

Dear AHPRA

I qualified in the UK and have worked in both private practice and hospital practice for over 12 years overseas and in Australia.

I personally feel if an optometrist has an interest in therapeutics they should be able to follow that interest. I feel it is not beneficial to the optometry profession or public to force optometrists who are not interested in that field to mandatory have to qualify in that field.

If an optometrist has an interest in a certain specialist area they normally become a better optometrist in that field due to their interest and passion. I feel it would be disastrous to the public and profession to force non interested optometrists into this field and allowing them to meddle with ocular prescriptions. It is one thing to pass the therapeutic qualification but requires the optometrist to have an interest to stay up to date and familiar with this specialty to allow optimum prescribing and avoid the potential dangers of adverse affects which can be fatal in some circumstances.

An optometrist's primary role is to refract, diagnose and refer if required. I feel an ophthalmologist should be responsible for therapeutics due to their expertise and every day experience in this field.

This would be similar to forcing ophthalmologists to mandatory undertake a refraction qualification.

I personally feel the optometrist profession should concentrate on its primary roles as sadly these skills are not being performed to a high level by the whole optometrist profession.

I believe it is useful for an optometrist to be therapeutically endorsed if practicing rurally where patients are unable to see ophthalmologists regularly or promptly but do not see the need to force all optometrists into this field.

As an optometrist I am able to use and prescribe certain ocular drugs/medications and artificial tears and I have never had the need to use or prescribe a drug/medication that I was

not able to use or prescribe. Medications which I could not prescribe could be promptly prescribed by a GP or ophthalmologist.

I feel ophthalmologists should also give their view to this. I suspect a very high percentage would be against therapeutic endorsement let alone mandatory endorsement.

I also feel the medicare fee especially the subsequent consultation fee would not warrant the extra responsibility and training for this speciality whilst also performing refraction and ocular examination to a professional level within this consultation.

Regards

Optometrist (WA)