

## **AIO welcomes revision to GOC Code of Conduct for business registrants**

### ***However the Association is disappointed about aspects of Standards for students***

The Association for Independent Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians (AIO) is pleased to see that the GOC will be revising its standards in respect of business registrants alongside the revision for individuals on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. The Association had strongly encouraged the GOC to take this approach during its consultation on standards to ensure that there is consistency in how the profession operates across the board and in what the public should expect on their eye care provider.

There is a clear difference in operating models between smaller independent practices and the larger corporate operators, and it is important that standards are consistent across different business models, particularly where a clear employer/employee model for professionals exists in larger companies.

Peter Warren, Chairman of AIO commented 'AIO is always keen to engage with the GOC in respect of its consultations and we were pleased to do so face to face, as well as by way of a formal response, in the case of the Standards Strategic Review. We welcome the fact that standards for business registrants will be updated alongside and consistent with those for individual registrants. We are however disappointed that Standards for students have been introduced, particularly when they have not been limited to patient interaction. It is not clear why the world of optics should be unique amongst other medical professions in requiring this.'

'It seems that a minor indiscretion, completely unrelated to optics, (perhaps made after a night out with fellow students!) could lead to some sort of sanction by the GOC, which seems a little extreme.' Peter added.

The new standards which go live on 1<sup>st</sup> April are broadly welcomed by the AIO as fit for purpose.