

Snapshot

Who is the Optometry Board of Australia?

The Optometry Board of Australia (the Board) protects the public by regulating optometrists. The Board sets requirements for optometrists through their endorsement, code, registration standards and guidelines.

What is happening?

The Board is starting its public consultation on the review of the [Registration standard: Endorsement for scheduled medicines](#) (the standard) and [Guidelines for use of scheduled medicines](#) (the guidelines) and would like your views.

What is the Board proposing?

Right now, endorsed optometrists can prescribe topical eye drops and ointments for common eye conditions. The Board is proposing to:

- expand what endorsed optometrists are qualified to prescribe, so that optometrists can prescribe topical and oral medicines (taken by mouth) for common eye conditions
- change the endorsement, standard and guidelines to keep them up to date, to support consistency across registered health professions and so that everyone knows what optometrists are qualified and expected to do
- remove clinical guidance from the regulatory guidelines to future proof them, and
- move the medicine lists from the appendices of the Board's guideline to its website, so that everyone will easily see what optometrists are qualified to prescribe. This will make updates to the lists timelier, while continuing to keep safety checks in place.

Endorsed optometrists would treat common eye problems like infections, allergies and short term pain using both topical and oral medicines within the limits of their skill and training, without needing to send you to a medical practitioner, unless it's really required.

What does this mean for consumers?

- **More choice:** you decide who, how, when and where you receive primary eye healthcare.
- **More timely access:** it's easier, faster and more convenient to see your optometrist than your general practitioner or ophthalmologist, for common eye conditions. There's also less wait times.
- **More affordable eye care:** Receiving safe treatment for common eye conditions from your optometrist at your first visit, means less travel time and out of pocket consultation costs to see a medical practitioner (GP).
- **Good eye health outcomes:** early access to eye care can protect and save your vision.

If the proposal goes ahead, endorsed optometrists will be able to prescribe additional medicines. These will initially not be funded under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and will be sold at private (non-PBS funded) prices, which will vary across pharmacies. You might notice a small increase in cost, but for most people it will be minimal for the proposed medicines. The peak optometry professional association will try to get these medicines added to the PBS, to help make them cheaper and easier to access, but this isn't guaranteed.

Why is the Board proposing this change?

The Board's current standard is due for a full review. The professional association requested a change to the Board's endorsement to recognise that endorsed optometrists in Australia are qualified to prescribe oral medicines. The Board has strong evidence to progress and consult on the proposal.

Where do I get more information?

See the consultation paper for more details, including a consumer guide at Appendix C and consumer impact statement in Appendix I.

How to make a submission?

Provide your feedback by COB (AEDT) 24 December 2025 by completing the short, two to five minute [survey](#), or send the response template to optomconsultation@ahpra.gov.au.