
Subject: proposal for therapeutic qualification to be included as a requirement for general registration
Date: Thursday, 27 January 2011 12:06:29 PM

Optometry has a long history of steadily increasing standards, without forcing out existing optometrists.

When legislation regulating optometry was first introduced in Australia the 1930's, those practicing optometry at the time were allowed to continue.

When optometry was upgraded from a technical college diploma to a university degree, existing optometrists were given the opportunity to upgrade their qualification, but those who did not were not forced to stop practicing.

When authorization was introduced to use diagnostic drugs, those who chose not to undertake the additional training were allowed to continue to practice.

I think the same approach should be taken now. We should take a longer view to the timeframe for having all optometrists therapeutically endorsed. Those members of the current generation of optometrists who choose not to undertake therapeutic training should be allowed to die out naturally, and not be legislated/regulated out of practice.

Public interest is not compromised, as non-therapeutically qualified optometrists are trained to be skilled in detecting disease, and referring if necessary for treatment to an appropriately qualified health care practitioner.

Sincerely,
Robert Hammer, B.Optom., M.Sc.