



Communiqué

The 33rd meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia (the National Board) was held on 23 August 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 at its meeting and other points of interest. 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.

Board appointments

Australia's health ministers have announced changes to the membership of the 10 National Boards originally appointed in 2009.

The appointments reflect Ministers' intention to balance stability with renewal in National Board membership.

The current appointments include 30 new appointments and 75 reappointments across the National Boards. Details of the announcements are published in the last communiqué of the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council published under the News section on the AHPRA website.

For the Optometry Board, Ms Judith Dikstein, will be leaving the Board. The members acknowledged the contribution of Judith over the past three years.

There was one new appointment to the Board, Ms Adrienne Farago. The Board looks forward to welcoming Ms Farago at its next meeting.

Audit

As noted in the Board's July communiqué the optometry profession will take part in a second phase audit along with the pharmacy and chiropractic professions.

This will begin in October 2012 and run for approximately three months. Practitioners will be randomly selected across these three professions when they apply to renew their registration for the 2012-13 period. This will apply to both paper and online renewal applications.

Optometrists will be audited for compliance against their board's registration standards: criminal history check, professional indemnity insurance, recency of practice and continuing professional development.

The Board is working with AHPRA and key stakeholders such as the Optometrists Association of Australia to ensure that when the audit commences optometrists will be able to gather the necessary evidence to provide to the Board.

Further information will be made available on the AHPRA website in the lead up to the commencement of the second phase and in the Board's next newsletter.

In the interim, optometrists are advised to review the record keeping requirements for the CPD registration standard including the available templates. These are published under the *Registration Standard – Continuing professional development* tab of the Board's website.

Consultation – draft registration standard for limited registration for teaching or research

The Board has released a draft registration standard for limited registration for teaching or research for consultation.

The consultation document is available on its website under the News tab. Submissions will be accepted up until close of business on Tuesday 23 October 2012.

Prescribing rights for endorsed optometrists in the ACT

The Board has received correspondence from the Chief Pharmacist of the ACT advising the Board that an amendment to the ACT Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008 (MPTGR) has been made and given effect.

The amendment authorises endorsed optometrists to prescribe prescription only medicines from the National List to the extent necessary to practise optometry. Additionally, optometrists holding general registration are authorised to administer certain medicines during consultations to the extent necessary to practise optometry.

The National List is the Board-approved list of Schedule 4 poisons that optometrists with a scheduled medicines endorsement are qualified to obtain, possess, administer, prescribe or supply for topical use, published in table 1 of the Board's Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard. This is published at the *Registration Standard* tab of the Board's website.

The MPTGR may be viewed via the ACT Legislation Register at www.legislation.act.gov.au.

Health professions agreement

The Optometry Board of Australia and AHPRA today increased public access to financial information about the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

In the interests of transparency and accountability, the Board and AHPRA have for the first time published the Health Profession Agreement that outlines the services that AHPRA will provide to the Board in 2012/13.

Under the National Law, the Board and AHPRA work in partnership to implement the National Scheme, each with specific roles, powers and responsibilities set down in the National Law.

The published agreement is available under the *About* tab of the Board's website.

Quarterly data

Optometry and other National Boards established in 2010 in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) have published their quarterly updates on registration data at the start of the month.

The optometry data includes information about types of registration held, principal place of practice, endorsements, registrant age and gender, is published on the Board's website under the *About* tab.

Updates from the Board

The Board will be releasing its next e-newsletter in coming weeks. To ensure that future editions of the newsletter reach you, please check your 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, 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 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

28 August 2012