

## Media release

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20 November 2012

### Time running out for optometrists to renew registration by 30 November

The Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) today urged optometrists who have yet to renew their registration, which is due 30 November, to renew online and on time.

Board Chair Colin Waldron said the number of optometrists renewing online was pleasing with a steady number of practitioners whose registration is due for renewal using the online service.

‘To date, 60% of the 4,570 optometrists due to renew their registration by 30 November 2012 have already renewed online which is a fantastic result,’ Mr Waldron said.

To ensure that everyone who wants to renew their registration does so, hard copy letters have been sent to optometrists who have already received email reminders but are yet to renew online.

‘In the National Scheme, health professionals are responsible for renewing their registration on time. The job of the Board – with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) – is to make this as simple and straightforward as possible,’ Mr Waldron said.

Once AHPRA receives an optometrist’s application for renewal of registration they will stop receiving renewal reminders. A new online facility to ‘opt out’ of renewing registration also puts a stop to renewal reminders.

‘Optometrists who do not want to renew their registration can simply ignore the reminders or go online to ‘opt out’ of renewing,’ Mr Waldron said.

‘This new online facility will provide the Board and AHPRA with better data on the number of optometrists who have chosen to opt out, to distinguish them from individuals who intended to renew, but did not do so on time.

‘I urge anyone due to renew by 30 November who has not yet done so to act quickly as applications received after the registration expiry date will incur a late payment fee.’

The late payment fee will apply to optometrists who apply to renew during the one month late period outlined in the National Law. It will be payable in addition to the annual renewal fee.

Mr Waldron reminded optometrists that there were significant consequences for individuals who do not renew on time in the National Scheme.

Under the National Law, optometrists 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 their profession in Australia until a new application is approved.

'Neither the Board nor AHPRA have any discretion about this so our advice is clear – renew on time. The quickest and easiest way to do this is online,' Mr Waldron said.

Optometrists can check that their application has been received via the online receipt service at [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency - Renewal Received Confirmation](#). Individuals whose application to renew registration has been received can practise while their application is being processed.

The listing on the National Register of Practitioners is evidence for employers that a health professional is registered, even if their registration expiry date has passed. Alternatively, optometrists can print off a copy of their registration certificate using AHPRA's online services at [www.ahpra.gov.au](http://www.ahpra.gov.au).

#### **Failure to renew:**

Optometrists who fail to renew their registration by 30 November 2012, or within the following one month late period, can apply to AHPRA for a fast-track application for registration. These practitioners should note that they are not able to practise in their profession until their fast-track registration application has been processed and approved.

#### *For more information*

- 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