



Communiqué

The 23rd meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 16 September 2011 in Sydney at the 3rd annual National Registration and Accreditation Scheme conference. This communiqué outlines the issues discussed and decisions made by the Board.

The annual conference provides the Board with the opportunity to meet with directors and managers of the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and the other national registration boards, including four new professions who will register practitioners from July 2012. These four professions are Occupation Therapy, Chinese Medicine, Medical Radiation Practice, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice.

Newsletter

The Board has released its latest electronic newsletter. All optometrists who have registered their email with AHPRA will be sent the newsletter directly. The newsletter is also published on the Board's website. If you have not yet done so, please consider providing your email address to the Board and AHPRA by updating your contact details online, so you can receive important updates about our profession.

Consultation papers

The Board has two consultation papers currently published on its website

A document on therapeutics qualifications as a requirement for general registration is open for comment until close of business on Monday 3 October 2011.

A document on supervision guidelines for optometrists is open for comment until close of business until close of business on Friday 18 November 2011.

Registration renewal

AHPRA and the Board are implementing an intensive communication campaign to support the renewal process that sees all optometrists holding general registration required to renew their registration by 30 November 2011 – the annual registration renewal date under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

This campaign will include sending several reminder emails and letters to individual practitioners who have not renewed and not provided their email address. The Board's newsletter also included renewal reminders. Optometrists will be able to renew online from 26 September 2011.

Optometrists across Australia are being urged to update their contact details held by AHPRA and the Optometry Board of Australia to ensure they don't miss these reminders.

Optometrists based in ACT and Western Australia, who renewed their registration by 30 June 2011 for five months, must renew again by 30 November 2011.



Optometrists should check their contact details and update them if necessary to receive regular reminders from the Board and AHPRA. Email accounts should be set to receive communications from AHPRA and the Board to avoid misdirection to an account junk box

To update your contact details, go to www.ahpra.gov.au, click online services, use your unique contact number (User ID) and follow the prompts. Your User ID is not your registration number. If you do not have your User ID, complete an online enquiry form, selecting 'User ID' as the category of enquiry or by calling 1300 419 495.

Individual practitioners are responsible for renewing their registration on time. The job of the Board – with AHPRA – is to make this as simple and straightforward as possible.

Optometrists can check that their application to renew registration has been received via the Board's website at www.optometryboard.gov.au. Practitioners whose application to renew has been received can practise while their application is processed.

If a practitioner's name is listed on the National Register of Optometrists this is evidence for employers that a practitioner is registered, even if their registration expiry date had passed but their application for renewal is being processed.

Under the National Law, optometrists who do not renew registration within one month of their registration expiry date must be removed from the National Register of Optometrists. Their registration will lapse and they will not be able to practise optometry in Australia until a new application is approved.

Neither the Board nor AHPRA have any discretion about this, so optometrists need to ensure they renew on time.

CPD

As referred to in the Board's August 2011 Communiqué, the Board has reviewed its policy on the accumulation of CPD points. When renewing their registration, optometrists will be able to declare that they have either met the CPD requirements in the registration period since 30 November of the prior year, or they have a plan in place to complete two years requirements by the end of the next registration period.

This means optometrists must accumulate 80 points over no more than two registration periods starting from 1 December 2010. This declaration is subject to audit by the Board.

This change applies to the upcoming 2011 registration renewal for optometrists. The Board will be consulting on proposed amendments to its CPD registration standard in 2012.

Conclusion

The Board publishes a range of information about registration and the Board's expectations of practitioners on its website at www.optometryboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au. For more detail or with questions about your registration please send an [online enquiry form](#) or contact AHPRA on 1300 419 495.



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Chair
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