



FOURTH MEETING OF THE OPTOMETRY BOARD OF AUSTRALIA 17 DECEMBER 2009

The fourth meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia was held on 17 December 2009 at the Hilton Melbourne Airport. The Board is established under the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*.

The Board noted progress with implementation of the new national scheme. The Board is making good progress against its work plan.

As in previous meetings, in its fourth meeting the Board continued work to prepare for the scheme's commencement on 1 July 2010. Work on the Board's budget for 2010 – 2011 is progressing. The budget will be finalised after the registration migration process that will confirm final registrant numbers, and due diligence processes that will confirm reserves to be transferred from existing State and Territory boards.

The Board was pleased to receive over 40 submissions on its consultation paper, and thanks stakeholders for their interest and valuable contributions. The submissions are available on the Board's website (except for those submissions marked confidential).

The Board reviewed this feedback at the meeting and finalised its proposals for Ministerial Council taking the submissions into account. The final proposals will be on the Board's website by 24 December 2009. The Ministerial Council is expected to consider the proposals in early 2010, to enable the Board's standards and scheduled medicines endorsement arrangements to be known well before commencement day on 1 July 2010.

The Board considered draft guidelines on mandatory notifications, which explain the requirements under the national law for health practitioners, employers and education providers to make compulsory notifications about health practitioners in certain circumstances. The Board also considered draft guidelines on the advertising of services provided by registered practitioners. The Board agreed to a process to further develop this work over January and February 2010, with a view to releasing draft guidelines for public consultation on 5 March 2010.

The Board also considered additional codes and guidelines required for the optometry profession, with drafts to be considered at its February 2010 meetings. The Board will do further work on these guidelines during January and February 2010 before releasing proposed guidelines for public consultation on 5 March 2010. The Board also considered a draft code of conduct for the optometry profession, and also expects to finalise this at its February meeting for public consultation on 5 March.

The Board considered student registration, and agreed that the Board will register students by obtaining details from education providers rather than requiring students to go through a full individual application process. The Board is giving further consideration to what point in a program student registration should occur.

The Board once again acknowledged the continuing efforts of existing State and Territory boards in preparing for implementation of the National Scheme, as well as accrediting bodies, AHPRA and the National Registration and Accreditation Implementation Project team. The Board looks forward to continued joint effort in coming months.

The Board recognized the particular contribution of Dr Louise Morauta who is retiring from her role as Director of the National Registration and Accreditation Implementation Project Team, and thanked her for her exceptional work in leading implementation of this project.

Colin Waldron
Chair, Optometry Board of Australia

24 December 2009