
PROFESSIONAL BOARD FOR OPTOMETRY AND DISPENSING OPTICIANS

SCOPE INFRINGEMENT BY “FRONT LINE” STAFF IN OPTOMETRY/DISPENSING OPTICIANRY PRACTICE

Following numerous queries and complaints received by the Professional Board for Optometry and Dispensing Opticians (“the Professional Board”) regarding the performance of certain clinical and professional acts falling within the scope of the profession of Optometry and Dispensing Optician by persons who are not registered in terms of the Health Professions Act; the Professional Board saw it fit to remind/inform and educate practitioners and the members of public that:

- It is illegal, for persons who are not registered in terms of the Health Professions Act including but not limited to Optometry Front liners / Optometry Assistants to perform clinical and professional acts falling within the scope of the profession of Optometry and Dispensing Opticians. Any person who, without registration in terms of the Health Professions Act, performs clinical and professional acts falling within the scope of the profession of Optometry and Dispensing Optician commits a criminal offence in terms of sections 17 and 39 of the Health Professions Act. The aforementioned offence attracts, inter alia, imprisonment for a period not exceeding twelve months.
- Only Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians can perform acts within their scopes of the profession respectively, to examine, diagnose, prescribe and dispense spectacles and contact lenses
- Any registered Optometrist or Dispensing Optician who instructs any person who is not registered as an Optometrist or Dispensing Optician in terms of the Health Professions Act to perform clinical and professional acts falling within the scope of the profession of Optometry and Dispensing Optician commit unprofessional conduct. The aforementioned unprofessional conduct attracts various sanctions in terms of section 42 of the Act

Media statement issued by the Professional Board