

Optometry with a difference ... you'll see

With Christmas just a few days away; now is an important time of year for our thoughts to focus onto thinking about others and the gift of giving. A wonderful way to 'give back' at Christmas and indeed at any time of year is to help others that may be less fortunate.



For the past 20 years, Professor Leo Hartley from h2 Vision Centres at Sippy Downs has self funded visits to Vanuatu to join a group of dedicated volunteer medical professionals who 'give back' their expertise and services to Ni-Vanuatu locals. Working in conjunction with the Vanuatu Government – Leo and the team with the Vanuatu Prevention of Blindness project identify the areas of greatest need for their medical services and set off to help, often visiting extremely remote parts of the country.

"Often our work will take us to super remote places! We fly into one of the islands, take a four hour trip in the back of a ute with all of our equipment and supplies – and then jump



into a tinny for another three hour leg of the journey. This is all just to get to the first village where we will set up the clinic. The villages are so remote and without medical infrastructure that sometimes we just set up the clinic under a mango tree and get on with the consults!" chuckles Leo.

While Leo predominately utilises his extensive optometry skills to help maintain the gift of sight; as a qualified doctor, he along with the team of local health professionals and Australian medical volunteers are often called upon to address other health issues during their visits.

Interestingly, Leo has found that the more remote the village, the more generally healthy people are – and the less prone they are to suffer more typically 'westernised' diseases such as diabetes and obesity.



However hypertension, which pushes up blood pressure to often disastrous levels, is a real health issue for the villagers. This spike in this condition is the result of a high salt diet (often used as a way to preserve food in the absence of refrigeration) and cooking in sea water. The team also come across a lot of ear, nose and throat (E.N.T.) conditions and a prevalence of tropical ulcers such as yaws which is transmitted via touch or by flies. Public health issues are also prevalent and Leo and the team are keen to promote effective public education programs as well as training programs to empower local health providers to service their community more effectively.

Leo usually visits Vanuatu for two weeks, a few times a year and spends much of his time working with the local eye workers to assist villagers in need. As well as addressing more complex issues, Leo also helps fix more general vision problems.



Working remotely, Leo and the team often don't have immediate access to the state of the art technology available here and are forced to rely on their own expertise and resourcefulness – with the results bringing a huge positive impact into the lives of others.

"It is so rewarding that we can use our skills to genuinely change people's lives. These people are so deserving – even though they are very materially poor or may have health issues, they don't complain ... they are lovely happy people. We are honoured to help them," says Leo.

When you come to h2 Vision Centres you experience so much more than just a typical optometrist service. This is the long held dream by two committed brothers Leo and Mark Hartley (the h2 in the company name) to provide a total exemplary experience in service, expertise and retail range delivered by a team of deeply passionate professionals. Drop in or call for an appointment.

You'll see...



Business feature

A new approach to optometry

Book an appointment now and you'll see.



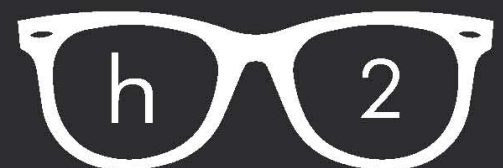
COMPREHENSIVE EYE HEALTH & VISION ASSESSMENTS

DRY EYE IPL LASER TREATMENT & DRY EYE MANAGEMENT

12 MONTH PROMISE TO REPAIR OR REPLACE

EXCLUSIVE RANGE OF OPTICAL FRAMES & SUNGLASSES

MEDICAL GRADE ANTI-WRINKLE INJECTIONS



VISION CENTRES
you'll see...

BVLGARI Ray-Ban PRADA DOLCE & GABBANA FRITZ EMPORIO ARMANI DRAGON SUNDAY REMEMOS

7/11 CHANCELLOR VILLAGE BLVD SIPPY DOWNS, OPEN 6 DAYS.

P 5353 5080

FOLLOW US