



# SIGHT LOSS

# COMMUNITY HEALTH PROFILE

2022



A BOLDER HEALTHIER BIRMINGHAM

**INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND BIRMINGHAM CONTEXT**

**28,600** people living in Birmingham who have some degree of sight loss  
**NATIONAL FIGURE IS 656,000**

**10,090** people living in Birmingham who are blind or partially sighted  
**NATIONAL FIGURE IS 245,000**

**GLOBAL SIGHT LOSS**  
 WORLDWIDE THERE ARE ROUGHLY  
**2.2 BILLION**   
**PEOPLE LIVING WITH SIGHT LOSS**  
 Based on global data from 2018

1 billion of those have preventable and treatable sight loss. There are 33.6 million people globally who could be classified as blind

**9,015** People in Birmingham with Certificates of Visual Impairments (CVIs) (2016/17)  
**NATIONAL FIGURE IS 290,500**

**£380.2 MILLION**  
 Total annual direct and indirect costs of sight loss in Birmingham  
  **THE FIGURE FOR THE UK REACHES £28 BILLION**

**OVERVIEW**

Sight loss can affect anyone at any stage of their life, and it is estimated that



**1 IN 5** WILL START TO LIVE WITH SIGHT LOSS DURING THEIR LIVES

THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WITH VISION IMPAIRMENT AND BLINDNESS ARE

**OVER THE AGE OF 50**  
 however, vision loss can affect people of all ages

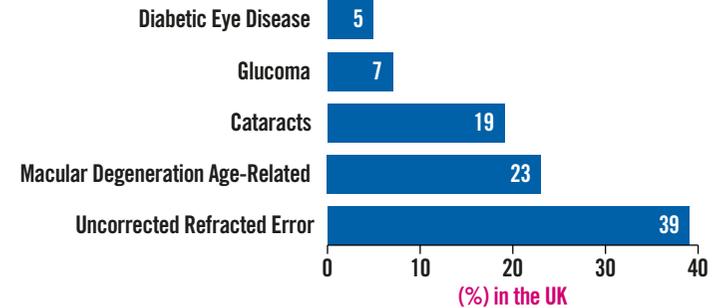
**LEARNING DISABILITIES**

Adults with learning disabilities are

**10x** MORE LIKELY TO BE BLIND OR PARTIALLY SIGHTED 

**KEY FACTS IN ENGLAND AND BIRMINGHAM**

**MAIN CAUSES OF SIGHT LOSS**



**↑ 17%**  
 ESTIMATED INCREASE IN SIGHT LOSS NUMBERS IN THE UK BY 2030 

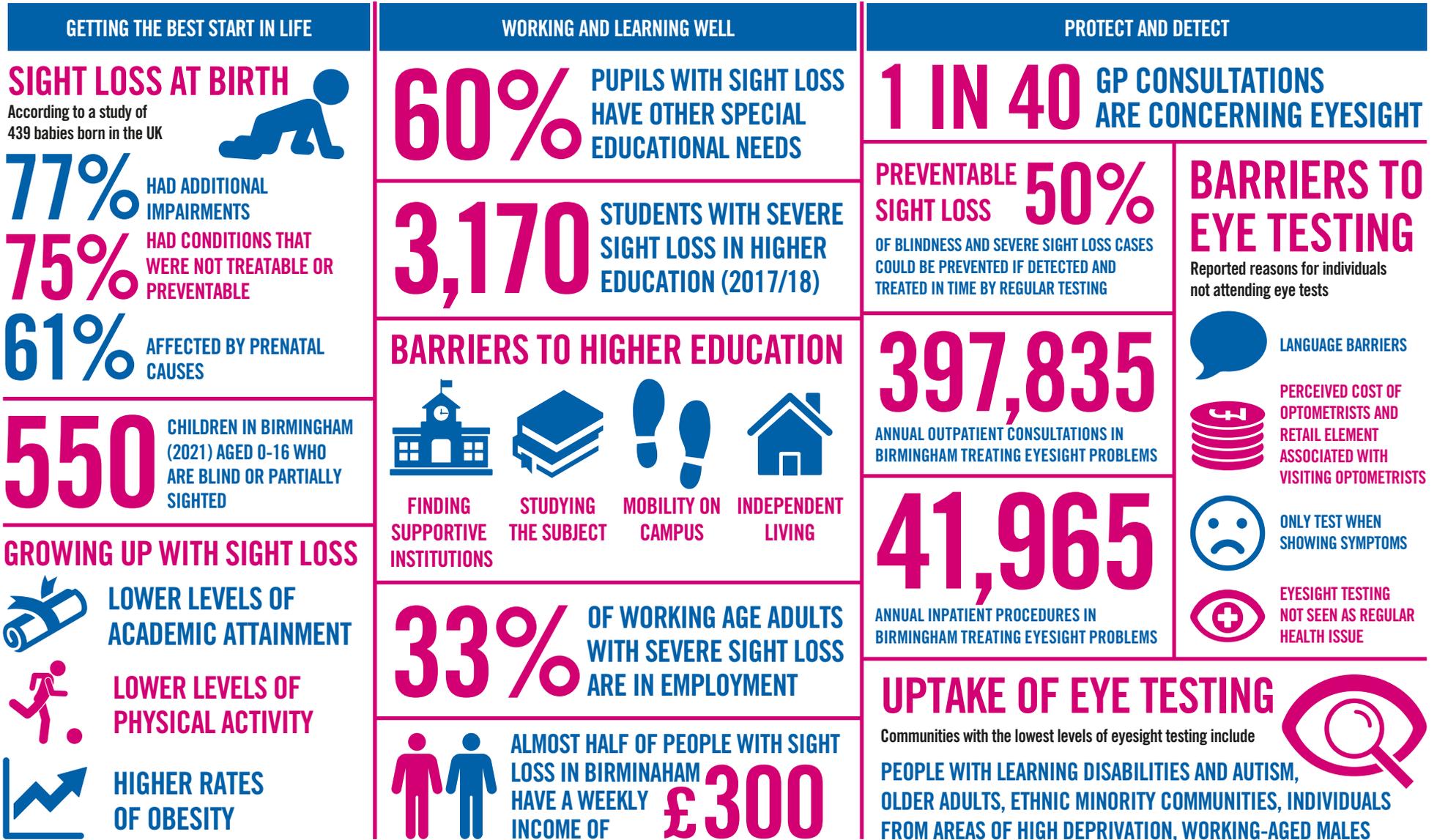
**42,000** INPATIENT EYESIGHT PROCEDURES CONDUCTED IN BIRMINGHAM (2019/20) AND OVER **400,000** OUTPATIENT APPOINTMENTS

Risks of specific eye disease higher amongst certain communities

**4-8x** higher risk of Glaucoma and a higher risk of Diabetic Eye Disease in Black African & Caribbean individuals  
**3x** higher risk of Diabetic Eye Disease in the South Asian Community



**HIGHER RISK** of Cataracts in the Asian Community



**MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

**22-38%** of people with severe sight loss show symptoms of clinical depression

**31%** OF PEOPLE WITH SEVERE SIGHT LOSS HAVE PESSIMISTIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE FUTURE 

**17%** OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGHT LOSS REPORT GETTING SUPPORT FROM CLINICAL OR REHABILITATION STAFF FOR EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS

**PREDICTORS OF DEPRESSION**

 **ADJUSTMENT TO SIGHT LOSS**  **STRESS**

 **DISCRIMINATION**  **ISOLATION AND LONELINESS**

**RISK FACTORS PREDISPOSING PEOPLE TO SEVERE SIGHT LOSS** 

**AUTISM AND DEMENTIA**

**WIDER DETERMINANTS**

**HEALTHY EATING**   
People with severe sight loss have difficulty shopping and cooking which leads to unhealthy eating, obesity and possibly further eye diseases

**SMOKING, ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE USE**  
There is no evidence suggesting that people with sight loss smoke more, drink more alcohol or use substances more than the sighted population

**SMOKING AND SIGHT LOSS**   
**3x** MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP AMD (AGE-RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION)  
**2x** MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP CATARACTS

**THOSE WHO ARE MODERATE TO HEAVY DRINKERS ARE**   
**2x** MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP CATARACTS

**ACTIVE AT EVERY AGE & ABILITY**

**RESULTS OF SEVERE SIGHT LOSS**

-  **LOSS IN CONFIDENCE**
-  **REDUCED MOBILITY**
-  **CO-MORBIDITIES E.G. DEMENTIA**
-  **FALLS**

**FALLS DUE TO SIGHT LOSS**  
THE NIB ESTIMATES THAT IN BIRMINGHAM, **3,270** people with sight loss over 65 experience a fall per year  
 **1,550** OF THESE FALLS, ARE DIRECTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO SIGHT LOSS

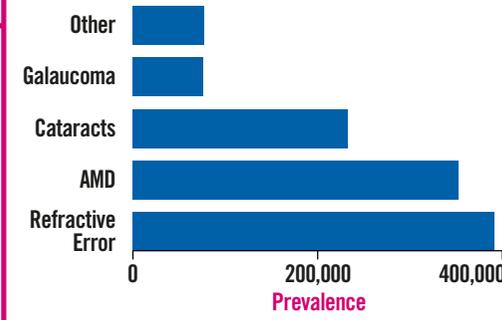
**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**  
**64%** OF PEOPLE WITH SIGHT LOSS IN A UK SURVEY WOULD LIKE TO DO MORE EXERCISE   
Low levels of physical activity can result in higher obesity, glaucoma, AMD, diabetes and Retinopathy

**AGEING AND DYING WELL**

**13%** OF BIRMINGHAM POPULATION ARE AGED 65 AND OVER

**70%** OF THOSE WHO ARE BLIND OR PARTIALLY SIGHTED ARE OVER THE AGE OF 65 

**EYE DISEASE IN THE 65 AND OVER POPULATION IN ENGLAND IN 2013**



**LEADING CAUSE OF SEVERE SIGHT LOSS** 

**60%** OF THOSE AGED 65 AND OVER DEVELOPED SEVERE SIGHT LOSS AFTER A STROKE

**CLOSING THE GAPS**

# LIFE EXPECTANCY

People who have severe sight loss tend to have lower life expectancy than sighted people primarily because of associated life-threatening conditions such as dementia and strokes



# IMPACTS OF COVID-19

During the pandemic, those with Sight Loss had additional barriers when accessing



**SHOPPING AND GROCERIES**



**HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**



**VACCINATION CENTRES**

**WELLBEING** The COVID-19 pandemic has also widened some pre-existing gaps in terms of wellbeing

-  INCREASE IN ISOLATION AND LONELINESS
-  INCREASE IN MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS
-  INCREASE IN EYE DETERIORATIONS AND CO-MORBIDITIES

**INEQUALITY GAPS**

# INEQUALITIES AMONGST DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHICS



**OLDER ADULTS**

More prone to isolation and depression



**CHILDREN**

Achieving lower levels of educational attainment and physical activity



**CO-MORBIDITIES**

Co-morbidities, especially learning disabilities, make all aspects of life more difficult



**MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS**

Co-morbidities, especially learning disabilities, make all aspects of life more difficult



**AREAS OF HIGH DEPRIVATION**

Financial vulnerabilities

**GAPS IN SERVICE PROVISION**

# IMPROVING SERVICES

Increased focus needs to be placed on navigating complex health service agencies and accessing social and health care services. The provision of the services can be implemented by



**VROs (VISUAL REHABILITATION OFFICERS)**  
**ECLOs (EYE CLINIC LIAISON OFFICERS)**

**50%** OF TRUSTS IN BIRMINGHAM AND THE BLACK COUNTRY HAVE ECLOs

**49%** OF PEOPLE CERTIFIED WITH SEVERE SIGHT LOSS RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM VROs

**EMOTIONAL SUPPORT** A UK survey of 1,200 people with sight loss found that only

**17%** REPORTED BEING OFFERED ANY EMOTIONAL SUPPORT FROM PROFESSIONALS 