

From: _____
 To: _____
 Subject: Therapeutics
 Date: Sunday, 25 September 2011 1:53:42 PM

Dear Colin,

why are we having this debate again, just a few months after the correct decision was made?

The board is obviously a group of people with one ideology that this is the way the profession must go, but are you correct? There will always be opposing views.

I know the following comments will be dismissed but here are my thoughts. I am not against therapeutic endorsement by any means, I think it's valuable however I do not believe that it should be compulsory and that current optometrists' livelihoods should be threatened and **FOR WHAT?** There are more pressing matters needed to protect this profession.

1. I wish Medicare had been tackled and lobbied with the same passion over the last 20 years, maybe then we could actually make a living and the endorsement would be viable. **BUT** Medicare argues and will not increase our fees as 96% of consultations are bulk-billed, so why force optometrists to take on more risk and stress without adequate financial compensation. Tackle this monstrous issue first!!

2. Therapeutic courses have been available for many years and hundreds of optometrists have graduated endorsed, so you should be asking why 80% of current practitioners are still not endorsed. Is it the cost, the risk involved, increased fees and insurances, time away from practice, or they have developed a successful mode of practice which sees therapeutic endorsement as not necessary. Also how many prescriptions are written each week? Enough to maintain clinical competence?

3. Many northern states optometrists who graduated pre-therapeutics are in their 30's, raising young families, commitments, many thus working part time. Some see the cost, time away from home to study an unnecessary burden. Does it effect their patient care? **NO!**

These people will be in their early 50's to early 60's in 2019, should they be forcibly de-registered for their choice of practice? **NO!**

4. Compulsory endorsement may be another nail in the coffin of independent optometry. (I know you will laugh at this one)
 With the advent of therapeutics has come the need for expensive technology, without any financial improvement in income. All practices must have OCT's, slit lamp and fundus cameras, if not they are wide open to massive litigation. With already massive HECS debts and living costs this will make purchasing (thus destroying the exit plans of current optometrists) or starting a new practice completely unviable. With the big two corporates able to supply such equipment out of "petty cash", they will have little choice in their options. A simple statement, but I'll bring it up again in ten years time.

I have and always believed therapeutics should be additional education. Having coming through the pre-endorsement days I will be called a dinosaur, but I know many modes of practice. Those who have graduated with the skills believe

all should be "like them" for the benefit of the profession but really, they know no other, there are more important issues at stake for our existence.

Again I call on the board to honour the decision made just a few months ago, let those who have graduated without endorsement be let practice to the level of their training until they **CHOOSE** to retire.

You argue that it may be to their disadvantage, but so what, **it is their choice.**

Government bodies of course will argue that our profession take it on as this will shift the cost of health care away from specialists and doctors to optometrists, thus saving Medicare millions of dollars a year. This may be what it is all about? But why again force us to take it on without financial benefit or gain.

Take on Medicare-Increase consultation benefits, make clinical practice viable, **then endorsement will come Willingly.**

Yours sincerely,

JLP