



## **National Vision Health Desk Frequently Asked Questions/Key Messages**

### **What is a National Vision Health Desk (NVHD)?**

The NVHD will be the national policy voice for the vision health community and work with the provinces and territories on strategies for efficient, cost-effective access to eye health and vision care.

COS will work collaboratively with other members of the eye care community to ensure the Vision Desk becomes a reality.

### **How will the NVHD provide value to ophthalmology and Canadians?**

1. Develop a National Strategy for Action on Eye Health and Vision Care.
2. Support the work of the Federal government on the creation of an essential ophthalmic drug list within the National Pharmacare framework.
3. Create a standardized national policy for vision screening across the country, with a particular focus on children, seniors, and Indigenous peoples.
4. A central role for NVHD will focus on vision health data collection and how crucial that information will be to support improved delivery, funding, patient care, health human resources, and more.
5. Develop patient care pathways for the main eye diseases, delineating inter-professional collaboration amongst physicians, opticians, optometrists, and ophthalmologists.
6. Be focused on coordinated action by governments, health professionals, non-government organizations, industry, and individuals working in partnership.
7. Oversee research with the goal to improve the evidence base for vision care.
8. Educate the public by implementing a public awareness campaign about the importance of eye health as a core component of overall health care.
9. Become the compendium/library for eye health research across Canada.



## What is the cost to run the NVHD?

- COS is requesting funding from the federal government of \$10 million (\$2 million for five years) to create a National Vision Health Desk (NVHD) that will develop and implement a National Vision Strategy to coordinate and address eye health issues across Canada.
- This will primarily cover salaried positions for a Chief Vision Officer and a core group of staff.

## What is the timeline?

There are several deliverables to get the NVHD up and running.

- In September 2022, the COS prepared a written submission for pre-budget consultations in advance of the 2023 federal budget.
- Budget is usually tabled in March, votes take place before summer recess, so implementation could be as early as Fall 2023.
- Continuing our 1:1 meeting with Members of Parliament and other government officials to build support for the NVHD in the interim.

**\*\*This document will be updated regularly\*\***

