

For Immediate Release

Eyes up for eye health, Calgary! Operation Eyesight calls on everyone to prioritize vision this World Sight Day, October 9, for education, employment and the economy

Look up, way up, on October 9, World Sight Day at the Calgary Tower lit in blue and orange – not in the colours of the Edmonton Oilers but for Calgary-based Operation Eyesight – to highlight eye health, a national and international priority

Calgary, Alberta, Canada, October 9, 2025: Operation Eyesight Universal, a Calgary-based international development organization working to prevent blindness and restore sight in Africa, South Asia and now Canada, encourages all Calgarians to prioritize their eyesight this World Sight Day, October 9. To raise awareness, the Calgary Tower will shine in Operation Eyesight's blue and orange, not for the Edmonton Oilers and the Battle of Alberta, but for World Sight Day. World Sight Day is especially relevant as eye health is now a national priority with the passing of [Bill C-284 – the National Strategy for Eye Care Act](#) last November.

The state of eye health in Canada

As of 2019, in Canada, [1.2 million people experience vision loss](#), which is 3.2 per cent of the population, and another estimated eight million people – [19 per cent](#) – have eye conditions that could lead to blindness. Fortunately, [75 per cent of vision loss in Canada is avoidable](#), meaning it can be prevented or treated when detected and addressed early. This is best done through regular eye exams; however, just [51 per cent of people in Canada are aware of how often to get an exam](#). Vision loss impacts people of all ages and touches all aspects of life including:

- education (students with uncorrected refractive error learn [50 per cent less than peers](#));
- employment (vision loss can lead to a [30 per cent reduction in employment](#)); and
- Canada's economy – in 2019 alone the estimated cost of vision loss was nearly 33 billion dollars according to [The Cost of Vision Loss and Blindness in Canada](#) report.

Eye health 2025: A priority in Canada and at the United Nations General Assembly

Kris Kelm, Global Director – International Programs, Operation Eyesight Universal and Chair, Canadian Eye Health Coalition, says, "Canada has made eye health a national priority with the passage of [the National Strategy for Eye Care Act](#). We're hard at work with like-minded organizations and communities, including Indigenous communities, to help shape the framework for an eye health care system that will serve all Canadians, from Whitehorse to Iqaluit, and from Victoria to St. John's – and every urban, rural and remote community in between. We are proud to bring more than 60 years of experience – earned building eye health care systems with partners in Africa and South Asia – to the table, and we feel that there is a lot for our Canadian policy to learn from international experience."

Kashinath Bhoosnurmath, President & CEO, Operation Eyesight Universal, says, "Together, we can build an eye health care system in Canada that improves quality of life for us all, personally and for our family, friends, colleagues and neighbours – and yes, even our sports rivals. Together, we can eliminate avoidable vision loss in Canada to expand our collective opportunities – and be a shining inspiration for others."

Eyesight is also currently on the international stage. On September 24, 2025, the UN Friends of Vision, collaborating with the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) which facilitates World Sight Day worldwide, presented the very first [*The Value of Vision: The Investment Case for Eye Health*](#) to the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

World Sight Day 2025: A list of Operation Eyesight activities in Canada

Operation Eyesight is taking part in hundreds of World Sight Day activities around the world in 10 countries in Africa and South Asia. In Canada, we are:

- Co-hosting a webinar for decision makers called *The Future in Focus: Eye Health in Canada and Beyond*. The webinar, a collaboration between Operation Eyesight, Seva Canada and Orbis Canada, will focus on the rising demand for eye health care nationally and globally, on World Sight Day, Thursday, October 9 from 10 – 11 a.m. MST.
- Engaging in **Eyes up for eye health! World Sight Day lighting events**: On Thursday, October 9, the Calgary Tower will shine Operation Eyesight's brand colours of blue and orange, as will the CN Tower in Toronto. Guelph's Market Square will light up overnight from October 8 to 9 and Winnipeg's Esplanade Riel Bridge and city sign will light up on October 11 for World Sight Day and World Blindness Awareness Month.

Learn more or donate in honour of World Sight Day at operationeyesight.com/worldsightday.

Parents, guardians and teachers are also encouraged to download resources for educating children (and themselves) about eye health: operationeyesight.com/free-resources-for-parents

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About Operation Eyesight Universal

Operation Eyesight Universal is an international development organization working to prevent blindness and restore sight. Its vision is the elimination of avoidable vision loss. Founded in Calgary in 1963, Operation Eyesight is now a global community spanning four continents – Africa, Europe, North America and South Asia. Its vision is global and the focus local, with teams on the ground in communities of work. Through activities like community outreach, water and sanitation projects, and health education, Operation Eyesight is addressing the root causes of avoidable vision loss and contributing to seven United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: no poverty, good health and well-being, quality education, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, climate action and partnerships for the goals. Operation Eyesight Canada is a registered charity and has been named a 'Top 10 Impact Charity' by Charity Intelligence Canada. Tax-deductible donations can be made at operationeyesight.com/donate

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