

BOARD NOTICE 81 OF 2001
HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICA

**RULES RELATING TO CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN OPTOMETRY
AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS**

The Health Professions Council of South Africa intends, in terms of section 26 of the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974), to make the rules set out in the Schedule.

Interested persons are invited to submit any substantiated comments or representations on the proposed rules to the Registrar, Health Professions Council of South Africa, P O Box 205, Pretoria, 0001 within one month of the date of publication of this notice.

SCHEDULE

DEFINITIONS

1. In these rules "the Act" means the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 56 of 1974), and, unless inconsistent with the context -

"board" means the Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing Opticians established by Government Notice R.75 of 16 January 1998;

"continuing professional development" means the continuing education and training referred to in section 26 of the Act and prescribed in terms of these rules;

"practitioner" means an optometrist or a dispensing optician registered in terms of the Act.

REQUIREMENTS

2. Any practitioner whose name on 1 January 2002 appears on the register of optometrists or the register of dispensing opticians kept in terms of section 18 of the Act, shall be required to comply with the conditions of continuing professional development laid down in these rules as a prerequisite for such practitioner to retain his or her registration in terms of the Act.

3. Any person who, after 1 January 2002, registers for the first time in terms of the Act as an optometrist or a dispensing optician in any category of independent practice or public service, excluding a person who is registered for non-clinical purposes, shall be required to comply with the conditions of continuing professional development laid down in these rules, which shall be a prerequisite for such practitioner to retain his or her registration in terms of the Act.

4. A practitioner whose name had been erased from the register of optometrists or the register of dispensing opticians or who is registered for non-clinical purposes, shall be subject to compliance with any condition(s) which the board may specify prior to the restoration of the name of such practitioner to the relevant register for the purpose of rendering clinical services.

5. For the purpose of continuing professional development -

(a) every optometrist shall be required to accumulate at least 25 points within any one year, provided that any points accumulated during one year in excess of 25 points may be forwarded to the subsequent year only;

(b) every dispensing optician shall be required to accumulate at least 15 points within any one year, provided that any points accumulated during one year in excess of 15 points may be forwarded to the subsequent year only:

Provided further that, if the practitioner does not accumulate the prescribed minimum in any one year, he or she shall be permitted to obtain as many points as required in the subsequent year.

6. The points prescribed in rule 5 shall be accumulated by way of different educational or developmental activities accredited by the board in any of the following categories of activities:

- (1) Organisational activities.
- (2) Small group activities.
- (3) Individual activities.
- (4) Any other activities or category of activities which the board may accredit from time to time.

7. During any one year, not more than 80% of the points may be obtained in any one category.

8.(1) In complying with the requirements, at least 2 points shall have to be obtained by every practitioner in professional ethics annually.

(2) During any one year, a maximum of 5 points may be obtained in non-clinical but health related activities.

9. Deferment of compliance with the requirements of continuing professional development may only be granted by the board on application to individual practitioners on submission of adequate reasons and subject to such requirements as the board may determine.

10. In the event of a practitioner not complying with the conditions specified in these rules within the prescribed period of time, the board may impose any one or more of the following conditions, namely –

- (a) grant the practitioner deferment for one extra year; or
- (b) require the practitioner to follow a remedial programme of continuing education and training as specified by the board; or

- (c) require the practitioner to write an examination as determined by the board; or
- (d) register the practitioner in a category of registration which shall provide for supervision regarded as appropriate by the board; or
- (e) register the practitioner in a category of registration restricted to non-clinical practice; or
- (f) erase the practitioner's name from the relevant register.

(11 May 2001)