

Working with medicines

# Optometrists

## Regulations

Optometrists registered with the national board, have various authorities under the Medicines and Poisons Regulations 2016 to purchase, hold and use prescription medicines.

## Authority

The following table outlines the authority of optometrists to use medicines under the Regulations:

| **Practitioner** | **Type of Authority** | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Obtain (purchase)** | **Possess** | **Administer** | **Supply** | **Prescribe** |
| Endorsed Optometrist | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 1 | 🗸 1 | 🗸 1 |
| Optometrist | 🗸 | 🗸 | 🗸 1, 2 |  |  |

Notes:

1. in accordance with the Optometry guidelines published by the Optometry Board of Australia.
2. in accordance with a Structured Administration and Supply Arrangement.

Any authority is limited to the lawful practice of the professional and includes:

* optometry practice only;
* scope of practice / general professional limitations;
* for patients under the care of the health practitioner;
* usual place of business;
* course of operating the practitioners business / as part of employment; and
* any relevant restrictions or conditions imposed on the individual practitioner.

Scope of practice for optometrists is defined by the Optometry Board of Australia.

## Purchasing medicines

Optometrists and endorsed optometrists may purchase medicines in their own name, to treat patients under their care.

A Permit is required to purchase medicines in name of a business or where inventory will be shared between multiple practitioners, for use at the one practice.

## Supply and prescription

Endorsed optometrists may personally administer, prescribe or supply a Schedule 4 (S4) medicine in accordance with their authority and in accordance with the Optometry guidelines published by the Optometry Board of Australia.

Any medicine supplied must be appropriately packaged and fully labelled according to regulation.

An optometrist may administer S4 medicines in accordance with their authority, in accordance with Optometry guidelines, and /or a Structured Administration and Supply Arrangement.

## Storage

S4 medicines must be stored in a locked storage facility to prevent unauthorised access. For example: a lockable room, cupboard, cabinet or refrigerator. Precautions must be taken to ensure keys are not accessible to unauthorised staff.

## Recording

Optometrists must make accurate clinical records of all medicines administered or supplied (where permitted) and retain these for at least 2 years for S4 medicines. All records must be available to be produced on demand of an authorised officer of the Department of Health.

## Compliance assessment

Optometrists possessing or using medicines may be required to participate in routine audit assessments to monitor compliance with these requirements. Non-compliance with the Regulations may result restrictions or loss of medicines authorities, notification to the Optometry Board of Australia, and/or prosecution under the legislation.

## More information

For more information contact the Medicines and Poisons Regulation Branch on:

* (08) 9222 6883 (Monday – Friday, 8.30am – 4.30pm)
* [poisons@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:poisons@health.wa.gov.au)