To Whom It May Concern,   12/02/2011

RE: Registration Requirement of Therapeutics

I graduated in 1986 from Bachelor of Optometry UNSW. When I entered the Optometry course it was because I wished to be involved in primary health care however I did not wish to practice medicine.

I have kept well up to date with continuing education requirements usually beyond the minimum requirement. I have done this prior to continuing education being mandatory.

I do not believe being therapeutically endorsed is a necessity nor will it make me a better Optometrist. I have practised successfully combining my skills and those of GP's and ophthalmologists to work together to manage the best interests of my patients.

There are many facets to being an optometrist. Individuals are able to best direct their energies to their particular area of interest whether it be children's vision, low vision, sports vision, contact lenses or therapeutics or other specialty areas.

At present there are 800 optometrists therapeutically endorsed and 3200 that are not. There appear to be difficulties in accessing hospitals and ophthalmologist practices to obtain clinical expertise.

I have resisted entering the domain of further study which entails increased cost financially and time. I do not wish to manage and prescribe medications such as those for glaucoma.

Could there not be tiered endorsement for therapeutics with a level for management of anterior eye conditions and one for those conditions currently handled by ophthalmologists.

As this is now offered in the course itself surely a choice can still be offered to those existing optometrists whether or not to take this added responsibility on? Natural attrition will mean eventually those not therapeutically endorsed will gradually retire from the workforce. Why place pressure on those experienced practitioners.

I do not believe therapeutics nor should any other specialty be a requirement of registration but rather an option open to the individual.

Yours Sincerely

Sally Atkins

B.Optom Hons