

Media release

4 June 2012

Two new registration standards for optometrists published today

The Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) today released two new optometry registration standards, which were recently approved by Australia's health ministers, for:

- General registration (for **new** registrations from December 2014), and
- Limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice.

The registration standards were developed by the Board after extensive consultation, and support the continuous strengthening of Australia's optometry workforce and its regulatory framework. The need for comprehensive optometric eye health services will only continue to grow as the populations grows and ages.

The new General registration standard

The new General registration standard requires those applying for registration for the first time from 1 December 2014 to hold qualifications in ocular therapeutics.

Optometrists who are already registered with the Board on 1 December 2014 who don't hold an approved therapeutic qualification are **not** required to undertake further study to maintain their registration.

These practitioners will have a notation stating 'the optometrist is not qualified for endorsement for scheduled medicines and is not able to prescribe schedule 4 medicines for the treatment of conditions of the eye' added to their registration. This will be published on the public register. The notation does **not** affect the practitioner's scope of practice and can be removed from their record on the completion of an approved postgraduate program in ocular therapeutics.

The new Limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice standard

Overseas trained optometrists who have not completed an approved program of study will be able to apply for *Limited registration for postgraduate training or supervised practice* and practice within a Board approved supervised practice plan after successfully completing the written component of the Competency in Optometry Examination (COE) conducted by the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ), and prior to sitting the clinical component.

From 1 December 2014, this new standard will also allow overseas trained optometrists to practice optometry with limited registration to complete the required postgraduate training in ocular therapeutics to qualify for general registration.

The Board has published a fact sheet on limited registration alongside the registration standard on the Board's website.

For more information

- The new standards are published on www.optometryboard.gov.au under *Registration standards*.
- Lodge an online enquiry form by following *Contact us* link on the website.
- For registration enquiries call 1300 419 495 (within Australia) or +61 7 3666 4911 (overseas callers).
- For media enquiries call (03) 8708 9200.