



## Communiqué

The 31st meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia (the National Board) was held on 2 July 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.

The Board publishes this communiqué on its website and emails it to a broad range of stakeholders. Please forward it on to colleagues and employees who may be interested in the work of the Board.

### Relationships with international colleagues

Representatives of the Board have recently met with representatives of the New Zealand Optometrists and Dispensing Optometrists Board as well as numerous North American board representatives at the Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry meeting in Chicago.

Meetings such as these provide all Boards with the opportunities to share knowledge and experience in regulating the profession.

### Current consultations

AHPRA and all National Boards are currently seeking feedback on options for refining international criminal history checks used by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) in assessing applications for registration for the 14 health professions regulated under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (National Law) as in force in each state and territory.

The consultation paper includes issues you may wish to consider in providing feedback and information on how submissions are published. This is available under the *News* section of the Board's website.

### The Victorian Optometrists Training and Education (VOTE) Trust

The Victorian Optometrists Training and Education (VOTE) Trust was established in 2010 by the Optometrists Registration Board of Victoria from funds accumulated and held by the Board.

Annual grant applications are now open.

For more information go to the VOTE page on the *About* section of the Board's website.

### Board nominee for membership of the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ)

The Board is interested in receiving expressions from suitably qualified optometrists to act in this role of nominee for the Board for membership of OCANZ.

The members of OCANZ meet annually to appoint the OCANZ Board of Directors.

Interested parties are able to forward a current CV and supporting statement addressing the following selection criteria electronically to the Board at [Katrina.xanthos@ahpra.gov.au](mailto:Katrina.xanthos@ahpra.gov.au) by Wednesday 8 August.

Selection criteria:

- holds current registration with the Optometry Board of Australia
- is a well regarded and experienced optometrist

- has previous experience as a member of a previous state or territory optometry regulatory authority
- is not a current Board member or a member of Board committee or advisory group that deals with matters relating to accreditation, and
- has not been an employee of OCANZ within the past 2 years.

Further information on OCANZ, including a copy of the organisation's constitution, can be found at [www.ocanz.org](http://www.ocanz.org).

## Fees

The Board has set its 2013 registration fees and limited fee increases to CPI.

The National Scheme receives no ongoing funding from government (except for one function of the scheme in NSW in which there is a co-regulatory arrangement). As the National Scheme is funded entirely by registration fees, these need to be set at a level that enables National Boards and the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) to meet their responsibilities under the National Law.

In setting its budget for the 2011/12 financial year, the Board has reviewed all registration fees in consultation with its Finance and Risk Committee and AHPRA. The Board has limited the fee increase to CPI, so the **annual general registration renewal fee** will be \$415 from the 30 November 2012 renewal period.

## Updates from the Board

The Board recently released the 3rd edition of its e-newsletter. The Board has received a report on the number of optometrists reading the newsletter via email and on the website. Though well above industry average, there are a significant percentage of optometrists who are not accessing this important information from the Board.

To ensure that future editions of the newsletter reach you, please check you contact details and update them if necessary. 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](http://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.

## 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](http://www.optometryboard.gov.au) or [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://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.

## Colin Waldron

Chair

10 July 2012