

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

OPTOMETRISTS ORDINANCE 1956

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

No. 4 of 1956

Some time ago the A.C.T. Advisory Council recommended to the Minister that steps be taken to provide for the registration of optometrists in the A.C.T.

A draft ordinance has been prepared. This ordinance provides for the formation of an Optometrists Board which will be responsible for the registration of optometrists in the A.C.T., maintenance of a Register of Optometrists and the general policing of the Ordinance.

It is provided that an optometrist is a person who either uses methods to measure vision by all methods other than the use of drugs or who, by the adaptation of lenses and prisms, aids the power of vision; optometry is also considered to include the dispensing of prescriptions for spectacles given by general practitioners but does not include lens grinding or spectacle making.

The Optometrists' Board will consist of the Director-General of Health as Chairman and two or three other members appointed by the Minister. Wherever possible one must be a registered medical practitioner and the other or others, as the case may be, optometrists who have been registered in a State or Territory for at least five years. Members will be appointed for a period of three years.

Registration will be restricted to persons over 21 years of age who, in the opinion of the Board, are fit and proper persons to be registered and who have passed an examination prescribed by the Board or under the law of any State or, are registered under such a law at the time the ordinance comes into operation. Applications will also be considered from persons who were registered or certified by a Public Authority in Her Majesty's overseas Dominions which recognises certificates issued by the Board and prescribes a substantially similar examination.

Appeals to the Supreme Court will be allowed in the case of a refusal by the Board of an application for registration or for re-registration. Section 23 provides for cancellation or suspension of registration if an enquiry by the Board indicates that an optometrist has committed anyone of a number of prescribed misdemeanours. Appeals to the Supreme Court is allowed against an adverse finding by the Board in any such enquiry.

Penalties are provided for fraudulent registration, failure to notify changes of address, failure to surrender certificate upon cancellation, unauthorised use of the title "optometrist", use of drugs in measuring vision, false swearing before the Board and the obstruction of officers in the performance of their duties.

In the case of a company or firm registration will be required of all employees of the Company who practise optometry.

The Minister is empowered to make any regulations necessary for giving effect to the Ordinance.