

Date: Tuesday, 25 January 2011 4:16:08 PM

Dear Board Members,

I would like to express my opinions and concerns regarding the proposed compulsory Therapeutics qualifications.

I cannot see how making these a compulsory qualification will be of benefit to the population of Australia at large. I admit that for the 10% of people who do not live in or quite near a Major city that it is a good idea for Optometrists who practice there, to be qualified as there is often not an available Ophthalmologist on a regular basis. And most Optometrists I know who have completed the course, have done so because that is precisely where they practice. But for the vast majority of Optometrists it is unnecessary and I for one work in a practice that is next door to an Ophthalmologist so have no need at all.

I also note in your consultation document that you question if qualification is a reasonable expectation of an Optometrists.

My personal feeling of this is that I work part time 2 days a week, and will for quite a few more years to come , and will never return to full time work by choice. I also specialise in seeing kids mostly, so the relevance of therapeutics qualifications is very low for me and consequently I have no plans of doing it. If it does become compulsory I will have to rethink my professional future as I don't have any inclination to spend the time and effort studying it. I am 39 years old, so I have a lot of work years in me left, but I see my contribution as being in the areas of general and Behavioural Optometry. I work at a practice where there are 2 Behavioral Optometrists, 2 Contact lens Specialists and 2 General optometrists. I do not know feel comfortable to fit a RGP lens or a Scleral lens, and they do not know how to diagnose or treat some of the trickier accommodative and Binocular Vision problems. Should I be expected to adequately fit a Scleral lens? Should they be expected to treat binocular problems even though they trained 20 to 40 years ago.

I would guess that there are a lot of people in very similar situations to me who are trying to do many things like raise children and work part time. It seems unnecessary and unreasonable to expect this training to be compulsory when no other new training in has been made compulsory.

Thank you for your time,

Yours Sincerely
Mrs. Helen Keen