

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

OPTOMETRISTS (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 1982

No.31 of 1982

This amending Ordinance is part of a uniform scheme which is to be applicable to all the health professions registration Ordinances in the Territory. Under this scheme annual registration under uniform conditions will be introduced for all registered health professions together with provisional, temporary and special registration also on a uniform basis.

Until now optometrists were not required by the Optometrists Ordinance 1956 to notify the Optometrists Board of their addresses and pay a fee annually. It is regarded as desirable that all these professions should be subject to this requirement in the interests of parity and the raising of revenue to provide in part for the costs of administering the Ordinances concerned. This requirement will also enable the various Registers to be used as more accurate guides to the numbers in each profession practising in the Territory.

The Chairman of the Optometrists Board may grant provisional registration to a person who has lodged an application for registration as an optometrist. Provisional registration lasts for a maximum period of 3 months and terminates when the Board makes a decision on the application for registration.

The amending Ordinance has replaced the previous provision for temporary permits for optometrists not registered in the Australian Capital Territory but registered elsewhere in Australia who wish to practise on a locum tenens basis in the Territory. The amending Ordinance introduces temporary registration for optometrists in a form consistent with amendments to the other health professions registration ordinances. Temporary registration is limited to 3 months renewable for a further 3 months but subject to a limit of 6 months in any 24 month period.

Special registration is available to optometrists who are entitled to practise outside Australia and who are visiting the Territory in connection with research into or dissemination of knowledge of the theory and practice of the profession. Application must be made by an educational institution or appropriate professional association. The Board may grant special registration for a maximum period of one year, renewable for one year and subject to such restrictions and conditions as the Board thinks fit. All types of registration are subject to fees prescribed in regulations.

New provision has been made for certificates of registration including the issue of duplicate certificates where a certificate has been lost or destroyed. There are new provisions for the notification of changes of address, for the alteration of the Register, for inspecting the Register and for obtaining certified copies of entries in the Register. Fees for these matters are prescribed in regulations. A new provision in a revised form has been inserted for the return of certificates of registration by persons who cease to be registered.

The previous section 19 of the Optometrists Ordinance 1956 which made it an offence to obtain registration by fraud has been repealed as this matter is adequately covered by other legislation. The appeal provisions have been altered as a consequence of other changes to the Ordinance.