



Media release

5 August 2011

Consultation on requirements for therapeutic qualifications for general registration

Practitioner and community feedback invited by the Board

The Optometry Board of Australia today released a consultation paper outlining the Board's proposed changes to requirements for therapeutic qualifications for general registration. Practitioners and community members are encouraged to provide feedback on the consultation paper which is published on the Board's website (www.optometryboard.gov.au).

This is the second phase of a consultation that began in February 2011, and is open to written feedback by organisations or individuals until close of business on **Monday 3 October 2011**.

The consultation paper is seeking responses to a proposed change in requirements whereby all students graduating from approved programs of study from 2013 will be therapeutically qualified. These students would then immediately qualify for general registration and an endorsement for scheduled medicines.

It is proposed that the changes will come into effect from 1 December 2014. The changes would at this time only apply to initial applications for general registration and not renewal of general registration.

After considering the submissions received, the Board will forward the proposed changes to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council for approval.

How would these proposed changes affect optometrists?

From 2014

There would be no change for optometrists who already hold an endorsement for scheduled medicines. Optometrists without an endorsement would have a notation stating that they are not qualified for endorsement for scheduled medicines.

All graduates from approved programs of study would be qualified to apply for general registration and endorsement for scheduled medicines on graduation.

Overseas-trained optometrists, on passing the Optometry Council's Competency in Optometry Examination, would be able to apply for limited registration for post-graduate training or supervised practice with the condition that they complete a therapeutic qualification within 2 years.

From 2019

General registration would include therapeutic qualifications. There would be no endorsement for scheduled medicines.

Optometrists renewing their general registration without approved therapeutic qualification at this time would have a condition that they need to complete the qualifications by 2029.

New applications from overseas-trained optometrists would be required to pass the Optometry Council's Competency in Optometry examination which will by this time incorporate therapeutic assessment.

By 2029

On current indications, the Board expects that all initial applications and applications for renewal of general registration would have therapeutic qualifications.

Making a submission

The Board invites interested parties to address their written comments on the content of the **draft registration standards** to Mr Colin Waldron, Chair, Optometry Board of Australia by COB **Monday 3 October** 2011.

Electronic submissions are preferred and can be made at optomconsultation@ahpra.gov.au. Submissions are also able to be posted to the attention of the Chair, Optometry Board of Australia, GPO Box 9958, Melbourne Vic 3001.

Please note that all submissions received will be published on the Board's website unless otherwise indicated.

For more information

- Visit www.optometryboard.gov.au under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200