

ANALYSIS OF HOUSE BILL 3014

Modifying the scopes of practice of certain vision care health providers.

SPONSORS: Representatives Schual-Berke and Cody.

BACKGROUND: The practice of optometry is licensed by the Department of Health and involves the examination of the human eye, the examination and ascertaining of any defects of the human vision system, and the analysis of the process of vision. The Board of Optometry examines applicants for licensure and acts as the disciplining authority, and otherwise governs the practice of optometry.

The scope of practice includes the use of topically applied drugs for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes. Licensed optometrists certified by the board for using topically applied drugs for diagnostic purposes must have a minimum of 60 hours of didactic and clinical instruction in general and ocular pharmacology as applied to optometry. Optometrists administering topically applied drugs for therapeutic purposes must have an additional 75 hours of didactic and clinical instruction. The board must establish a schedule of drugs limited to the practice of optometry for optometric practice.

A dispensing optician is licensed by the Department of Health to prepare duplications of lenses and eyeglasses upon the written prescription of physicians and optometrists, who measures, adapts, and fabricates lenses and spectacles to the human face.

Currently, there is no reference to the endorsement of refracting opticians.

SUMMARY: The practice of optometry includes the treatment of the eye and the human vision system.

Optometrists certified by the Board of Optometry may use legend drugs and controlled substances for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes related to the practice of optometry as follows:

Optometrists using topical drugs for diagnostic purposes must have a minimum of 60 hours of didactic and clinical instruction in general and ocular pharmacology as applied to optometry, and be certified by the board.

Optometrists using or prescribing topical drugs for therapeutic purposes must have an additional minimum of 75 hours of didactic and clinical instruction, and be certified by the board.

Optometrists using or prescribing drugs administered orally, by injection, or by any other method of delivery for therapeutic purposes must have an additional 20 hours of didactic and clinical instruction, and be certified by the board.

The board must establish by rule specific guidelines to the prescription and administration of drugs.

The use of drugs must be specifically limited to those related to the practice of optometry, and restricted to no more than 7 days for a single condition.

No hospital may discriminate against an optometrist who applies for hospital privileges.

PREPARED BY: *John Beresford Welsh, Senior Counsel*
House Health Care Committee, P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA. 98504-0600, (360) 786-7133

A licensed dispensing optician may apply to the Secretary of Health for an endorsement as a refracting optician for the purpose of modifying prescriptions as defined and meet qualifications. Qualifications include 80 hours of accredited course work; at least 200 supervised refractive examinations; continuing education as determined by the Secretary; and successful completion of an examination.

Refracting is defined as a means of measuring the powers or range of a person's vision to determine the degree of correction.

Prescription modification is defined as the ability to alter a prescription with a cumulative plus or minus 2.00 diopter of change, with 1.00 diopter at a time during a 6-month period.

The original prescriber must be notified within 14 days of any modifications.

Refracting opticians must refer patients to an optometrist or ophthalmologist if they are unable to select specified lenses or observes specified changes in power of either eye.

The Dispensing Optician Examining Committee is increased from three to five members, of which four are licensed opticians, including one public member.