



# Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board

Te Poari o ngā Kaimātai Whatu me ngā Kaiwhakarato Mōhiti

## CONSULTATION – PROPOSAL TO AMEND RECERTIFICATION PROGRAMME FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF DISPENSING OPTICIANS

**Released: 4 April 2018**

**Submissions Due: 7 May 2018**

### Introduction

- 1 The principal purpose of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act) is to protect public health and safety by ensuring health practitioners are competent and fit to practise.
- 2 Section 41 of the Act sets out that for the purpose of ensuring that health practitioners are competent to practise within the scopes of practice in respect of which they are registered, each authority may from time to time set or recognise recertification programmes for practitioners who are registered with the authority. A recertification programme may require a practitioner to do any one or more of the following:
  - (a) pass any examinations or assessments, or both:
  - (b) complete a period of practical training:
  - (c) undertake a course of instruction:
  - (d) permit a health practitioner specified by the authority to examine—
    - (i) any or all of his or her clinical and other practices:
    - (ii) any or all of his or her relations with other health practitioners:
    - (iii) any or all of the clinical records of the practitioner in relation to his or her patients or clients:
  - (e) undergo an inspection:
  - (f) adopt and undertake a systematic process for ensuring that the services provided by the practitioner meet the required standard of competence.

- 3 If a health practitioner who is required to complete a recertification programme does not satisfy the requirements of the programme, in accordance with section 43 of the Act, the responsible authority may make either of the following orders:
- (a) that the health practitioner's scope of practice be altered—
    - (i) by changing any health services that the practitioner is permitted to perform; or
    - (ii) by including any condition or conditions that the authority considers appropriate:
  - (b) that the practitioner's registration be suspended.

## Background

- 4 In 2009, following consultation with the profession and relevant stakeholders, the Board set the following recertification requirements for Dispensing Opticians for the purposes of ensuring that Dispensing Opticians remained competent to practise:

- to obtain 20 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) credits on a biennial basis; and
- to complete a self audit of their practice in the event that the required number of CPD credits were not obtained (also known as a deficit self audit).

In addition, the Board specified that it would require up to 40 percent of practising dispensing opticians to complete a random self audit of their practice at any time during the recertification cycle in order to assure the public that the profession were generally maintaining their competence. Attached as **Appendix 1** is a copy of the current recertification programme.

- 5 The Board's experience over the years since 2009 has been that the vast majority of the profession comply with the compulsory recertification requirements and only small numbers of the profession fail to satisfy the CPD credit requirements necessitating the requirement to undergo the deficit self audit at the end of each cycle. In addition, of those Dispensing Opticians required to undergo a self audit, only one audit has resulted in the Board having sufficient concern that the Dispensing Optician may not be practising at the required standard to warrant a competence review being ordered.
- 6 This suggests to the Board that the CPD requirements of the recertification programme are generally sufficient to verify maintenance of practitioner competence, and therefore, it may not be necessary or cost-effective on Board resources to continue to invest in conducting random self audits of Dispensing Opticians in addition to deficit self audits (as required) to verify practitioner competence.

## Proposal

- 7 The Board proposes to **amend** the current recertification programme for Dispensing Opticians to remove the requirement that up to 40 percent of the profession be required to complete a random self audit of their practice at any time during the recertification cycle. Instead, Dispensing Opticians will only be asked to complete a self audit of their practice in the event that they do not achieve the required CPD credits for the recertification cycle, are rejoining the workforce after an extended period of absence or in the event that the Board receives information or has concerns that the Dispensing Optician may not be practising at the required standard of competence.
- 8 As outlined above, the reason for this proposal is that the Board feels assured, having randomly audited members of the profession for more than eight years, that for the vast majority of Dispensing Opticians, completion of CPD activities is sufficient to ensure they are maintaining their competence to practise.

## Summary

- 9 The Board has provided details above, of the amendment it proposes to make to the current *Recertification programme for the continuing professional development of Dispensing Opticians*, including the reasons for this proposed amendment. Stakeholders are now invited to provide submissions on this proposed amendment.

## How to have your say

- 10 If you wish to make submissions, please provide them in writing **by 5.00 pm on 7 May 2018**. The Board does not guarantee that submissions received at the Board's offices after that date will be considered.

## Appendix 1 – *Recertification programme for the continuing professional development of Dispensing Opticians*

### Submissions can be sent to:

The Registrar  
Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board  
PO Box 9644  
Wellington 6141

Email: registrar@odob.health.nz