



Communiqué

The 25th meeting of the Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) was held on 24 November 2011 at the Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Agency (AHPRA) South Australian office in Adelaide. This communiqué outlines the issues discussed and decisions made by the Board.

Consultation papers

The Board has one consultation paper currently [published on its website](#) under the 'News' tab.

A document on the definition of practice is open for comment until close of business on Friday 2 December 2011.

The Board is currently considering the submissions received during its consultation on the Guidelines for Supervision of Optometrists. Submissions received are available on the Board's website, except when the author requested it not be published. The Board will publish these guidelines once approved.

Registration renewal

Optometrists were required to renew their registration by 30 November 2011. Those Optometrists who have not done so are still able to renew their registration online but will be subject to a late fee on top of the registration fee. Optometrists have until 31 December 2011 to complete this renewal.

Under the National Law, optometrists who do not renew registration by this date must be removed from the National Register of Optometrists. Their registration will lapse and they will not be able to practise optometry in Australia until a new application is approved.

Neither the Board nor AHPRA have any discretion about this. If you have any questions about completing the application for registration renewal, please contact AHPRA immediately on 1300 419 495.

Optometrists who have completed their renewal application can check that it has been received via the Board's website at www.optometryboard.gov.au. Practitioners whose application to renew has been received are able to practise while their application is processed.

If a practitioner's name is listed on the National Register of Optometrists this is evidence for employers that a practitioner is registered, even if their registration expiry date had passed but their application for renewal is being processed.

Optometrists should check their contact details and update them if necessary to receive regular reminders from the Board and AHPRA. 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.

Graduate online applications

AHPRA is smoothing the path from study to the workforce for new graduates by providing an online early registration application service available at:

www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Graduate-Applications.aspx

AHPRA is now calling for applications for health practitioner registration from students completing National Board-approved programs of study in Australia 4 to 6 weeks before they complete their course.

Policies

The Board has published two new policies on its website under the [Policies, Codes and Guidelines](#) section.

1. *Policy on Infection Control for Optometrists including hand hygiene*
2. *Policy on Health Records*

Both policies expand on matters addressed in the Board's *Code of Conduct for Optometrists*. They refer to key resources available to optometrists to aid them in practising at the standard expected by the Board.

The Board will consider the content of these policies when it next reviews the *Code of Conduct for Optometrists*.

Board Committees

The Board has appointed committees to advise the Board and to make decisions where the Board has delegated functions under the National Law.

Information on these committees is published on the Board's website under the '[About](#)' section of the Board's website.

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 AHPRA on 1300 419 495.

Colin Waldron
Chair
29 November 2011