

The Economic Cost and Burden of Eye Diseases and Preventable Blindness in Ireland

A health economic study analysing the impact and burden of blindness and the most prevalent eye diseases* in Ireland

75-80% of blindness is preventable (1)



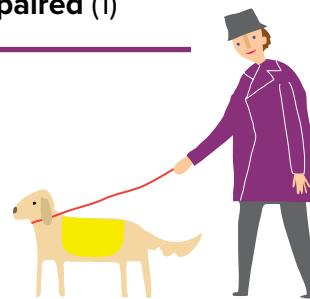
Ageing population

As the Irish population ages, the impact of vision loss will grow substantially in the future

More than 220,000 people in Ireland are blind or vision impaired (1)



Blindness affects **13,845** individuals in Ireland



123 million workdays are lost per year in Europe, and 2.1 million healthy days are lost per annum in Ireland (2)

5 people per week became blind in Ireland between 2010 and 2013 – approximately 260 per annum



€2.5 billion

Vision impairment and blindness is expected to cost more than €2.5 billion by 2020 (1)



The National Vision Coalition is an alliance of healthcare professionals, those working in the sight loss community, and, most importantly, service users: NCBI (Chair); Fighting Blindness (Chair); Irish College of Ophthalmologists; Association of Optometrists Ireland; Diabetes Ireland; Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind; ChildVision; Mark Cahill, RVEEH; Dr Maureen Hillery, HSE; David Keegan, Mater Hospital; Gerry Kerr, Service User Representative; and Irene Reid, National Rehabilitation Hospital.

Healthcare costs

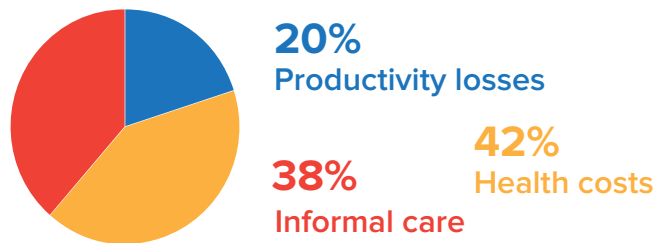
for the main eye diseases* are €65.1 million and for blindness €3.7 million per year



€205 million

The financial cost to the departments of health, social protection and finance was €205 million in 2010 (3)

The economic cost of blindness and vision impairment (3)



Informal care: Day-to-day care for blind people, e.g. by relatives or friends.
Health costs: Healthcare systems costs e.g. hospitalisation, GPs, medical services, medications, research. **Productivity losses:** From reduced employment.
Economic cost = healthcare cost + productivity costs + informal care.

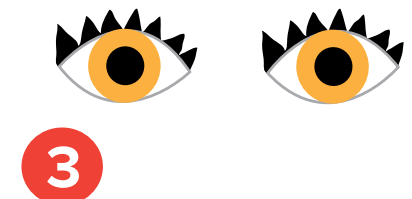
By investing in these **cost-effective interventions** some types of vision loss may be avoided

Methods:

1 Screening for diabetic retinopathy and earlier access to treatment, if treatment is required



Treatment with anti-VEGF for wet age-related macular degeneration (AMD)



Screening for cataracts and access to surgery when needed

€ Cost-effective interventions can reduce economic costs by up to **€76 million**

* Diabetic retinopathy, Wet AMD, cataract, glaucoma. All data is from The Economic Cost and Burden of Eye Diseases and Preventable Blindness in Ireland, with the exception of the following references: **(1)** Framework to Adopt a Strategic Approach for Vision Health in Ireland (Nov 2012). Accessed on 10 March 2014 <http://www.ncbi.ie/about-ncbi-ncbi-publications/framework-adopt-strategic-approach-vision-health-ireland-report-2012>. **(2)** The Cost of Preventable Blindness. Accessed on 10 March 2014 http://www.efabeu.org/media/1043/cob-infographic_pan-eu-results_14-october.pdf **(3)** The Cost of Sight Loss (May 2011) Accessed on 10 March 2014 <https://www.ncbi.ie/about-ncbi/ncbi-publications/cost-of-sight-loss-report-2011>

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