

## **The Australian College of Optometry (ACO) expresses concern for reforms to self-education expense deductions**

The ACO has expressed concern about the Government proposed “Reforms to self-education expense deductions” as referenced in the media release of the 13 April 2013, on the basis that the impact of the proposed cap of \$2,000 (effective 1 July 2014) for work related self-education expenses directly challenges the ethos of Continuing Professional Development within the Health industry (there is currently no cap on the amount that can be claimed as a tax deduction for the purposes of self education). The CEO of the ACO, Ms Maureen O’Keefe, has consequently written to the Treasurer and Minister expressing her concern.

The ACO advocates professional ethics, standard and quality optometric practice, providing clinical and further education for optometrists and undergraduate students through its Continuing Professional Development Program. It is believed that this measure directly questions the essential outcomes of clinical expansion of knowledge, expertise and competence.

The ACO proposes that the Federal Government pursue a collaborative approach with the Health sector with a focus on identifying acceptable types of expenses as appropriate to claim rather than apply a total amount claimable.

The ACO has further advised that it would welcome the opportunity to be part of wider health sector consultation regarding any proposed reform.