

**MEETING OF THE OPTOMETRISTS & DISPENSING OPTICIANS BOARD
HELD IN THE BOARDROOM AT LEVEL 5, 22 WILLESTON STREET,
WELLINGTON
AT 9.00 AM ON FRIDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2017**

Meeting Attendees:

Chairperson: Jennifer Craig

Optometrist Members: Jennifer Craig, Ross Tayler, Jayesh Chouhan, Ross Tayler, Annette Morgan

Dispensing Optician Members: Lorraine Helson, Kristine Hammond

Lay Members: Irene Durham, Joanne Talbot

Board staff in attendance:

Registrar: Lindsey Pine

Deputy Registrar: Annette McCoy

Administrator: Laura Leatham

Minute taker: Linda Young (Nursing Council of New Zealand)

Summary of key meeting decisions/matters discussed:

Elections

Schedule 3, Clause 3(1) of the HPCA Act requires the Board to elect a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson at the first meeting of each year. Jennifer Craig was re-elected as Chairperson and Jayesh Chouhan was re-elected as Deputy Chairperson.

The Board also welcomed new Board member, Annette Morgan at the meeting. Annette qualified with a Bachelor of Optometry in 1985, and was in the first therapeutics class at the University of Auckland, receiving the TAPIOT in 2004. She was employed in Wellington from graduation until buying her own practice in Paraparaumu in 1990. She now works for Grylls, Keleher and Matthews in Paraparaumu and OPSM in Johnsonville. She was a councillor of the New Zealand Association of Optometrists (NZAO) from 1992 until her appointment to the Board, but has been a member of the Council of Optometry Regulatory Authorities (CORA) and its successor the Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand (OCANZ) for the past 10 or so years so has seen how legislation works to govern patient safety. Annette is looking forward to shifting gear and serving on the Board, balancing the application of her knowledge as an optometrist with the consumer perspective and ensuring protection of the public.

Consultation on changes proposed to Optometrists scopes of practice.

The Board received a copy of the submissions received on the Board's consultation on proposed revisions to the optometry scopes of practice. After careful discussion and debate, the Board agreed to proceed with the revisions to the optometry scopes of practice as proposed in its recent consultation document, effective 1 April 2017. The proposed changes will be published in the New Zealand Gazette and an information sheet detailing the effect of the scope changes will be included with all renewed optometrist APCs.

Optometrists in CPD Deficit at end of recertification cycle

The Board received and considered information on the numbers of Optometrists in deficit at the end of the CPD recertification cycle. The Board was disappointed by the numbers and resolved that an e-communication item was needed for the profession on the programme requirements and the ramifications of not meeting them.

Dispensing Optician Disciplinary Levy

Between meetings the Board considered feedback from two submitters on a proposal to impose a small disciplinary levy on dispensing opticians. The Board resolved to confirm its proposal to impose the disciplinary levy commencing 1 April 2017.

Cancellation & Change of Practise Forms

The Board discussed the need to implement application forms for requests for cancellation from the Register and change of status to non-practising during the year. Board staff are having numerous back and forth enquiries regarding these matters and this has become too labour intensive and the potential misunderstandings over the status of registration/APC is too risky for practitioners and the public. The Board resolved to approve the implementation of dedicated application forms for these processes.

Pearson English Test

The Board received information on a new English language test available and considered whether a pass in this test may be acceptable for registration purposes. The Board resolved that a Board member take the test and report their findings back to the Board.

Optometrist therapeutic prescribing follow-ups

The Board discussed how it follows up prescribing queries with pharmacies and practitioners and whether to continue the current process or adopt a new process.

The Ministry of Health provides the Board with quarterly data about all subsidised medicines prescribed by optometrists. The Board uses this information to review prescribing practices and ensure that optometrists are prescribing safely.

The Board has found that more than 90 percent of the anomalies showing up on the quarterly reports each year are as a result of a computational error in recording the prescriber by the pharmacy rather than inappropriate prescribing by optometrists. Therefore, the Board's process is to approach the pharmacy for confirmation of the prescription details before approaching individual optometrists for explanations. This is so as not to cause optometrists any undue stress, concern or work when there may be a simple explanation for the anomaly that can be cleared up with the pharmacy.

The Board resolved that monitoring of optometrist prescribing will continue per the above process.