

Thinking of Ophthalmology?

An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who has undertaken additional specialist training in the diagnosis and management of disorders of the eye, visual system and related structures. Ophthalmology involves the diagnosis and management of patients with abnormal conditions affecting the eye and its appendages, including prevention of blindness, promotion of eye health and rehabilitation of patients with visual disability.

An overview of Ophthalmology

- Ophthalmologists use a wide range of skills and experience in both medicine and surgery. They treat adult and paediatric patients, managing primary through to tertiary eye care conditions across the whole spectrum of the eye.
- The most common ophthalmic surgical procedure is cataract removal, but there are many facets to ophthalmology such as cornea and external disease, glaucoma, neuro-ophthalmology, ophthalmic pathology, ocular inflammation, oculo-plastics, orbital surgery and vitreoretinal disease. Ophthalmologists are also involved in scientific research into causes and cures for eye diseases and vision problems.

Why choose Ophthalmology?

- Ophthalmologists provide medical treatment and complex microsurgery that cannot be offered by other health care providers.
- Ophthalmology is a rewarding career; restoring or preserving the sight of others
- It can be undertaken in a range of settings from hospitals to day surgeries, group practices or as a sole practitioner.

Ophthalmology Training

- The objective of the ophthalmology Vocational Training Program (VTP) is to produce a specialist ophthalmologist who, on completion of training, is equipped to undertake safe, unsupervised, comprehensive, general ophthalmology practice.
- Ophthalmology training equips eye specialists to provide the **full spectrum of eye care**, including the **prescription of glasses and contact lenses, medical treatment and complex microsurgery**.
- An ophthalmologist in Australia and New Zealand will have undertaken a **minimum of 12 years of training** comprising:
 - Up to 7 years at medical school, graduating with a **degree in medicine**
 - **2 years (minimum) as a newly qualified** doctor undertaking basic medical training
 - **5 years of ophthalmic specialist training** and successful completion of **examinations set by The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO)**.
- Vocational Training Program (VTP) comprises of:
 - Basic Training - 2 years of basic training during which Trainees must demonstrate integrated clinical skills and knowledge in the Ophthalmic Sciences (OS) and the Ophthalmic Basic Competencies and Knowledge (OBCK)
 - Advanced Training - 2 years of advanced training during which Trainees are expected to demonstrate integrated knowledge, clinical and surgical skills as documented in the clinical standards

- Final Year Training - a final year during which the Trainee develops their specialist experience in preparation for specialist qualification and to function in the community as an independent general ophthalmologist.

Personal qualities required to be an Ophthalmologist

- Good manual skills
- Good vision
- Ability to use instruments
- Good patient communication skills and the ability to work as part of a team - ophthalmologists work closely with optometrists, nurses, nurse practitioners and managers
- Patient-focussed
- Highly ethical
- Good decision-makers

Specialty Training Programme Information

Medical College

Royal Australia and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists ([RANZCO](#))

Fellowship/Qualification

Fellow of the Royal Australia and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (FRANZCO)

Examination requirements

In addition to regular work based assessments throughout training examinations are undertaken in:
Basic training - Clinical Ophthalmic Pharmacology and Emergency Medicine Modules 1 & 2, Ophthalmic Basic Competencies and Knowledge (OBCK) and Ophthalmic Sciences which includes Anatomy, Physiology, Optics.
Advanced training – Ophthalmic Pathology, RANZCO Advanced Clinical Exam (RACE) written and clinical

Recognition of Prior Learning

There is no automatic recognition of prior learning. This would be considered on a case by case basis.

Transferability of registration to other countries/across training sites

The Ophthalmology training programme is available in Australia and New Zealand.

Entry requirement

Eligibility criteria for application to the RANZCO training programme:

- Medical degree with full registration in either Australia or New Zealand at the time of applying.
- Citizenship or permanent resident status of Australia or New Zealand at the time of application.
- Completion of a minimum of two years postgraduate pre-vocational experience. You should have a broad experience across a range of non-ophthalmic medical, surgical and clinical settings with a minimum of 21 months in such posts.

Application process

1. Candidates complete a [registration form](#) when applications are open (from early March-late April every year)
2. Applications are assessed against eligibility criteria.
3. All eligible candidates are interviewed within the training region to which they have applied.

Successful applicants are offered a place on the Vocational Training Program.

Selection criteria

The employing bodies selection committees use the seven key roles which underpin the work of a specialist ophthalmologist (medical expert, scholar, communicator, collaborator, manager, health advocate and professional).

Guidance on these roles can be found in the '[Social and Professional Responsibilities Standards](#)' documents.

You will need to complete placements in multiple DHBs whilst completing vocational training

Further information can be obtained on the Royal Australia and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists ([RANZCO](#))

Resident Medical Officer (RMO) Information

Demand for vocational Training Posts

Year	Number of applications for training year	Number of applicants for training year selected
2016	NOT AVAILABLE	26
2015	NOT AVAILABLE	35
2014	NOT AVAILABLE	39
2013	NOT AVAILABLE	42
2012	NOT AVAILABLE	50

RMO training registrar positions contracted

Northern	Midland	Central	South Island	Total
6	3	7	7	23

(September 2016 RMO census)

Regions

Northern:

Northland, Waitemata, Auckland, Counties Manukau DHBs

Midland:

Lakes, Tairāwhiti, Bay of Plenty, Waikato, Taranaki DHBs

Central:

Hawke's Bay, Wanganui, MidCentral, Wairarapa, Capital and Coast, Hutt Valley DHBs

South Island:

Nelson Marlborough, Canterbury, South Canterbury, Southern, West Coast DHBs

Senior Medical Officer (SMO) Information

Year	Number of NZ New Fellows
2016	6
2015	6
2014	6
2013	6
2012	6
2011	6
2010	6
2009	6

Average Age of SMOs	Number registered with the Medical Council	% of international medical graduates in the workforce
51	140	29

Number by Region (September 2016 SMO census)

Northern		Midland		Central		South Island		Total	
FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount	FTE	Headcount
28.5	44	6.4	10	12.6	21	18.3	28	65.8	103