

## ACO Advanced Glaucoma Course

The Australian College of Optometry (ACO) has expanded its post-graduate level courses with the launch of a six month course on glaucoma management. The Advanced Certificate in Glaucoma (ACO ACG) course will enable optometrists in Australia and New Zealand to undertake higher level study in this specialised area.

Speaking of the certificate course, Leanne Nguyen the College's Lead Optometrist, Ocular Disease and Hospital Services and Site Co-ordinator, Glaucoma Initial Treatment Study said, "Optometrists are well-placed to work closely with our colleagues in ophthalmology and general medical practice to facilitate optimal outcomes for patients. This certificate will build on existing knowledge to increase connections and confidence to improve clinical care."

The certificate will feature self-paced learning supported by online lectures, e-learning materials, demonstration videos and on-line discussion forums. Local clinical placements with ophthalmologists and interaction with colleagues will strengthen networks to ensure patients are receiving the highest level of care. Under the guidance of an expert advisory committee, the course will be presented by ophthalmologists, university lecturers and experienced optometrists.

Jolanda de Jong, ACO General Manager of Professional Development said, "Continuous learning is imperative to quality clinical care. Undertaking an advanced certificate contributes to skills-based career development. This grows competence and increases performance capacity for both individuals and practices," she said.

Visit [aco.org.au](http://aco.org.au) for details.

## ACBO Licenses Practical Vision Therapy Program Overseas

**The Australasian College** of Behavioural Optometrists (ACBO) has launched its Practical Vision Therapy program in Canada, having successfully established the program in New Zealand earlier this year.

ACBO has licenced its Practical Vision Therapy (PVT) program to the Canadian Optometrists in Vision Therapy & Rehabilitation (COVT&R) where it ran for the first time this year, with 55 enrolments in both Ontario and British Columbia.

Veronica Kypros, Executive Officer of the Australasian College of Behavioural Optometrists said, "The feedback from the launch of the Practical Vision Therapy program in Canada has been overwhelmingly good, with bumper enrolment and positive comments from attendees, including a number of veteran therapists."

ACBO has delivered a Vision Therapist training course since the early 90's. ACBO Fellow, Meredith Graham, managed the major redevelopment of the education program in 2012, which led to the program content being updated and aligned with recent advances in vision science. The program's revision included new video content to complement the existing foundation education, workshop planning was streamlined, and an online portal was introduced to facilitate the delivery of the program. Legendary doyen of Vision Therapy, Bev Roberts, facilitates the Australian workshops.

Since the new program was relaunched in 2013, the PVT program has grown from a

few enrolments a year, to a record breaking 55 enrolments in 2015. By the end of 2016 in Australia, 64 Vision Therapists and 67 optometrists will have graduated through the program in four years.

The program runs for 18 months and commences each year in March. The PVT program is delivered via a combination of online, face-to-face workshops, and on the job work practice. To receive accreditation, all modules and workshops must be completed. To be eligible to participate in this program, the optometrist or therapist must be an ACBO member.

Veronica adds, "The most pleasing result of the new program is that we are seeing optometrists join in even greater numbers than Vision Therapists. Although the PVT program was initially designed for training vision therapists, the education is vital for optometrists working with VTs."

As a result of the successful licensing agreement in Canada, an agreement has also been signed with the Optometric Extension Program Foundation (OEP) in the United States, tentatively commencing in 2017.

Global Behavioural Optometry organisations meet regularly to collaborate and share resources and information. The International Congress of Behavioural Optometry (ICBO) conference will be held in Sydney in 2018 with an estimated 500 attendees from overseas and within Australia.

ICBO's member organisations have launched the ICBO One app as a means of connecting members of all these international groups.



Ontario instructors at the Practical Vision Therapy Workshop at the Halton Vision Therapy Centre in Burlington, Ontario, Canada. Front Row (L to R) Dr. Shirley Ha, Dr. Patricia Fink and Dr. Virginia Donati.