

# eyecure.

## WELCOME


This is the first Queensland Eye Institute (QEI) newsletter since we moved to our new home at 87 Ipswich Road Woolloongabba. It's been a busy time, as we packed and unpacked and adjusted to our new space. The dust has settled now and the clinical, research and corporate teams are getting on with the business of saving sight.

In this edition, we highlight how QEI delivers on its commitment to teaching, taking advantage of new technology and communications systems to reach more people. When the photo below of the QEI wetlab was taken in 2012, we never imagined we'd be able to make education accessible to so many more people.

I hope you enjoy reading about the innovative ways QEI teaches current and future eye health professionals, here in Australia and in nearby Pacific nations too.

Professor Mark Radford  
CEO and Executive Director  
Queensland Eye Institute



 Students at the QEI wet lab at South Brisbane in 2012

# THE STUDENT BECOMES THE TEACHER.

Dr Jonathan Lai is having a full circle moment at the Queensland Eye Institute, as the past student has returned to the fold as a clinician and teacher.

Dr Lai spent a year of his undergraduate medical degree with QEI's corneal transplant cell research team, completing a project under QEI senior scientist Peter Madden.


He says it was a great experience and cemented his commitment to become an ophthalmologist.

"QEI had that great integration with the laboratory and research, as well as the clinicians who were in the same building," Dr Lai says.

"During my student placement, although I was based in the lab doing research, I still had interactions with the clinicians. I'd go down to help and watch in the clinics and learn as well."

In the years since, Dr Lai completed medical and surgical residencies at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, the Mater Hospital, and the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. He then did further subspecialty training in glaucoma and neuro-ophthalmology at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital,

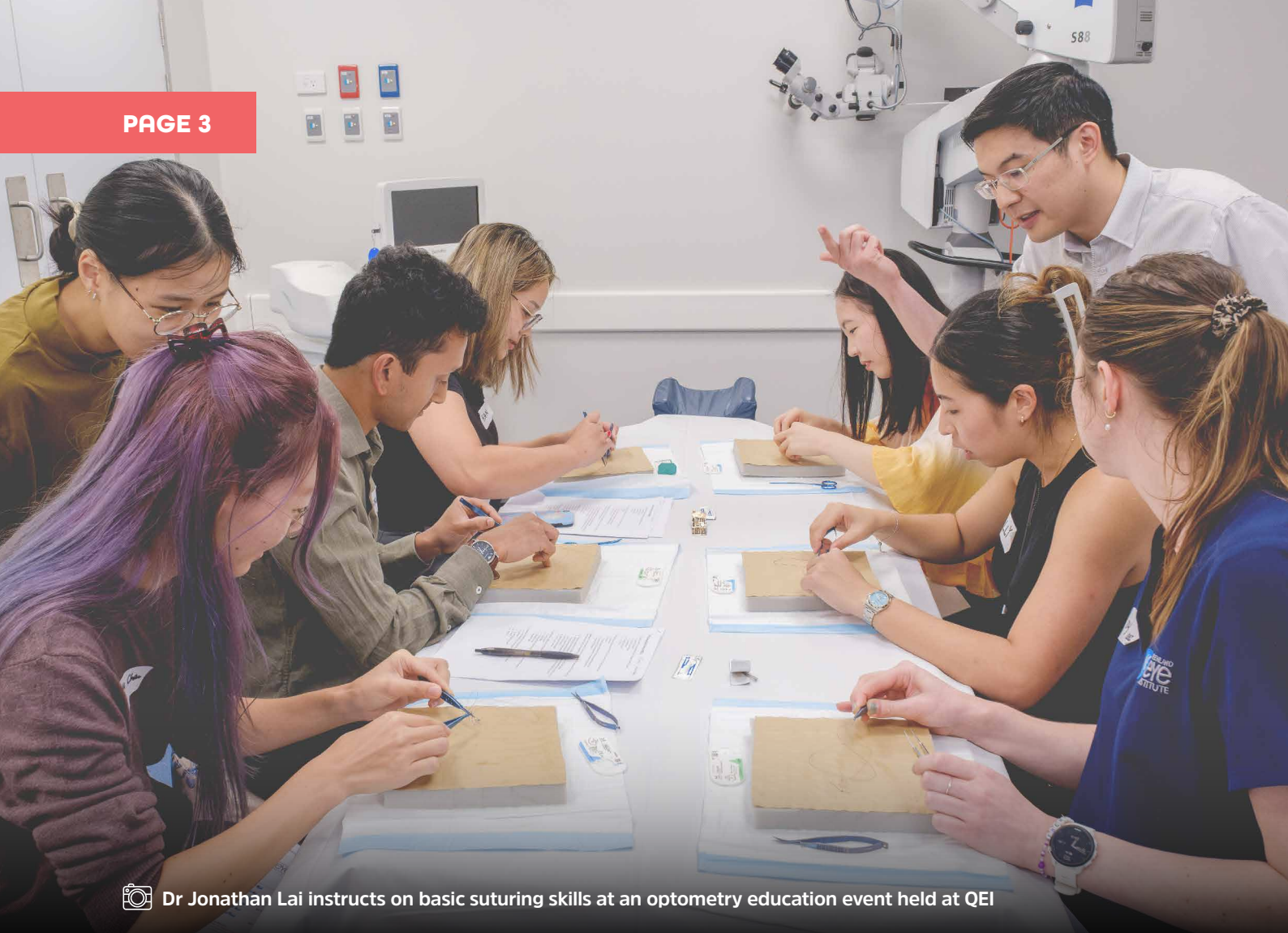


 Dr Jonathan Lai

Royal Perth Hospital and at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London.

With such an impressive resume, Dr Lai's career could have taken him anywhere. But he chose to return to Brisbane, joining the clinical faculty at QEI and accepting a visiting role at The Mater Hospital Brisbane.

"QEI just feels like home," Dr Lai says.



 Dr Jonathan Lai instructs on basic suturing skills at an optometry education event held at QEI

“I’ve kept connections here ever since I was a student. And as a training ophthalmologist, QEI has been the home for education because the teaching sessions and the wet lab have been here,” he says.

While Dr Lai appreciates the familiarity of QEI, he also embraces the organisation’s broader goals.

“Because QEI also has education and research as priorities, it shifts the culture,” he says.

“And I think it creates a much more welcoming environment for everyone involved with the Institute, including students and patients.

“I think patient care is improved by the fact that there’s other aspects to the institute

apart from just clinical work,” Dr Lai says.

A noticeable change at QEI since Dr Lai’s student days is the way education is delivered, a shift he sees as inevitable.

“I think we have to embrace technology a lot more and how we deliver education, especially for working professionals,” he says.

“During COVID we started exploring digital solutions, like virtual workshops and teaching, and even doing case discussions online.

“It’s nice having the social interaction of in-person events, but we have lots of new options now to explore how we deliver the same sort of teaching through different formats.”



# OPTOMETRISTS LEARN AT QEI.

More than 150 of Queensland's eye health professionals learned about modern surgical techniques at a hands-on skills session at QEI in February. Optometrists were invited to QEI's new home in Woolloongabba to sharpen their skills, including corneal foreign body removal at the slit lamp using Alger brushes and needles on a specially imported eye model. Other interactive stations included basic suturing and surgical skills and virtual reality surgery.

QEI ophthalmologists Assoc Prof Tony Kwan, Dr Brendan Cronin, Dr David Gunn, Assoc Prof Abhishek Sharma, Dr Geoffery Ryan, Dr Lee Holland, Dr Angela Richards and Dr Jonathan Lai demonstrated techniques and fielded questions from an enthusiastic crowd.

Optometry evenings like these, where QEI's ophthalmologists demonstrate techniques and offer hands on skills training, play an important part in continuing professional development for Queensland's eye health sector.


This special skills training session was supported by industry funding.




Associate Professor Anthony Kwan demonstrates instruments used for performing vitrectomy procedures





 Dr Lee Holland discussing intraocular lens insertion



 Dr Brendan Cronin discussing techniques for removing corneal foreign bodies with fine needles using a model eye



 Associate Professor Abishek Sharma discussing intravitreal injections



# ONLINE TEACHING REACHES NATIONAL AUDIENCE.

QEI's Dr Alexandra Manta convened a panel of Australian and international experts to teach safe practices in facial rejuvenation using dermal fillers last November. More than 50 cosmetic practitioners and eye health professionals from around the country attended the online seminar, with experts from Australia, Los Angeles and London giving instruction via video link.

Facial rejuvenation with dermal fillers is becoming increasingly popular in Australia, with gel-like substances injected under the skin allowing people to achieve cosmetic changes without invasive surgery. Although the risk of complications is low, dermal fillers can cause blindness and other adverse events.

Participants in the QEI seminar were guided, step-by-step, in identifying and managing complications based on the best available scientific evidence.






After training in oculoplastic surgery at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Romanian-born Dr Alexandra Manta decided to make Brisbane her home.

Support from the QEI Foundation allows her to work with the QEI research team while she obtains Australian registration. In addition to running education events, Dr Manta works on QEI's eyelid laxity research projects and clinical trials for thyroid eye disease treatments.

SCAN ME!

Read more about  
Dr Manta's journey as an  
ophthalmologist here



 Dr Alexandra Manta is now channelling her passion for saving sight into research and education with the Queensland Eye Institute

# TEACHING VIA SOCIAL MEDIA.

As part of their commitment to teaching, QEI ophthalmologists run a private Facebook group where they share interesting cases to test knowledge and spark discussion. All cases are shared with patient consent and no personal details are revealed.

The doctors answer general questions about eye conditions and treatments. They also post to the group about upcoming QEI education sessions which qualify for continuing professional development (CPD) points. The group is open to all Australian optometrists and optometry students.


# GLOBAL EYE HEALTH NETWORK.

The Queensland Eye Institute works with the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) to run a Global Eye Health Network, supporting professional development for eye health workers in smaller, low-resourced Pacific nations. The Network offers professional development, mentoring and training, which increases local capacity for diagnosis, treatment, and care.

Regular support is provided through an online chat group. Clinicians who work in isolated areas post questions to the group, which are answered by experts from Australia and New Zealand.

The Network also convenes in person at the RANZCO annual conference, where a dedicated workshop is run for members. The workshop fosters learning and ideas exchange, and allows members to develop leadership skills, for instance, by chairing sessions and participating as panellists and speakers in scientific sessions.



 Global Eye Health Network members at RANZCO Congress 2023



# VALE PROFESSOR RAVI THOMAS.


QEI was sad to report the sudden passing of Professor Ravi Thomas, an internationally recognised glaucoma researcher and specialist, and former clinician, educator and researcher at QEI. Professor Thomas passed away in November 2023.

In 2008 Professor Lawrence Hirst recruited Professor Thomas to be QEI's academic glaucoma specialist. Professor Thomas was recognised internationally for his significant contributions to glaucoma and glaucoma research and returned to India annually to teach clinical skills and the principles of evidence-based ophthalmology.

Professor Thomas will always be remembered as a well-respected clinician, colleague and, above all, a friend. His unique humour, advice and friendship will be greatly missed.





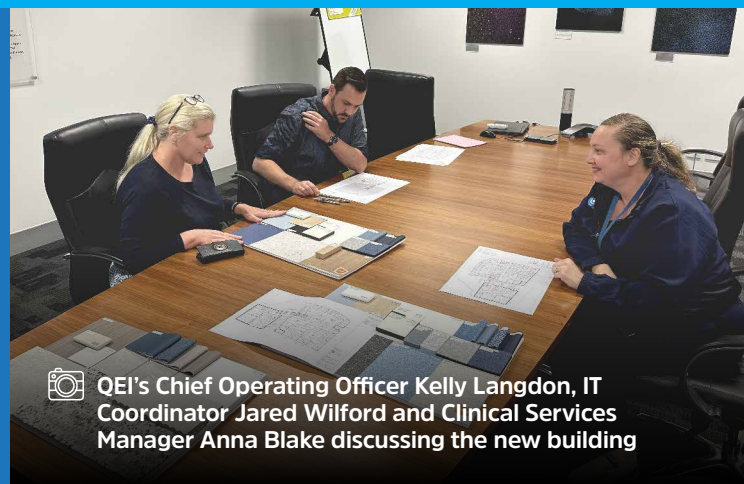
 A new home for the Queensland Eye Institute at 87 Ipswich Road Woolloongabba


# WE HAVE MOVED.

2023 was a very busy year for QEI. As well as the usual demands of QEI's research, education and clinical programs, management oversaw fitout of a new home for QEI and South Bank Day Hospital, which is now called South Brisbane Day Hospital.


The new location for QEI and South Brisbane Day Hospital at 87 Ipswich Road Woolloongabba will allow QEI to better combat preventable blindness, with expanded clinical areas and more efficient spaces for research and administration teams.

The relocation was made possible by a grant from the Sylvia and Charles Viertel Charitable Foundation.



 QEI's Chief Operating Officer Kelly Langdon, IT Coordinator Jared Wilford and Clinical Services Manager Anna Blake discussing the new building



 QEI team visiting 87 Ipswich Road during construction, led by Executive Director and CEO Professor Mark Radford



# WHERE TO FIND US.



### CAR PARK

Ample patient parking is available via 37 Henry St.



### BUS STOP 10A

Bus numbers: 113, 117, 124, 125, 172, 203, 198 and N100.



### PARK ROAD TRAIN STATION

Is the nearest station.

