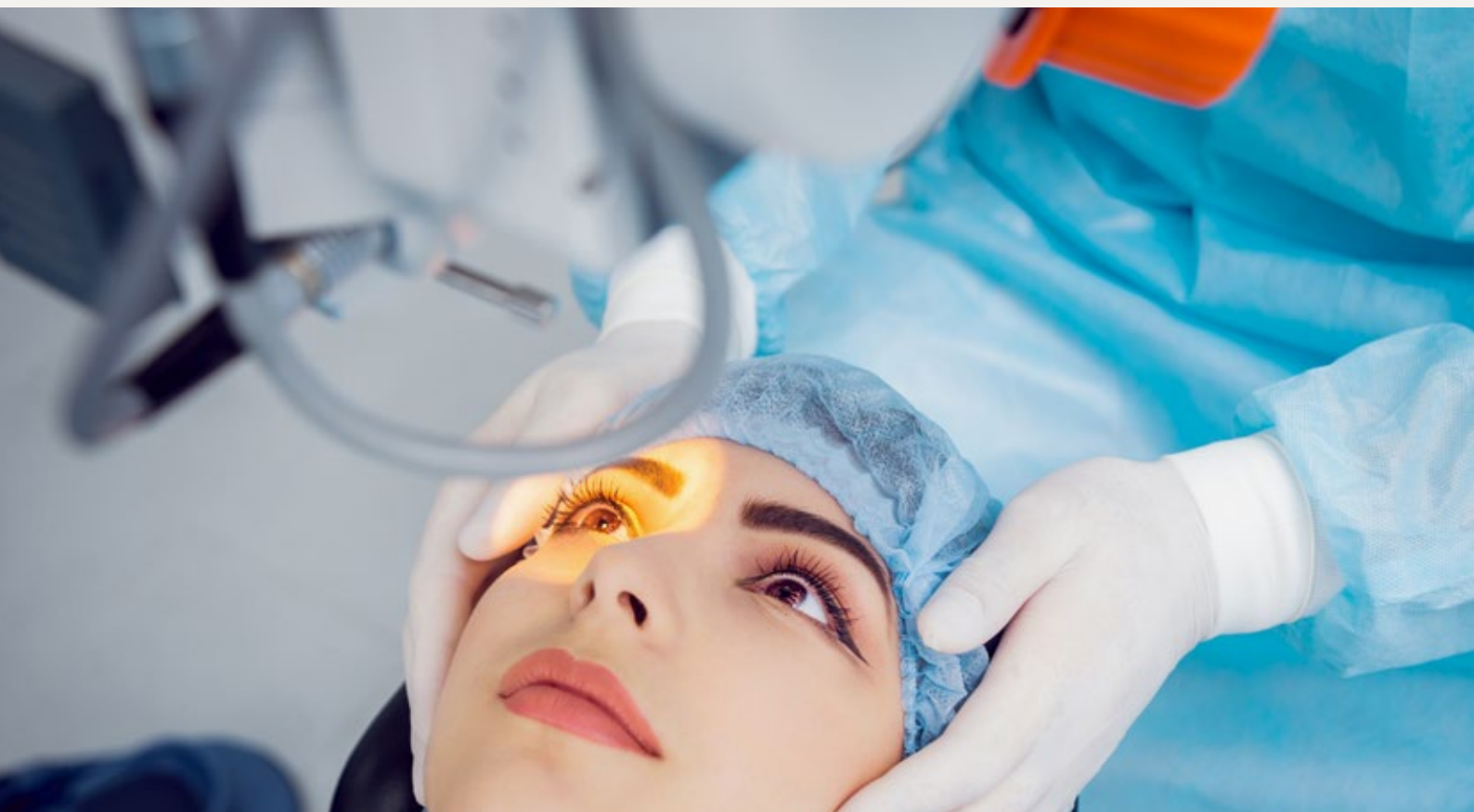




PHRN Population
Health
Research
Network



Longevity after cataract surgery

www.phrn.org.au

NCRIS 
National Research
Infrastructure for Australia
An Australian Government Initiative

The Research

The researchers evaluated which patients over the age of 64 years who had cataract surgery lived longer. Was it patients whose vision was corrected by the surgery or those patients who still lived with visual impairment after the surgery? The study found that patients with moderate-severe visual impairment prior to surgery, and whose vision was corrected by cataract surgery, had a 30% lower risk of death, compared to those patients whose moderate to severe levels of visual impairment continued post-surgery. The study concluded that older patients who had their vision restored after cataract surgery had a better chance of living longer than those patients whose sight remained impaired.

HOW DID THE PHRN INFRASTRUCTURE HELP?

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare linked the clinical data with the National Death Index for the research team to analyse.

AUTHORS/CONTRIBUTORS

Fong CS, Mitchell P, Rochtchina E, de Loryn T, Tan AG, Wang JJ.

Fong CS, Mitchell P, Rochtchina E, de Loryn T, Tan AG, Wang JJ. Visual impairment corrected via cataract surgery and 5-year survival in a prospective cohort. *American journal of ophthalmology*. 2014;157(1):163-70 e1. Accessed 12 April 2016
[http://www.ajo.com/article/S0002-9394\(13\)00578-3/pdf](http://www.ajo.com/article/S0002-9394(13)00578-3/pdf)
http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/130/11_suppl_1/S32.abstract

Privacy and security

Privacy protection and data security lie at the heart of the Population Health Research Network. The collection, use and disclosure of personal information by government agencies and other agencies are bound by strict legislative and regulatory conditions. Researchers wishing to access linked data must also adhere to stringent conditions, including ethics approval, data custodian approval and the development of a detailed data security plan.

Researchers are typically given access to a linked data set put together to meet the specific needs of their project. This de-identified data includes only the minimum information required for the research, such as age rather than date of birth.

Government agencies handle personal information in highly-secure environments. Data is delivered to researchers through a secure remote access facility, ensuring no information is stored on the researcher's personal computer or their institutional network. Researchers cannot export raw data from this system, only their analyses, and these are checked.

Researchers must only use the data for the approved purpose and are not allowed to link any other information. At the conclusion of the project, all data must be destroyed or returned.

Penalties for researchers and government employees can include criminal conviction, jail time or substantial fines. In the more than ten years since the network began, there has never been a breach.

