



OPTOMETRISTS  
ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA

Submission to the  
Health Workforce Principal Committee  
Practitioner Regulation Subcommittee on  
*Other matters for inclusion in Bill B*  
December 2008  
from  
Optometrists Association Australia

## **Introduction**

The Optometrists Association Australia is pleased to provide comments relevant to optometry on the matters raised in the consultation paper *Other matters for inclusion in Bill B*.

As we have stated in earlier submissions, Optometrists Association continues to support the concept of national registration and accreditation.

While there remain some aspects of the new scheme which we believe are not ideal we accept it will be better than what exists and will continue to work with Australian Governments and other professions.

## **Comments on Specific Proposals**

### **3.5 More flexible committee arrangements**

#### Proposals 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.3, 3.5.4 and 3.5.5

Supported strongly.

### **3.6 Further safeguards around delegations**

#### Proposal 3.6.1

We question whether, given more flexible delegation arrangements as proposed it is then necessary to impose constraints on how boards will use that flexibility. We see no need to include such constraints in the enabling legislation.

### **4 Appointments to board (non-statutory) committees or (statutory) panels**

Optometrists Association has no concerns about creating a pool of existing members of boards and panels as proposed, but we question whether that would need to be included in the legislation. We would have thought this matter could be handled by administrative action.

#### Proposal 4.1.1

Supported

#### Proposals 4.1.2 and 4.1.3

Supported in both cases with Option 1 preferred.

### **5 Interaction of national scheme with other legislative schemes**

#### Proposals 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3, 5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.2.6, 5.2.7, 5.2.8, 5.2.9 and 5.2.10

Supported.

### **6 Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition and the national scheme**

#### Proposal 6.1

Supported.

## **Conclusion**

We welcome in particular the willingness of scheme designers to reconsider the proposed committee structures to allow national boards more flexibility in decision making. Optometrists Association has argued consistently that the boards will need to play a greater role in the operation of the new scheme than initially envisaged. We urge ministers and officials to continue to approach implementation of the new scheme in this flexible and practical manner.