

Communiqué

The 29th meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia (the National Board) was held on 23 April 2012 at the Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Agency (AHPRA) National Office in Melbourne. This communiqué outlines the issues discussed and decisions made by the Board.

Guidance on when to be registered

The Board, in conjunction with AHPRA and other National Boards, undertook a consultation process on the definition of practice in 2011.

The Board has decided not to change the definition of practice, and has instead issued guidance about when practitioners need to be registered.

The consultation process drew out significant discussion and wide variation about issues generated by the current definition. However, there was no consensus about the need for a change in the definition and no change proposed that did not also have unintended or unacceptable consequences.

The Board guidance advises the profession about when practitioners required registration and when it would be acceptable to the Board for a practitioner to not be registered.

This document can be accessed via the Registration section of the Board's website.

Consultation on amendments to the Board's Continuing professional development registration standard and guidelines

The Board has released a consultation document on amendments to its Continuing professional development registration standard and guidelines. The Board has reviewed the standards and guidelines now, earlier than the proposed 2013 date, to accommodate significant amendments and issues that need to be clarified for practitioners prior to renewal in November of this year.

The consultation document is published on the Board's website. Comments are welcome until COB 18 May.

Registration standards for general registration and limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice

The Board has submitted its proposed registration standards for general registration and limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice to the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council for approval.

Ministers will consider these standards at a meeting on the 27 April 2012. The Board will publish the Ministerial Council decision on its website and notify the profession and key stakeholders of the outcome.

Updates from the Board

The Board and AHPRA release key information from time to time to update optometrists on matters impacting on their registration. 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.

Registration applications now open for four more professions

Registration applications are now open for practitioners in the four professions joining the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) in July. From 1 July 2012, the following professions must be registered with their National Board to practise anywhere in Australia:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner
- Chinese medicine practitioner¹
- Medical radiation practitioner, and
- Occupational therapist.

Registration application forms for practitioners in these professions who intend to practise after 1 July are published on each National Board website through www.ahpra.gov.au.

The National Board encourages optometrists to help spread this important message and to refer anyone with questions to the website.

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 AHRPA on 1300 419 495.

Colin Waldron

Chair

27 April 2012

¹ Including Chinese medicine practitioners, acupuncturists, Chinese herbal medicine practitioners, oriental medicine practitioners and Chinese herbal dispensers.