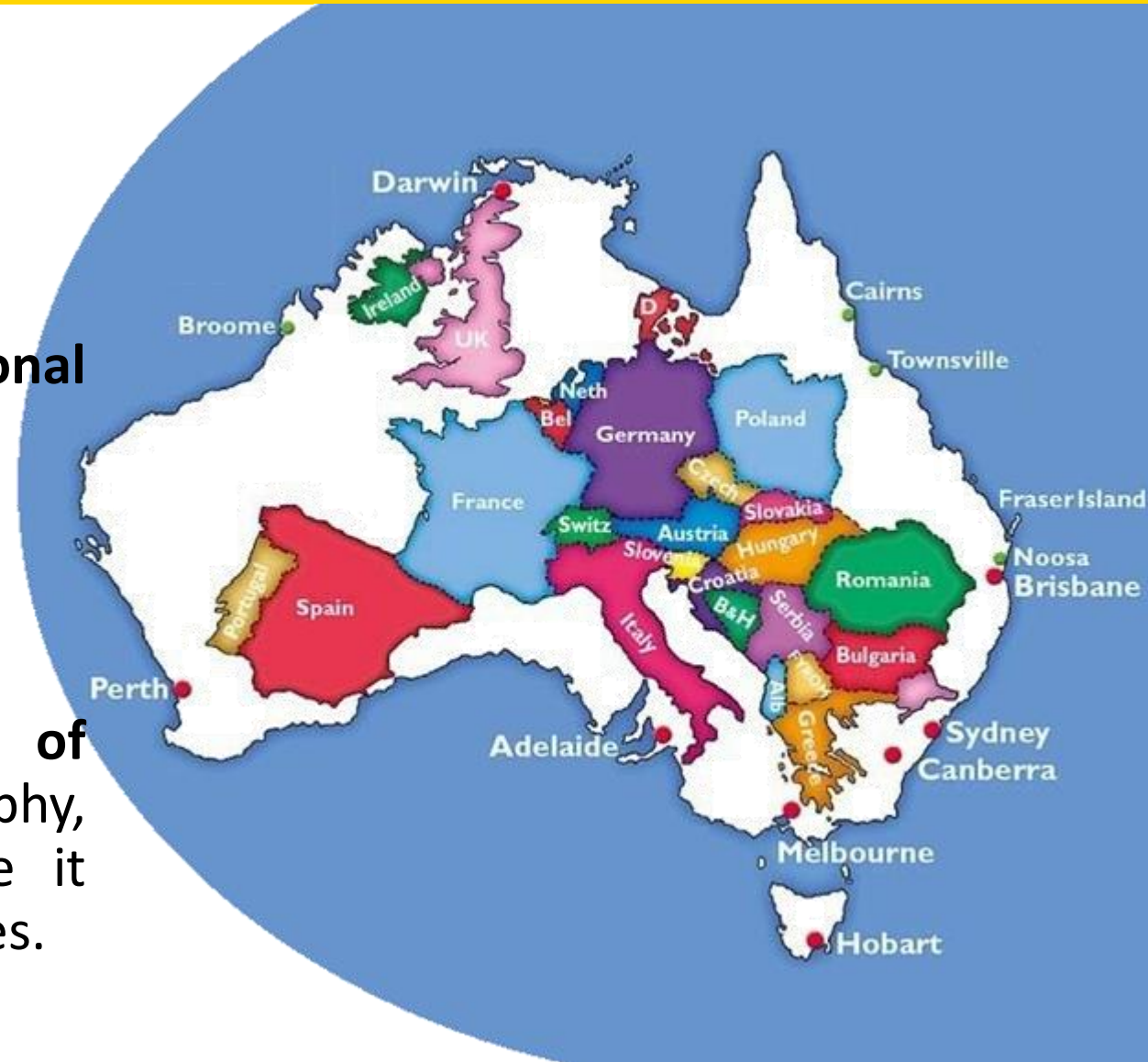


Australia & Teleophthalmology

65% of Indigenous Australians live in **regional and remote areas**

Eye care highly **image driven profession**

Great potential to **improve accessibility of services** in countries where geography, population or workforce distribution make it difficult to provide services outside major cities.





Lions Outback Vision (LOV): A case example

The Outback Vision Van

Providing a **state-wide teleophthalmology** service since **2011**.

Links patients in **rural and remote communities** of Western Australia to consultant ophthalmologists based in the state capital city, Perth.

The distance from Perth to the furthest community in the service is **over 3000 km**.





Overview of the Service:

1. Telemedicine service

The provision of both:

- i. **Online booking system and**
- ii. **“On call” urgent assessment**

Referrals originate from **primary eye care workers** in regional communities, **rural hospital emergency departments**, **general practitioners**

Minimal additional infrastructure costs



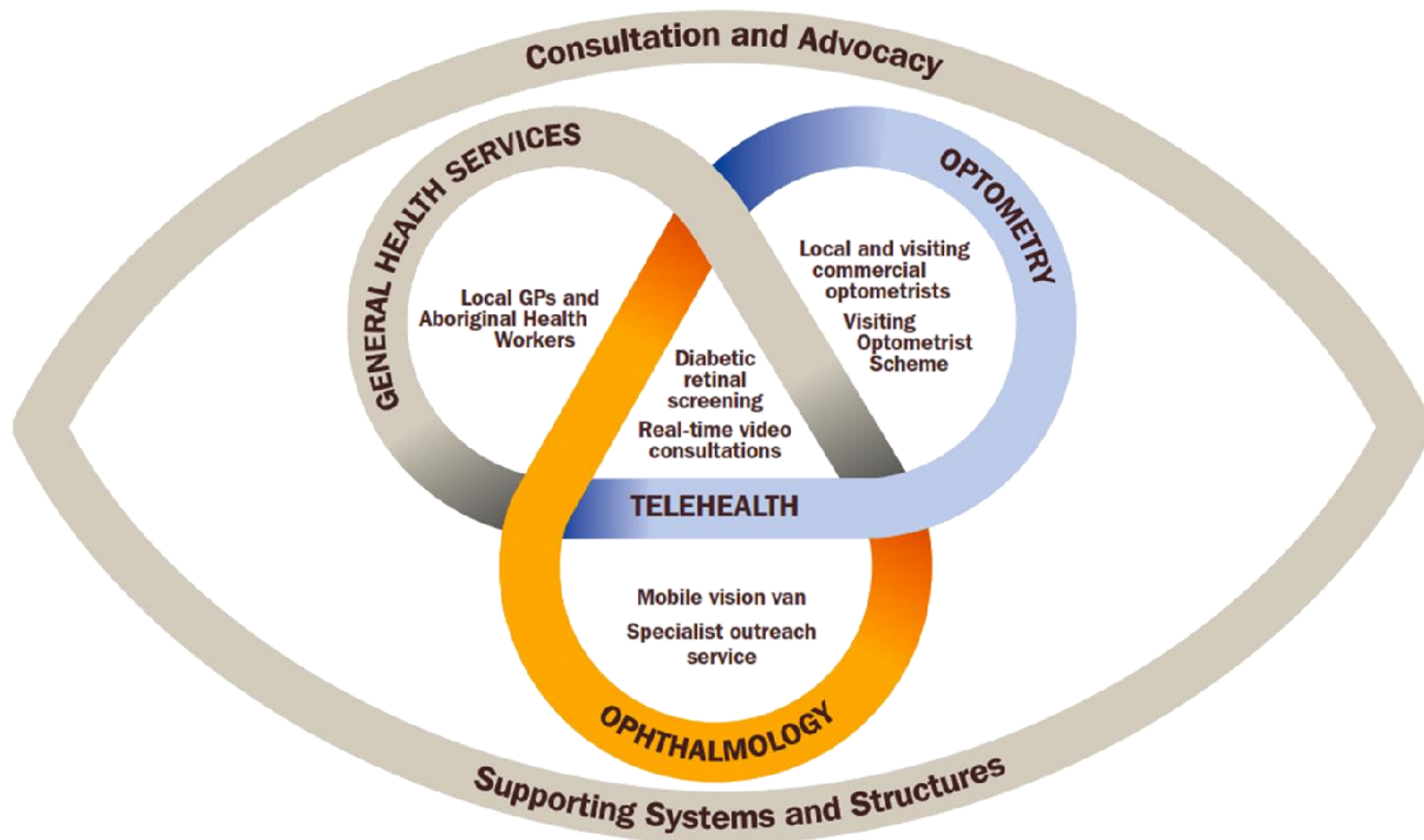
Overview of the Service: 2. Outreach services

1. Visiting primary eye care workers
2. Outreach specialist clinics in regional hospitals
3. Lions Outback Vision Van
 - i. 3 consulting rooms
 - ii. Comprehensive ophthalmology care for eye conditions (e.g. trachoma, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy)
 - iii. Completes numerous circuits per year





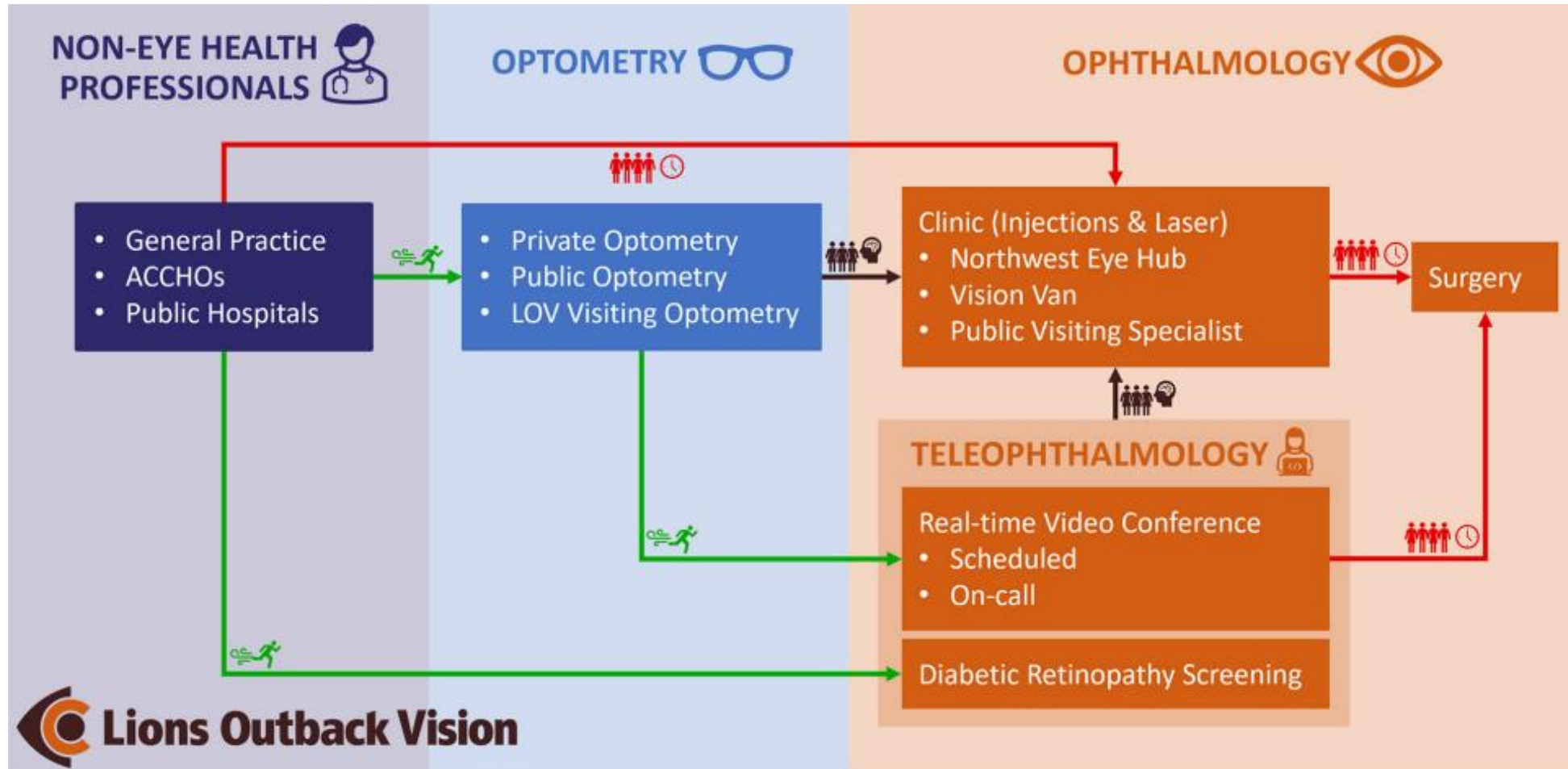
LOV Eye Health Care Workforce Coordination



>90% of primary eye care workers in the regions participate in the telemedicine service



Clinical pathway within LOV





Key Outcomes of the LOV Telehealth Service



Non-attendance rate at outreach service visits has decreased from 50% to 3%.



On-call (real-time) service has **increased access for Indigenous population 10-fold.**



Patients also demonstrated **very high satisfaction** with the telehealth service.



Key Outcomes of the Videoconsultations for Surgery



Elimination of the “**wait for the waiting list**” where patients can wait for up to one year for public service outpatient appointment prior to being placed on surgery waiting list.



Improve significantly the **efficiency and impact of outreach ophthalmology** services:

- a higher proportion of primary eye care is being appropriately managed by optometry with less duplication of services,
- a marked increase in surgical management by LOV ophthalmologists



Acknowledgements

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