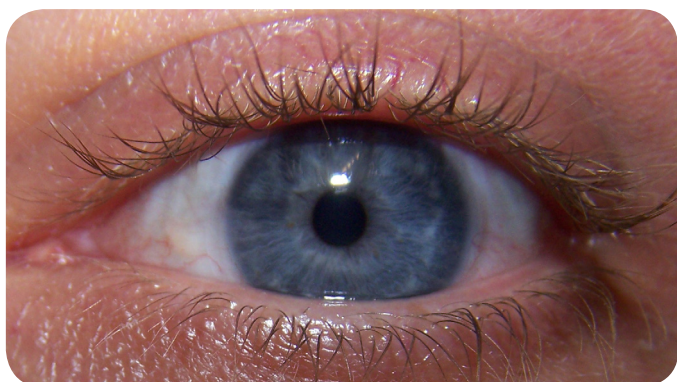


Orthoptics



>>What is an Orthoptist?

Orthoptics is an allied health profession specialised in diagnosis and management of disorders of eye movements and associated vision problems; performance of investigative procedures appropriate to disorders of the eye and visual system; and rehabilitation of patients with vision loss. Orthoptists are an integral part of the eye health team providing investigative testing of diseases such as glaucoma, assessment and management of eye movement disorders (for example, following a head injury) and rehabilitation of persons with sight loss due to eye diseases such as age-related macular degeneration. Orthoptic treatment of certain conditions can relieve visual symptoms and enhance visual performance. Orthoptists are involved in vision therapy, vision rehabilitation, specialised vision testing procedures, vision screening, education and research in a variety of settings, including private practice eye clinics, public hospitals, community health centres, specialist teaching and children's hospitals, rehabilitation centres and universities. Orthoptists work in many areas including neonatal care, paediatrics, rehabilitation, geriatrics, neurological impairment, community services and ophthalmic technology.

Where do these professionals work in Tasmania?

Orthoptists work in a diverse range of settings, including hospitals, private practices, low vision and rehabilitation settings and research centres. They work independently, in conjunction with ophthalmologists or in a variety of multidisciplinary teams. Orthoptists are involved in the

diagnosis and management of eye movement disorders including strabismus and amblyopia, the screening, investigation and monitoring of eye diseases such as diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma and the assessment of functional vision for the development of rehabilitation programs.

How do Orthoptists work in DHHS?

Orthoptists are employed at the Launceston General Hospital and Royal Hobart Hospital.

What qualifications are required to practice?

Orthoptic education in Australia is currently undertaken in the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Sydney and at the La Trobe University, Melbourne. Graduates from either of the above mentioned courses are eligible for membership of the orthoptic professional body, the OAA Inc. This membership carries with it automatic recognition by the private health benefits organisations throughout Australia. The AOB assesses orthoptists with Australian and overseas qualifications for registration in Australia and also performs a disciplinary function. While registration is not compulsory to practise, the OAA encourages orthoptists to register with the Board and participate in the Continuing Professional Education program (CPE) to gain credit towards a Certificate of Currency. Registration must be applied for every two years. Orthoptists registered with the AOB may submit a CPE claim and a Certificate of Currency will be awarded if sufficient points have been accrued.

Useful links

<http://www.orthoptics.org.au/OAA07/>