

Communiqué

The 40th meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia (the National Board) was held on 2 May 2013 at the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) National Office in Melbourne.

This communiqué outlines the issues and decisions from this meeting as well as other points of interest.

We publish this communiqué on our website and email it to a broad range of stakeholders. Please forward it on to your colleagues and employees who may be interested.

Consultations

Current consultations

We have released a consultation document on the following key regulatory policies:

- *Code of conduct for optometrists*
- *Guidelines for mandatory notifications*
- *Guidelines for the advertising of regulated health services, and*
- *Social media policy.*

These are critical documents that apply to optometrists, as employees or employers.

We encourage you to review the consultation document published under the *News* tab on the Board's website and provide your feedback by 30 May 2013.

Revised *Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines*

The Board is monitoring the implementation of the revised *Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines*.

The Board approved guidelines and accompanying fact sheet are published under the *Policies, codes and guidelines* tab of the Board's website.

If your registration is endorsed for scheduled medicines, and your email is registered with AHPRA, you should have received an email from the Board that outlines the Board's expectations with regard to prescribing scheduled medicines.

We expect you to:

- practise within the scope of your training and competence
- communicate and collaborate with the patient's other health practitioners including general practitioners and ophthalmologists
- in respect of patients with glaucoma or at high risk of developing the disease, refer to and practise within the recommendations contained in the National Health and Medical Research Council (2010) *Guidelines for the screening, prognosis, diagnosis, management and prevention of glaucoma*, and
- refer for ophthalmological assessment patients with chronic glaucoma who are not responding to therapy, or who require advice about possible surgical intervention.

You still have the option to either refer patients with chronic glaucoma for ongoing management by an ophthalmologist or enter into a shared care arrangement.

Importantly, the Board's new guidelines do not mean that you must now treat patients with chronic glaucoma; nor do they require you to alter the way you currently manage these patients. They do allow optometrists whose registration is endorsed for scheduled medicines, and who are comfortable working in this expanded scope of practice, to do so.

Conclusion

We publish a range of information about registration and our expectations of you as an optometrist on our website at www.optometryboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au.

For more detail or with questions about your registration please send an [online enquiry form](#) or contact AHRPA on 1300 419 495.

Colin Waldron

Chair, Optometry Board of Australia

9 May 2013