

COMPLETING YOUR DISPENSING OPTICIAN SELF AUDIT

SOME HELPFUL HINTS

Board self audits provide one measure of ensuring practitioners are providing the minimum standards of care. Self audits are a method of systematically reviewing patient care against explicit criteria and aim to ensure practitioners are prescribing safely within their scope of practice. They are also an educative tool that may help you to reflect on and make any changes to the way you practice. You should allow sufficient time to complete the self audit – the time taken will vary depending on several factors including patient demographics, hours of practice, accessibility of health records etc.

If you are working in a non-traditional role and are not sure what information to provide with your self audit, please contact the Board office for further advice.

Specific question guidelines:

- **Question 12:** when discussing the suitability and uses of low vision aids describe the basic optical principles of different types of magnifiers as well as patient factors that you might consider when prescribing low vision aids for both distance and near.
- **Question 13:** remember to include details of contact lens insertion and removal and contact lens care solutions. If your practice has standard documentation that is provided to contact lens patients please provide a copy of this with your self audit answers.
- **Question 18:** when describing considerations for paediatric dispensing include information about both frame and lens choices.
- **Question 21:** Please refer to the Standards for Cultural Competency on the Board's website 'Practice Standards' page and use these to help answer this question. Cultural competence involves more than ethnicity and finding an interpreter where required. The best answers to this question show the **dispensing optician** reflects on his/her cultural awareness and incorporates this awareness into practice.
- **Question 22:** please refer to the Standards of Ethical Conduct on the Board's website 'Practice Standards' page to help answer this question.
- **Question 24:** please provide a statement reflecting on what you have learnt from the cases supplied with your self audit. Almost all practitioners acknowledge that there are areas where they could benefit from further information or education. Identification of these areas occurs through self-reflection and audit processes and ensures improvement in patient care and outcomes.

Cases for submission:

You must submit **four** specific examples that demonstrate *good dispensing practice* that you have been involved in. These should be dated in the 12 months prior to the date of your notification from the Board that you have been selected to complete a self audit.

One of each of the following cases should be provided:

1. **Single vision** lenses for a prescription over ± 6.00 D (in one or both meridians) which should include commentary on any adjustments required due to differences in BVD.
2. **Occupational** lenses – more correctly known as digressive lenses.
3. **Progressive addition** lenses detailing all of the measurements required for fitting the particular lens design.
4. **Grief case** – which may document patient non-tolerance to a specific lens design and details the dispensing techniques utilized to bring this case to a satisfactory conclusion.

Clearly label cases e.g. Patient 1, Patient 2, Patient 3 etc. and number pages consecutively.

Each case should be accompanied by

1. **The optometrist's record card** which includes the patient's case history, refractive findings including BVD of the subjective refraction where appropriate, any relevant binocular vision results e.g. the need for prism and the diagnosis and a clear statement of patient management. These details may help the Board understand why a particular lens design was chosen. Where the patient was examined at another practice, please provide a copy of the outside prescription.
2. **The dispensing record and lab order** showing all the relevant measurements e.g. monocular PDs, heights, pantoscopic tilt, BVD, frame wrap etc. where appropriate.
3. **A brief commentary** explaining why a particular lens design was selected and what measurements were taken to ensure a good dispensing outcome for the patient.

Please make sure you de-identify the patient records but indicate the patient's age (or date of birth). Do not include the patient's name, address, telephone numbers or NHI number.

Results of the self audit process

Usually you will receive the outcome of your self audit within a six week period.

1. When the Board is satisfied with the self audit you will receive a letter confirming 'The Board considers that you appear to be practicing at the required level of competence'. This wording is derived directly from the HPCA Act, which does not allow the Board to acknowledge self audits of high quality.
2. In some circumstances the Board may request further information from a practitioner including clarification of answers to self audit questions, further case examples or additional referrals and replies. Often this further information is sufficient to ensure the Board of practitioner compliance.
3. If you do receive a request for further information and are unsure what specific information is required please contact the Registration and Recertification Officer or Professional Standards Advisor who will be very happy to assist you with your query.