



infocus

FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

OCTOBER 2015

SIGHT-GIVING
TREATMENT

INTRODUCING OUR
RESEARCH FELLOWS

ONE PATIENT'S
GRATITUDE

A GIFT THAT
KEEPS GIVING

Natalie's Story

24-year-old Natalie has benefitted from a rare personalised iris implant and corneal graft that has not only corrected cosmetic damage to her left eye, but perhaps more importantly, has restored her confidence and she is now looking forward to achieving her full potential.

Natalie was devastated when a fungal infection in her left eye damaged the iris and cornea, taking away some of her sight and her self-esteem.

The psychological impact of the damage was profound. Feeling self-conscious about the appearance of her left eye she was unable to look people in the eyes – she felt they were always focusing on her bad eye. Natalie changed from a very outgoing, positive young person and became socially averse, avoiding interaction. All she wanted was to get back to studies, work and a normal social life.

Natalie was working in a remote location when she contracted the infection, which was initially misdiagnosed and treated incorrectly. The delay in receiving the correct treatment meant that when she finally arrived at the Sydney Eye Hospital, the damage to her eye was quite advanced.

Ophthalmologist Dr Con Petsoglou could see that reconstruction of the cornea and iris would make a dramatic difference to her, improving her self-confidence and allowing her to return to work and normal social relationships.

“The left eye had a residual iris root, enveloped with thick fibrous tissue, which I was able to stitch the new, personalised artificial iris to,” explains Dr Petsoglou. “I was also able to attach a new corneal graft. This is a very effective operation. The iris implant is used once and never needs to be repeated.”

“This revolutionary iris implant is approved for use by the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration and distributed by Melbourne-based supplier Spectrum Ophthalmics.”

“Natalie is a unique patient, a young person who really wanted to look normal again and an iris implant under a new corneal graft has given her a new lease of life. She wanted to move from Sydney for work and education but had been unable to because of her eye condition and the need for expert care. Regular hospital visits precluded her from finding regular work and her eye condition restricted her other activities. With the new surgery, I expect this will all change.”

The surgery in July this year was a success and it is expected that Natalie's vision will continue to recover, and the cosmetic appearance of her eye will also be significantly improved. This will mean fewer visits to the hospital and she will be able to continue with her education and relocation to either Wollongong or Newcastle.

World leading treatment like this is only made possible with the support of the community. With continued support like yours we can make these outcomes a reality for more people like Natalie.



Research Fellows



Dr Johannes Keller

Dr Eddie Donaldson Vitreoretinal Fellow

Johannes started his vitreoretinal surgery fellowship at the Sydney Eye Hospital in July 2015. He arrived in Australia after completing the equivalent programme at the Bristol Eye Hospital, England. He had previously worked and trained in Spain and across the UK for over 10 years, completing the resident training programme at the Hospital Clinic de Barcelona, University Hospital. Johannes is keen to take his surgical skills to a world-class standard and is excited to have been given the opportunity to do so at one of the premier eye hospitals in the world. At the end of his fellowship he looks forward to returning to Europe and working in a university hospital environment.



Dr Graham Belovay

Glaucoma Fellow

Graham completed his Ophthalmology training at the University of Toronto in Toronto, Canada. His interests include technology in medicine, surgical techniques and glaucoma. He also enjoys teaching in the clinic, operating theatre and wet lab settings. Outside of Ophthalmology, he is interested in computer programming and playing soccer. He hopes that this fellowship will allow him to learn new techniques in surgical and clinical glaucoma that he can bring back to Toronto. He also hopes to undertake more clinical research in order to share knowledge with the Ophthalmology community. He is excited to explore Sydney and the rest of Australia's diverse regions.



Dr Simone Beheregaray

Corneal Fellow

Simone completed her specialist training in Brazil. After working as a consultant in her home country she became a research fellow in Cornea at the Wilmer Eye Institute, USA. In 2014 she obtained her PhD at the University of Tsukuba, Japan. Simone would like to become highly qualified in order to support her patients with cornea and ocular surface diseases. She is interested in learning different techniques of corneal transplantation with renowned professionals at the Sydney Eye Hospital. She hopes to improve her clinical and surgical skills, as well as engage in research activities during the fellowship.



Dr Thomas Fearnley

Oculoplastic Fellow

Tom attended medical school at Cambridge University before moving to London to complete his general clinical training. He returned to his native Yorkshire to embark upon seven years of Ophthalmic specialist training and recently completed a fellowship in ocular oncology, orbital and oculoplastic surgery at The Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield. He hopes to return to Yorkshire to take up an NHS consultant post in oculoplastics or ocular oncology next year. Tom is excited about the prospect of working with the experienced oculoplastic surgeons at Sydney Eye Hospital and looks forward to learning new techniques that will benefit him in his UK practice. He plans to enjoy Sydney with his wife and two children over the next 12 months.



Dr Anagha Vaze
Medical Retinal Fellow

Anagha completed her postgraduate training in Ophthalmology in India, and undertook post specialist training in Medical Retina and inflammatory eye diseases at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. She also received a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Medicine from the University of Sydney in 2014. Her interests include medical retinal disorders including diabetic retinopathy, age-related macular degeneration, retinal vascular disorders and other macular disorders. She also has a keen interest in clinical research and looks forward to enhancing her knowledge and skills working with renowned experts in the field at Sydney Eye Hospital.



Dr Richard Symes
Professorial (Uveitis) Fellow

Richard completed his Ophthalmology residency in the UK and went on to gain fellowship experience at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London and the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. Richard came to Sydney to further his interest in inflammatory eye conditions, particularly the surgical management of this group of patients. He is looking forward to working alongside some of the leaders in Ophthalmology at Sydney Eye Hospital.



Dr Kurt Spiteri Cornish
Graham Lovett Vitreoretinal Fellow

Kurt started his vitreoretinal fellowship at Sydney Eye Hospital in January 2015, after having completed his Ophthalmology training in Scotland, UK. In 2013, he completed a vitreoretinal fellowship in Aberdeen, UK, followed by 12 months as a Consultant Ophthalmologist. He is very excited to have the opportunity to learn from and work alongside some of the world leaders in the field of vitreoretinal surgery. After completing his fellowship, he will work as a vitreoretinal consultant in Sheffield, UK.

Letter of Appreciation

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

AS YOU WOULD KNOW I HAVE BEEN A PATIENT OF THE SYDNEY EYE HOSPITAL ON AND OFF OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. I HAVE NOTHING BUT PRAISE FOR THE WONDERFUL DOCTORS, NURSES AND STAFF OF THE HOSPITAL.

I WOULD LIKE TO KEEP RECEIVING YOUR NEWSLETTERS AND REQUEST FOR DONATIONS. HOWEVER BEING AN AGED PENSIONER I CANNOT GUARANTEE RESPONDING WITH A DONATION EVERY TIME I RECEIVE A REQUEST.

PLEASE DO NOT BE OFFENDED IF I CANNOT HELP OUT FROM TIME TO TIME.

YOURS TRULY

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A Bequest is a Gift of Vision – for Today and Tomorrow

It's a way of ensuring that the assets (money, property, shares or valuables) that you need now will eventually be used to help the Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation save sight. It's something that you can arrange in addition to – or instead of – giving cash right now.

By making a Bequest, you will be in good company. Bequests from donors, like Mary E who has provided \$160,000 towards equipment for the Eye Hospital, make a significant difference to our patient outcomes.

Bequests are a major source of income that help the Foundation provide much needed research and advanced equipment to help in the diagnosis of Macular and Corneal diseases.

The main advantage of the Bequest programme is it allows donors of all means to make a valuable donation to the Foundation. These donors can feel proud that their generosity will help save the sight of thousands of adults and children who come to the Hospital for help each day.

Should you decide to make a Bequest to Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation, clear instructions in your Will are necessary to ensure your wishes are carried out.

If you would like more information, please contact the Foundation on (02) 9382 7408 or email: bequest@sehf.org.au

We will be pleased to assist.

Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation Board of Management

All Members of the Board of Management are financial members of the Foundation. They also give their time freely in the interests of enhancing the ability of Sydney Eye Hospital to provide first class eye care to the public of Sydney and beyond.

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*Offering world-class
eye treatment to
Australians*