

# Deirdre O’Kane Launches AMD Awareness Week

Sep 14, 2018

Deirdre O’Kane launches the 11th annual AMD Awareness Week. AMD is the number one cause of sight loss in Ireland for those aged over 50<sup>1</sup> and more than 7,000 new cases are diagnosed each year in Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

The theme of this year’s AMD Awareness Week is ‘**Sightsee With Me**’. Sightseeing and travelling with family is enjoyed by many people and the campaign aims to highlight the importance of managing eye health to continue to see the sights we enjoy with the loved ones.

Speaking at the launch, Deirdre said: “Having recently turned 50, I’ve become really aware that now more than ever I need to think about my health. Protecting our eyesight is such an important priority, I’d hate to miss out on seeing the things I love! The Sightsee With Me campaign is an important reminder to consider the lasting memories we create with loved ones through sightseeing and to get our eyes tested regularly to continue to enjoy these special moments.”

The Novartis AMD testing bus will travel throughout the country from the September 10th to 14th. Free AMD eye tests will be available on board the bus, along with information on the condition.

**Mr Mark Cahill, Consultant Eye Surgeon, and spokesperson for the Irish College of Ophthalmologists** explained: “Symptoms of AMD can often go unrecognised so it’s vital that those aged over 50 get their eyes tested every two years. When AMD is diagnosed and treated early it is a very manageable condition, as effective treatments are now available. There are many ways people can improve their eye health such as maintaining a healthy lifestyle, increasing intake of leafy greens into your daily diet, regular exercise and not smoking. If you notice any change in your sight or if there is a history of AMD in your family, it is important to get your eyes tested regularly.”

The Novartis campaign is proudly supported by the Association of Optometrists Ireland, Fighting Blindness, the Irish College of Ophthalmologists, and the National Council for the Blind Ireland. For more information and testing locations visit [www.AMD.ie](http://www.AMD.ie)

## References:

1. The Cost of Sight Loss Report NCBI 2011
2. Akuffo KO, Nolan J, Stack J, Moran R, Feeney J, Kenny RA, Peto T, Dooley C, O’Halloran AM, Cronin H, and Beatty S. Prevalence of age-related macular degeneration in the Republic of Ireland. British Journal of Ophthalmology. 2015. (<http://bjo.bmj.com/content/early/2015/02/23/bjophthalmol-2014-305768.short> accessed: 14/07/2017)

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