

## Media release

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27 September 2012

### Optometrists urged to renew registration online and on time

Optometrists across Australia are reminded that their registration is due for renewal by 30 November.

The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) is sending a series of emails to optometrists, for whom an email address is known, reminding them to renew their registration with the Optometry Board of Australia (the Board).

Board Chair Colin Waldron urged the more than 4,500 optometrists due to renew their registration to do so online and on time.

'The quickest and easiest way to renew registration is online, with 88% of optometrists using this secure service last year,' Mr Waldron said.

'Optometrists should check that their contact email details are up to date so they receive renewal reminders from AHPRA. These reminders are confirmation that online renewal is open.'

To update your contact details held by AHPRA, go online at [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, included in AHPRA correspondence to practitioners, 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.

Mr Waldron said optometrists who do not want to renew their registration can simply ignore the reminders from AHPRA or go online to 'opt out' of renewing.

This new online facility will provide the Board and AHPRA with better data on the number of optometrists who choose to opt out of renewing their registration, to distinguish them from individuals who intend to renew, but do not do so on time. Using the 'opt out' service puts a stop to renewal reminders.

Mr Waldron reminded the profession they risked not being able to work if they did not renew on time in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme).

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

'Neither the Board nor AHPRA have any discretion about this so our advice is clear: renew online and on time,' Mr Waldron said.

He advised optometrists that when renewing their registration for the 2012-13 period, whether online or by paper application, that they may be randomly selected to take part in the second phase of a larger Practitioner Audit Pilot. Chiropractic and pharmacy are the other two professions taking part.

The selected practitioners will be audited for compliance against their Board's registration standards for criminal history, professional indemnity insurance, recency of practice and continuing professional development.

'This second phase will run for about three months from October and the board is working with AHPRA and key stakeholders to ensure that participants will be able to gather the necessary evidence to provide to the audit team,' Mr Waldron said.

Further information about the audit is available at [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) under *Registration*.

#### *For more information*

- Visit [www.optometryboard.gov.au](http://www.optometryboard.gov.au) for FAQs on renewal
- Visit [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au) under *Contact us* to lodge an online enquiry form
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (within Australia) +61 3 8708 9001 (overseas callers)
- For media enquiries: (03) 8708 9200