



Communiqué: Optometry Board of Australia

February 2018 meeting

The 90th meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 22 February 2018 at the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) National office in Melbourne. The Board does not meet in the month of January.

This communiqué outlines the issues and decisions from this meeting as well as other points of interest. We publish it on our website and email it to a broad range of stakeholders. Please forward it to your colleagues and employees who may be interested.

Call for applications for appointment to the Optometry Board of Australia still open until 9 March 2018

There was recently a [call for applications](#) for appointment to the National Boards regulating health professions across Australia, including the Optometry Board of Australia due to the scheduled expiry of terms of appointment. The Board regulates more than 5,400 registered optometrists, and its primary role is to protect the public. All appointments are made by the Ministerial Council for up to three years, under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory.

The closing date has been extended and late applications will still be accepted for the practitioner member vacancies **until Friday 9 March 2018**.

For enquiries, please contact statutoryappointments@ahpra.gov.au

Applications for appointment to the Scheduled Medicines Advisory Committee of the Optometry Board of Australia now closed

There was also a [call for applications](#) for appointment of two optometrists and an ophthalmologist to the Scheduled Medicines Advisory Committee of the Board (the Committee). The role of the Committee is to advise the Board on matters with respect to the administration or prescribing of scheduled medicines by optometrists for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes. Applications closed on Friday 16 February 2018.

The Board also welcomes the recent pharmacist appointment of Angela Stathopoulos to the Committee.

Guide for National Boards on endorsement for scheduled medicines released

In 2016 the Ministerial Council endorsed the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council's *Guidance for National Boards: Applications to the Ministerial Council for approval of endorsements in relation to scheduled medicines under section 14 of the National Law* (the AHMAC Guidance).

AHPRA has released a guide for National Boards on endorsement for scheduled medicines.

Any proposal to amend an existing endorsement may be initiated by government(s), consumers and/or professional associations. These stakeholders may make a representation to a National Board on the regulatory need for an endorsement variation. Any representation to a National Board would be expected to address the issues outlined in the concept development section of the guide.

The AHPRA Guide is now available together with the AHMAC Guidance on the [Endorsement for scheduled medicines](#) section of the AHPRA website.

See the Board's [news item](#) for more information.

Update on the review of scheduled medicines

The Board undertook a wide-ranging public consultation in 2017 on the review of the current *Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard* (the standard) and *Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines* (the guidelines). The Board received helpful feedback from the profession, stakeholders and the community on its proposed changes and has helped the Board in finalising the proposed revised standard and guidelines.

The proposed revised standard and guidelines are currently being considered by the COAG Health Council. If approved, the revised standard and guidelines will be published on the Board's website and will have a transition period so that optometrists can become familiar with the content.

Upcoming public consultation for the revised continuing professional development standard and guidelines

The Board will soon release a public consultation paper on the review of the revised *Continuing professional development registration standard* and related guidelines.

The revised registration standard sets out the Board's minimum requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) for optometrists.

With other National Boards, the Board has reviewed the current registration standard and related guidelines in keeping with good regulatory practice and will seek feedback from the profession, stakeholders and the community on the proposed revised CPD registration standard and related guidelines.

Any changes made to the approved revised registration standard and guidelines after public consultation will have a period of transition to support the profession in adapting to these changes.

The public consultation paper will soon be available on the [Current Consultations](#) page.

Self-assessment tool launched to help practitioners and advertisers

As part of the [Advertising compliance and enforcement strategy for the National Scheme](#), new resources have been made available to help practitioners and advertisers check and correct their advertising so it complies with their professional and legal obligations. Such resources include a [summary of advertising obligations](#), [frequently asked questions](#), tips on [words to be wary about](#) and examples of [compliant and non-compliant advertising](#).

The latest resource, the [self-assessment tool](#) is now available in the [Advertising resources](#) section on the AHPRA website.

Quarterly registration data released

The Board has released its quarterly registration data. Read the latest report and other statistics on our [Statistics page](#).

Are your contact details up to date?

It is important that your contact details are up to date to receive renewal reminders from AHPRA and information from the Board. You can check your details via the [Login icon](#) at the top right of the AHPRA website. Email accounts need to be set to receive communications from AHPRA and the Board to avoid misdirection to an account junk box.

Follow AHPRA on social media

Connect with AHPRA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#) to receive information about important topics for your profession and participate in the discussion.



Further information

We publish a range of information about registration and our expectations of you as an optometrist on our website at www.optometryboard.gov.au or www.ahpra.gov.au.

For more details or help with questions about your registration, notifications or other matters relevant to the National Scheme, refer to information published on www.ahpra.gov.au or [contact AHPRA](#), send an [online enquiry form](#) or call on 1300 419 495.

Ian Bluntish

Chair, Optometry Board of Australia

February 2018

[The Optometry Board of Australia](#) is the regulator of optometrists in Australia and acts to protect the public by ensuring that suitably qualified and competent optometrists are registered. The Board is responsible for developing registration standards, codes and guidelines for optometrists and managing notifications (complaints) about optometrists and optometry students. The Board does this through its powers under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory, and the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, supported by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). The Board's work in regulating Australia's optometrists in the public interest is underpinned by [regulatory principles](#), which encourage a responsive, risk-based approach to regulation.*

**Except in NSW and Qld which have co-regulatory arrangements.*