

Frequently asked questions

June 2018

2018 revised Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard and guidelines

The Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) has developed this FAQ to guide optometrists through the Board's requirements in the *Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard* (registration standard) and *Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines* (guidelines). This document should be read in conjunction with the standard and guidelines.

1. Who does this apply to?

This registration standard applies to all optometrists applying to have their registration endorsed for scheduled medicines or whose registration is endorsed for scheduled medicines. This registration standard sets out the qualifications and other requirements that must be met in order for a registered optometrist or applicant for registration as an optometrist to be granted an endorsement as qualified to prescribe or supply scheduled medicines.

The guidelines apply to optometrists with general registration who use scheduled medicines for diagnostic purposes and to optometrists whose registration is endorsed for scheduled medicines, who use scheduled medicines for the purposes of the practice of optometry.

2. Why has the standard been revised?

The registration standard and guidelines have been updated as a result of a scheduled review, following wide-ranging public consultation in 2017.

3. Has the endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard and related guidelines changed?

The Board has introduced a revised registration standard and guidelines (2018). This replaces the *Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard* (2010) and *Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines* (2014).

4. When does the standard and guidelines take effect and what do I need to do when the revised standard takes effect?

The revised registration standard and guidelines come into effect on 10 September 2018.

During the transition period June 2018 to 9 September 2018, registered optometrists need to familiarise themselves with this guidance to ensure their practice meets the Board's expectations.

5. What key changes do I need to be aware of?

- The list of scheduled medicines that endorsed optometrists are qualified to prescribe has moved from the 2010 registration standard to the 2018 guidelines.
- Based on public consultation feedback, the list is now published on the Board's [webpage](#) and will be in effect on 10 September 2018.
- The revised 2018 list with highlighted changes from the 2010 list is found [here](#).
- There have been minor changes to the current registration standard and guidelines:
 - to improve consistency with the terminology from the majority of state and territory legislation, and
 - for clarity and consistency, to better reflect the format and wording with other professions within the National Scheme.

6. As an endorsed optometrist, what can I prescribe?

Endorsed optometrists may prescribe medicines that are on the [Board-approved list](#) of scheduled medicines, as long as it complies with the current legislative requirements in the jurisdiction in which they practice.

The Board approved list is a list of scheduled medicines that endorsed optometrists are *qualified* to prescribe. State and territory drugs, poisons and controlled substances legislation determine if and when an optometrist is *authorised* to prescribe.

The Board expects that all endorsed optometrists comply with the current requirements in the jurisdictions in which they practice. The Board expects that all endorsed optometrists have the knowledge of how their local state and territory poisons legislation affects what medications they can prescribe and to check if they are unsure.

7. Where can I find more information about legislative requirements in the jurisdiction that I practice?

State and territory legislation is updated from time to time; it is the responsibility of the endorsed optometrist to keep up to date with current legislation in the jurisdiction in which they practice.

Advice on current legal requirements in a particular state or territory may be obtained from the relevant authority found at <https://www.tga.gov.au/contacts-stateterritory-medicines-poisons-regulation-units> .

8. What can I prescribe on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS)?

Endorsed optometrists may prescribe PBS medicines listed in the Optometrical Items of the Schedule of Pharmaceutical Benefits, as long as it is prescribed in accordance with their state or territory legislation and the medicine is also on the Board-approved list of scheduled medicines.

It is a PBS requirement that endorsed optometrists must ensure their patient satisfies the PBS entitlement requirements and meets eligibility criteria in the schedule for supply of the medicine under the PBS.

For more information refer to:

- the Department of Human Services [website](#)
- the PBS [website](#) or contact PBS at 1800 020 613.

9. I have submitted an application for endorsement, which is currently being assessed by the Australian Health Practitioner Agency (AHPRA). Will the revised standard affect my application?

If you applied before 10 September 2018, assessment of your application will not be affected by the revised standard.

10. I am an enrolled in a Board approved program of study leading to endorsement as an optometrist, will the revised standard affect my application for endorsement?

If you are currently enrolled in a Board-approved program of study leading to endorsement as an optometrist and you are due to graduate after 10 September 2018, your program of study is still recognised as a Board-approved program. When you have successfully completed the Board-approved program, the revised standard will apply to your application for endorsement.

For more information

- [Endorsement for scheduled medicines registration standard](#)
- [Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines](#)
- Lodge an [online enquiry form](#)
- For registration enquiries: 1300 419 495 (in Australia) +61 3 9275 9009 (overseas callers)