

Name change heralds new direction for orthoptics in Australia

The national body for orthoptists is undergoing a transformation, starting with the name change in March to Orthoptics Australia.

It was previously named the Orthoptic Association of Australia, having had that name since its formation in 1944.

"Our professional body is evolving constantly," says Orthoptics Australia President, A/Prof Zoran Georgievski. "OA has substantially strengthened its links with key stakeholder groups, including government departments, advocacy groups, consumers, and allied health

and medical associations. Orthoptics as a profession is further adapting and diversifying to meet the many challenges we face with the increasing demand on eye health care services."

A/Prof Georgievski says the name change heralds further development in the profession. "It's a way to mark orthoptics embracing change and improvement. When we started discussing the name change we felt, increasingly, that we were coming to the fork in the road where we would need to communicate a clear message as to what orthoptics is, where it's going, the changes in our workforce, increasing roles and enhanced scope of practice. We felt this had to be heralded with new name change, new logo, a new-look web site," he says.

"In many ophthalmology practices and hospitals, orthoptists are like 'the right-hand' to ophthalmologists. Now is a good opportunity to increase our profile and to provide a higher level of

assistance to ophthalmologists. That's where we're heading, so it's more than just a name change."

Orthoptics Australia's new email address is office@orthoptics.org.au. Its web address remains as www.orthoptics.org.au.

The 67th Annual Scientific Conference of Orthoptics Australia will be held in Adelaide from 21-24 November 2010, running concurrently with RANZCO's Congress.

"It will be a good opportunity for people to get up to speed with where orthoptics is heading as a profession," says A/Prof Georgievski. "We welcome ophthalmologists to attend the OA conference. Orthoptics is on the move, and it would be good for this to be supported and guided by ophthalmologists."

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