

Date:

Friday, 28 January 2011 9:56:30 AM

I am writing to express my anxiety and anger at your proposals to make therapeutic endorsement mandatory for optometrist registration. This ill conceived idea I suspect has been put forward by as usual the vocal minority; by the figures quoted in your letter, only 800 out of 4,000 plus optometrists are endorsed, meaning that more than 80% of optometrists aren't endorsed, and as therapeutic courses have been running for some time, it would suggest that most don't want it.

I am happy for those who want to practise therapeutics to do so, but for me and colleagues that I speak to it is not a practise style that we wish to engage upon. To make some argument about the "public benefit" is nonsense as the current arrangement of ophthalmological referral works very well. In fact some of the ophthalmologists have spoken to me personally of problems they're encountering with therapeutic optometrists mis-managing patients, and their perspective is that the "public benefit" is reduced! Furthermore, forcing into therapeutics optometrists like me who are not interested in therapeutics, and probably won't be very good at it, would reduce any "public benefit" even more.

Personally, I am 50 years of age and am looking forward to another 20 years of practising optometry. To force me to either undertake therapeutic training or deny me the means to make my living is outrageous; as I have been an optometrist all my adult life I have no alternate career to fall back upon. Surely the logical approach is to allow currently registered optometrists to continue practising, whether therapeutically endorsed or not, as they did in N.S.W years ago when they brought in the B.Optom requirement. With regards to a "grace period", what are the implications for someone who is forced to undertake therapeutics training (against their wishes) and fails the examinations/assessments?

In conclusion, I consider your letter and it's tone to be a direct threat to me and my right to earn a living. I find this very upsetting and I am quite angry about this. Surely commonsense will prevail and making therapeutic endorsement mandatory for registration will NOT become policy.

Yours angrily,
John Culver B.Optom