

Scheduled Medicines Advisory Committee

28 August 2025

Terms of Reference

1. Background

The Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) is responsible under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (2009) as in force in each state and territory (the National Law), for ensuring that optometrists are suitably trained and that they practise in a safe, competent and ethical manner. The Board is required to ensure that optometrists holding an endorsement for scheduled medicines have the necessary qualifications and practise in accordance with accepted professional standards.

Under Section 94 of the National Law, the Board may endorse optometrists who have suitable training as qualified to administer, obtain, possess, prescribe, supply or use a scheduled medicine or class of scheduled medicines.

Scheduled medicines are substances that are included in a schedule to the current Poisons Standard under the Therapeutic Goods Act 1989 (Cth). The authorities to prescribe scheduled medicines are conferred under State and Territory drugs and poisons legislation and regulations.

The Scheduled Medicines Advisory Committee of the Board (the Committee) is established by the Optometry Board of Australia pursuant to Schedule 4, clause 11 of the National Law.

The Committee will report to the Board and carry out its functions at the request of the Board.

The Scheduled Medicines Advisory Committee provides advice to the Board in formulating regulatory standards, guidelines and support material for the optometry profession in its use of scheduled medicines.

2. Terms of Reference

At the request of the Board, the Committee will advise the Board on:

- scheduled medicines or classes of medicines that are suitable for optometrists to administer, obtain, possess, prescribe, supply or use for the purposes of the practice of optometry
- any guidelines or support materials that might be required to support safe, competent and effective prescribing or administration practice by optometrists, and
- any other matters that the Board may refer from time to time.

3. Membership

The Committee is to comprise:

- a Chair should be a practitioner member of the Board two optometrists who hold a scheduled medicine endorsement under the National Law or a law of a participating jurisdiction
- a pharmacist
- a medical practitioner who practises as an ophthalmologist
- a medical practitioner with relevant expertise
- an academic or educator in pharmacology, and
- an optometrist who is an academic or educator in optometry.

The Board may appoint additional members as required. The Committee will seek consumer input when required.

4. Terms of office

The term of appointment to membership of the Committee is for a period of three years. The Board may remove or replace a member from the committee when and as it sees fit.

5. Meetings

The Committee will:

- meet as required by the Board or by the Committee on an as required basis, or at least once per year.
- be held at a time that is suitable to the majority of members, and
- have the capacity to consider matters urgently.

6. Quorum

The Committee is an advisory rather than a decision-making group. A simple majority of members is required for a quorum to be present. It would be at the discretion of the quorum with good reason, given the subject matter at hand, to request a matter be deferred to another time should the preference be for a full membership of the Committee to be present.

7. Conflict of interest

Members of the Committee are to comply with the conflict of interest requirements set out in clause 8 of Schedule 4 of the National Law.

8. Procedures

The Committee will adopt procedures consistent with the National Boards, which will include agendas, decision and actions, privacy and declarations of any conflicts of interest.

9. Records of meetings

Records of meetings of the Committee will be made available to the Board as required.

10. Support

Administrative support is to be provided by the Executive Officer and Board Support Officer.

11. Review

These Terms of Reference apply from 28 August 2025. The Board will review these Terms of Reference at least every two years.

Last reviewed: 28 August 2025.