

Subject: Therapeutics  
Date: Thursday, 24 February 2011 2:03:58 PM

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing in response to the OBA's policies on therapeutics for Optometrists and the future registration of Optoms with or without such qualifications.

I don't believe that Therapeutics qualifications should be a requirement for general registration for Optometrists.

I chose Optometry as a career some 40 years ago as against Medicine because I didn't want the responsibility of treating eye diseases.

I work in a large country town, where there are 4 Ophthalmology practices, 2 therapeutically endorsed Optometrists that I know of. I have had no trouble finding an ophthalmic practitioner or appropriate health practitioner to treat my patients who are in need of therapeutic intervention, within an appropriately short space of time when such a situation arises, which is seldom, perhaps less than once a month.

I'm pushing 60 years of age, and therefore have little desire to spend a lot of time, money and unnecessary effort in gaining therapeutics qualifications, which I would seldom use, and don't wish to. Considering the difficulty our Optometrists are finding in obtaining the necessary experience with Ophthalmologists and hospital training, I consider it totally unreasonable to expect all Optometrists to be so qualified within the next 20 years.

Having been a Clinical Supervisor in Optometry at UNSW for the past 34 years, I consider myself reasonably "up-to-date" on technology changes and I attend continuing education courses far more regularly than necessary, purely for interest's sake.

Most Optometrists have minor specialties, such as contact lens prescribing, behavioural Optometry, industrial, etc, all of which are covered by the undergraduate course within the Schools of Optometry, however, no suggestion has ever been made to make these specialties compulsory for every Optometrist.

I believe therapeutics should be treated in a similar vein - if you wish to treat patients with therapeutics, then by all means obtain the necessary qualifications, but leave the rest of us to follow our own special interests and do what we do best.

Thank you.

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June B McLeish  
Optometrist