

\$200,000 GRANT LEADS TO POTENTIAL BREAKTHROUGH FOR DIABETICS

Your support of Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation has helped fund a clinical study by Professor Mark Gillies that could help save the sight of millions.

Diabetic macular edema, or DME, can be a devastating condition for people with diabetes around the world, causing complete loss of sight if it's left untreated.

It's caused when fluid builds up because of leaking blood vessels in the macula – a small but very important area at the back of the eyeball.

Until recently, the best way to stop the disease getting worse was through regular injections. But in many countries these costly injections simply aren't available to everyone who needs them.

Knowing there must be an easier, more cost-effective way to treat DME, Professor Mark Gillies and his team from the Macular Research Group set out to explore the potential of low energy lasers.

Thanks to generous supporters like you, the Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation was able to grant \$200,000 towards this ground-breaking research, which was dubbed the *Near Infrared Light Photobiomodulation Treatment for Diabetic Macular Oedema (NIRD) Trial*.

Professor Mark Gillies has good reason to be proud of his team's achievements, which were recently showcased in San Francisco at the Retina Day of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the leading clinical meeting in the world.



"The Academy was very interested," says Mark. "They set aside time for us in a very crowded program. And following the success of our trial here in Australia, a bigger phase two study is now underway in the United States."

The international recognition of studies funded by the Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation shows just how important your support is.

Your gifts don't just help fellow Australians, they have the potential to improve the lives of people all over the world for years to come.

As Mark says: *"In five to ten years, I can see a time when people with DME will have access to a simple hand-held laser device they can use to administer treatment themselves, without the expense and complication of injections."*

That's a future we can all look forward to, thanks to generous supporters like you who help fund these vital trials.

HOW YOU HELPED SAVE BERNARD'S SIGHT

When a sewer pipe at the bottom of his garden became blocked, handyman Bernard didn't hesitate to jump down the manhole and investigate. But he soon found himself on an emergency flight to Sydney, desperate to save his eye.

"There was a dirty, rusty length of steel cable in the pipe that wasn't meant to be there," explains Bernard. *"I started to pull it out but didn't realise just how short it was. It flicked up like a bow and struck me in the eye".*

Shocked and in searing pain, Bernard managed to climb out of the sewer and get to Canberra Hospital. An emergency CT scan showed the rusty cable had penetrated 5cm into his eye socket.

"As soon as they got the results of the scan they said, "Mate, you're going to Sydney Eye Hospital". I didn't argue."

Bernard was strapped to a stretcher and flown up to Sydney where he came under the expert care of Dr Jenny Danks and her team.

"I could tell I was in good hands from the start," remembers Bernard. "I've been told Jenny is one of the best in the world in her field. I was treated like royalty."

First thing next morning, Bernard underwent hours of delicate surgery to clean out his eye socket to avoid any danger of infection. Rusty particles were removed using powerful magnets and a deft touch.

Just three days later, Bernard was back home in Canberra. Incredibly, he still has 95% of his vision and he puts it all down to the world-class care he received:

"Without the medical intervention I got at Sydney Eye Hospital, I would have lost the eye and maybe the other one as well. So I am extremely grateful."

Before his accident Bernard had never heard of the Sydney Eye Hospital, now he is a passionate advocate for the Hospital and has nothing but deep admiration for the wonderful supporters like you who make it such a special place:

"To anybody who wants to listen to me I'd say, Give as generously as you can, because it is a wonderful institution."



A quick plumbing job in his garden almost cost Bernard his eye.

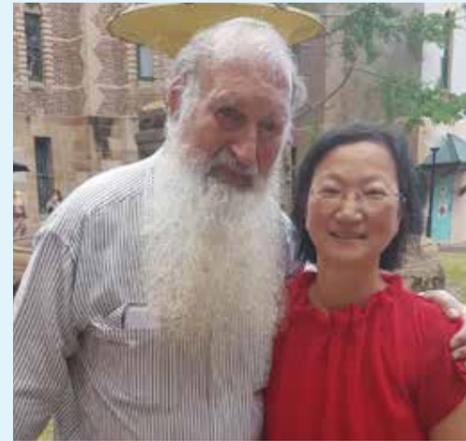


Bernard now after recovery. Thanks to expert care, Bernard retains 95% of his vision.

IT'S ALL POSSIBLE THANKS TO YOU...

Sydney Eye Hospital brings together the best doctors, most innovative equipment, ground-breaking research and specialised facilities to deliver world-class patient care to thousands each year... all thanks to your generosity.

"My eye was the most examined eye in the Southern hemisphere at one stage"



78 year old Peter Hannigan knows the inside of Sydney Eye Hospital better than most. He was in for a total of seven weeks this year, and sent a thank you note after he left. Here's a small section of his note:

"Everyone was so friendly, dedicated, efficient, caring and gentle.

I'm grateful to Dr Ridia Lim who operated on me. Not only is she the foremost surgeon in her field but she is a lovely lady and the most caring human being you'll ever meet.

The Cornea team pooled their knowledge to get the best possible results for me. They were not only interested in my eye but in getting the best possible outcomes for me."

"Because of you, Sydney Eye Hospital will continue to be not only the oldest, but the most innovative and most dedicated and caring specialist eye hospital in Australia."

Kylie-Rae Thomas is Operational Nurse Unit Manager at Sydney Eye Hospital. She sees first-hand the difference your support makes – to the hospital, the medical team and most of all, the patients.

She is in charge of all five Operating Theatres and leads 50 nursing staff and 10 support staff. She's also responsible for the procurement, care and maintenance of all operating theatre equipment.

"I want to thank each and every one of you for your generous support of the Sydney Eye Hospital.

"Your support is so important. It ensures Sydney Eye Hospital can give patients the very best eye care and medical services.

"We're particularly grateful for the new equipment funded by kind supporters. It's already making a huge difference to our patients and the medical team here.

"Thanks to you, the surgical team now has access to the latest technology and sophisticated equipment which ensures our patients receive comprehensive and innovative treatment and care.

"For example, the StealthStation and Smith & Nephew HD camera lets surgeons perform highly accurate and minimally invasive surgical procedures. This means our patients are now able to receive more accurate treatment and most importantly, will experience improved surgical outcomes including shorter recovery times.

Thank You!



A GIFT OF SIGHT BEYOND YOUR LIFE

Leaving a gift in your Will to Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation has the power to transform lives.

Your gift will help save the sight of thousands each year, buy crucial equipment and help train the next generation of eye surgeons.

Once your loved ones are taken care of through your Will, you can arrange to donate the rest to your favourite causes. It allows your personal legacy to live on for years to come.

If you would like to talk with us about the possibility of building your legacy through your Will, feel free to chat with Amrita Sharma on 02 9382 7408 or amrita.sharma@health.nsw.gov.au.



"I believe sight is the greatest gift ever given to humanity. To have had it, then lose it, must be the hardest thing imaginable to overcome. Let us all help someone who is sightless." – Ken, who is leaving a gift in his Will to Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation. Ken is pictured here with his late wife, Rosalyn.

Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation Board 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 care to the public of Sydney and beyond.

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From our family to yours: wishing you a wonderful holiday season, and a very happy and healthy New Year!