



THE PREVENTABLE VISION LOSS AND BLINDNESS SUMMIT

Setting the scene

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Preventable Blindness Background

- Canada is in desperate need of a far-reaching, coordinated national plan for vision health.
- The Government of Canada has made several commitments to developing and implementing such a plan, but has failed to deliver on these commitments
- In 2003, the Canadian government made a commitment to the WHO that it would develop a Vision Health Plan for Canada by 2007 and implement this plan by 2009. To date there is no such plan.
- In 2013, and again in 2020, the Canadian government made similar commitments at the World Health Assembly, and then in July last year supported a unanimous motion in favour of vision health at the United Nations General Assembly.



Preventable Blindness Background

- In order to develop a vision health plan for Canada, it is essential to understand the extent of the issue through the use of evidence-based data.
- Most recent data on prevalence and cost of VL was 2007
- In order to provide the evidence base for future planning, in late 2020, the Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB) commissioned Deloitte Access Economics to conduct an updated assessment using 2019 data. The results were released in May 2021.

What impact did the pandemic have?

COVID Addendum released in September 2021 looked at the impact of the pandemic on the prevalence and cost of vision loss.



**FIGHTING
BLINDNESS
CANADA**

**VAINCRE
LA CÉCITÉ
CANADA**



**LE CONSEIL CANADIEN
DES AVEUGLES**

The Cost of Vision Loss and Blindness in Canada – Key Findings



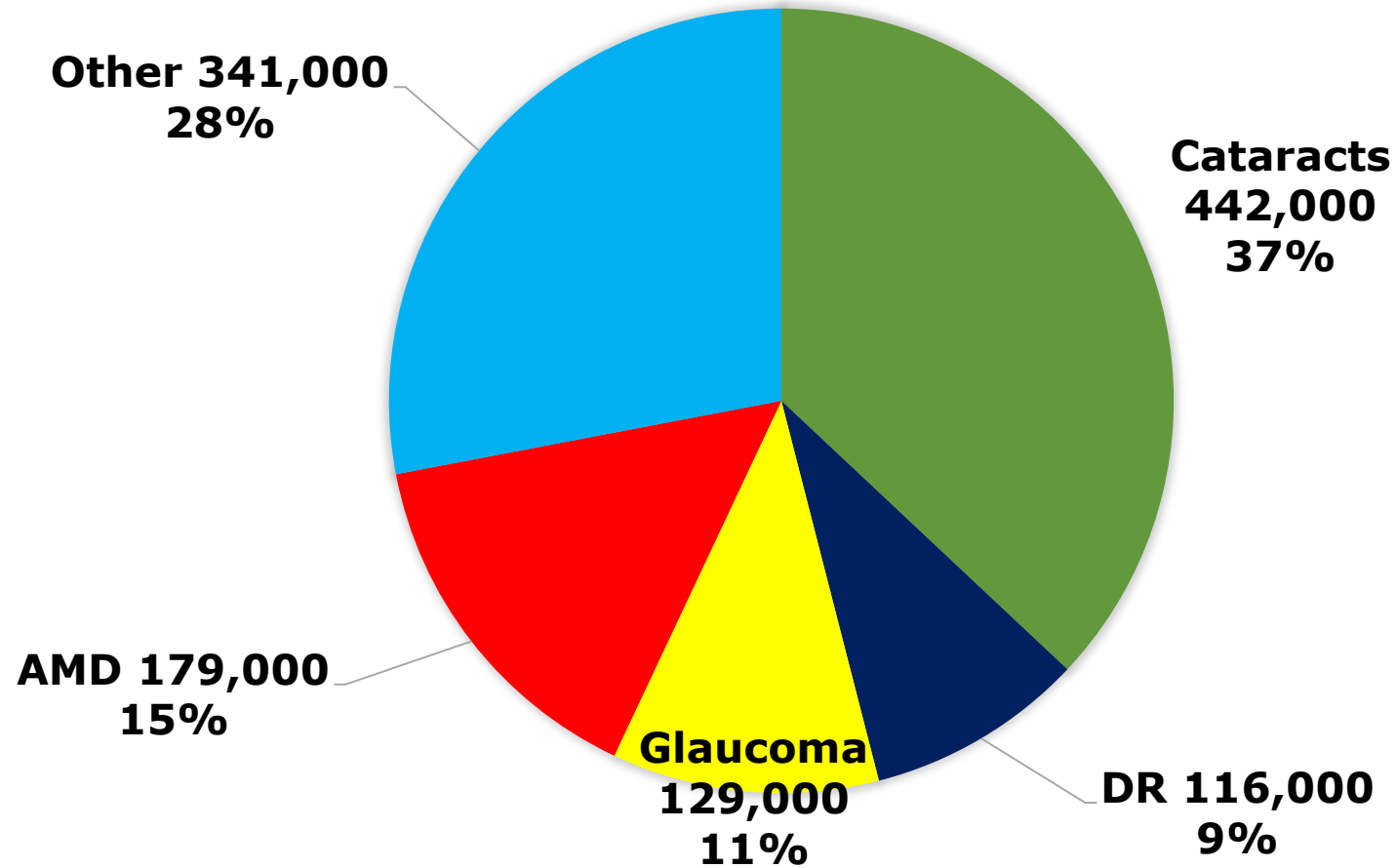
- There are an estimated 1.2 million Canadians living with VL, representing 3.2% of the total population.
 - 49,500 are blind (4.1% of people with VL) (BCVA \leq 20/200)
 - 417,600 (34.6%) have moderate VL (BCVA 20/60 – 20/200)
 - 738,400 (61.3%) have mild VL, (BCVA 20/40 – 20/60)

- 54% of people with VL are 65 years of age or over

- About one in 5 people over 85 have VL (20.9%)

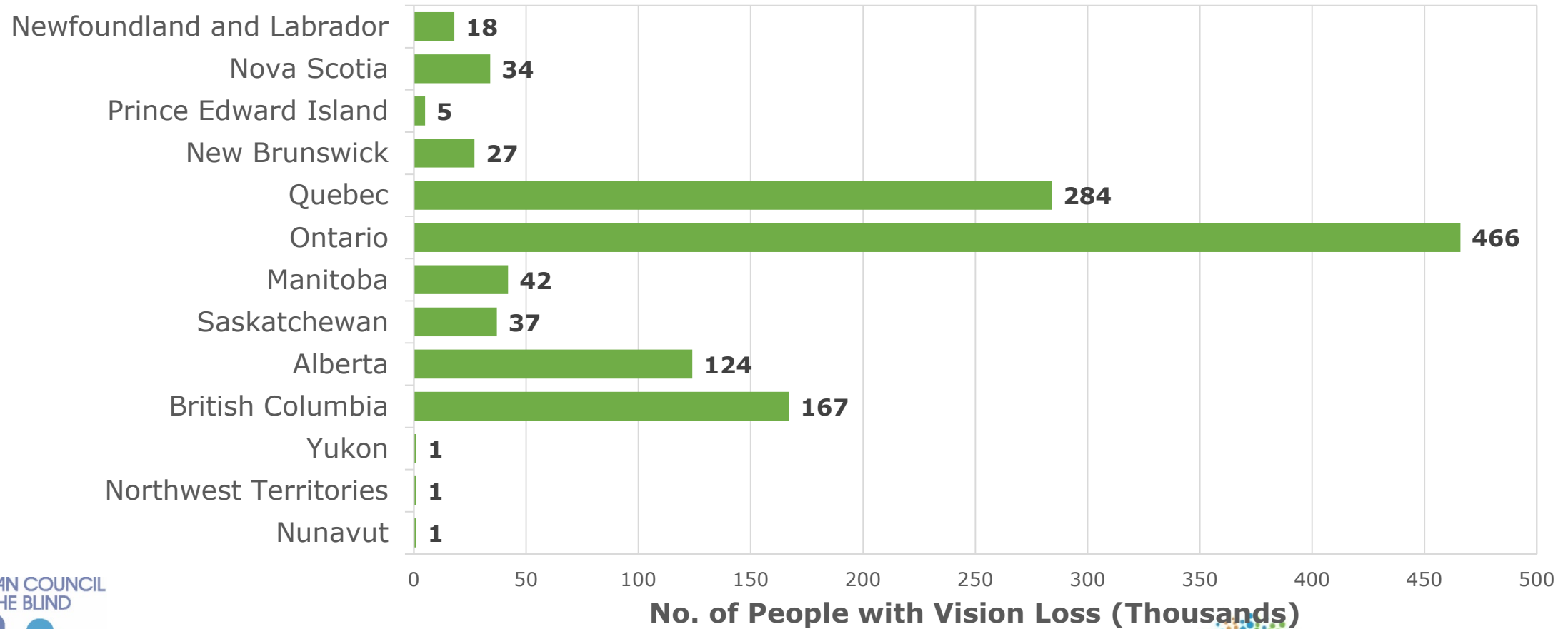


Prevalence of VL by Major Cause

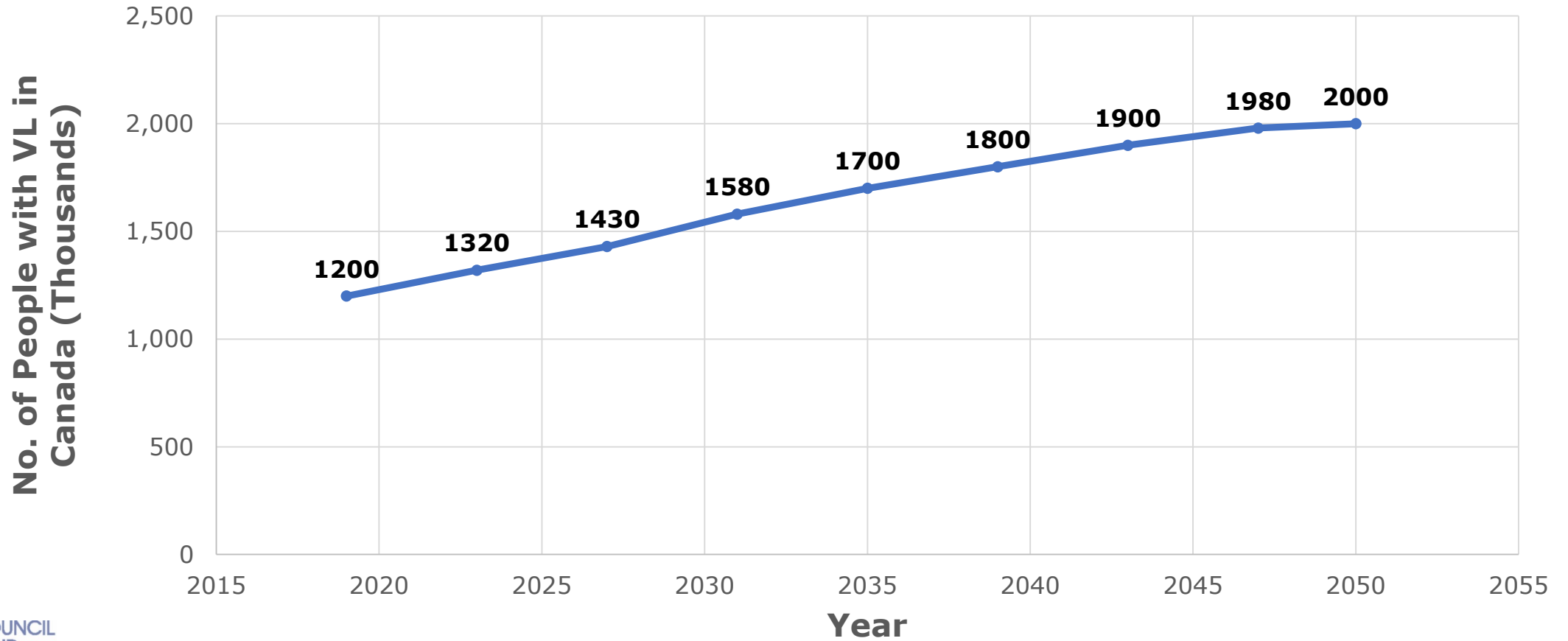




Prevalence of VL by Province/Territory



Projected Prevalence of VL in Canada, 2019-50



The Cost of Vision Loss and Blindness in Canada – Key Findings



- More than 8.0 million Canadians are living with an eye disease that may lead to blindness.
 - 2.5 million are living with AMD
 - 3.7 million are living with cataracts
 - 1.0 million are living with diabetic retinopathy
 - 728,000 are living with glaucoma



Cost of VL and Blindness in Canada - 2019

- The total cost of VL in Canada in 2019 was \$32.9 billion, consisting of:
 - Total financial cost of \$15.6 billion
 - Lost well-being cost of \$17.4 billion
- The direct health system costs of falls due to VL was estimated to be \$105.3 million.

Direct Health Care System Costs of VL in Canada 2019



	Financial Cost (\$'000'000)	% of Total Direct Health Costs
Vision Care	5,492.6	57.8
Outpatient Care	1,918.5	20.3
Pharmaceuticals	1,361.0	14.3
Other Costs (Capital and Admin)	549.7	5.8
Hospital Care	152.2	1.6
Vision Research	20.9	0.2
Total Direct Health Costs	9,515.8	100



**The preceding results are all
pre-pandemic**

**What impact did the pandemic
have?**

COVID Impact Study – Key Findings



- **2.9 million fewer visits were made to optometrists in 2020 compared to 2019.**
- **143,000 eye surgeries missed or delayed in 2020.**
- **69,800 fewer anti-VEGF injections for AMD or DR in 2020**
- **1,437 people experienced vision loss due to delayed eye examinations and treatments in 2020.**
- **Wait times for cataract surgery increased by 31 days in 2020**

COVID Impact Study – Key Findings



- It is expected to take two years to clear the additional backlog of cataract surgeries caused by the pandemic.
- It is estimated that an additional \$129 million per year will be required to clear the backlog in cataract surgery between 2021 and 2023.

Cost of Vision Loss and Blindness in Canada Summary



- **There are 1.2 million Canadians living with vision loss**
- **There are over 8 million Canadians living with a blinding eye disease that could lead to vision loss if untreated**
- **The Government of Canada needs to develop a national plan for vision health in Canada, as well as a vision desk at Health Canada.**