



Eye and Ear Surgical Support

Introduction

The Eye and Ear Surgical Support (EESS) program aims to reduce the instances of avoidable vision and hearing loss in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, through ensuring timely access to eye and ear surgical care, by strengthening patient pathways and support.

EESS services are prioritised to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in regional, rural, and remote locations across Queensland.

The EESS is funded by the Australian Department of Health, under the Indigenous Australians' Health Program, and forms part of CheckUP's Outreach services.

Aims

The objectives of the EESS program are:

- to reduce surgical wait times for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients needing eye surgery or ear surgery for conditions resulting from diseases of the middle ear
- to identify and reduce barriers to accessing timely and affordable eye or ear surgery, at the nearest available location to the patient's home
- to work collaboratively with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services, allied health professionals, specialists, and hospitals, to strengthen culturally appropriate patient surgical pathways
- improved eye, and ear and hearing health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

"The service is amazing. It makes such a big difference for families to be able to get the surgery when it's needed rather than spending three years on the wait list."

- EESS eye surgery patient

"The best thing about having the surgery is the opportunity to be able to see again! I've heard of others getting the surgery and it changing their lives, so I wanted it. Now finally we can get it and I can see again! I am telling everyone I know with eye problems to get it done."

- EESS eye surgery patient

Who is eligible for EESS support?

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people requiring eye surgery (largely cataract) and/or ear surgery for conditions resulting from diseases of the middle ear (Otitis Media)
- Ear surgery support is prioritised to children and youths, aged 0-21 years.
- Surgery support is prioritised for people living in rural and remote Queensland (MM3 – MM7)

About CheckUP

CheckUP is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to better health for people and communities who need it most. CheckUP works with partner organisations and health providers to create healthier communities and reduce health inequities through a range of initiatives. CheckUP has an established footprint in over 170 communities across Queensland.