

**2024**

**ANNUAL REPORT**



**Optometrists & Opticians Board**



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# Chairman's Message

Dear fellow eyecare colleagues,

Thank you for partnering with the Board to deliver comprehensive eye care to our patients and community.

It is crucial that we maintain our focus on delivering high-quality eye care. We must also strive to elevate our practice standards through continuous learning and professional development. Our collective efforts have far-reaching impact, even if it is not immediately apparent.

Our society is facing a growing myopia epidemic. High myopia is an important risk factor of serious eye diseases such as retinal detachment, myopic macular degeneration, myopic tractional maculopathy, glaucoma, and early-onset cataracts – all potential causes of irreversible vision loss.

Every preventable case of vision loss due to high myopia is one too many and this must be addressed decisively. Through early intervention, proper eye care, appropriate optical corrections and lifestyle modifications, appropriate referrals and shared care, we can effectively manage myopia progression. It is imperative that we act now to educate the public and promote proactive myopia management.

Similarly, age related eye conditions such as glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration continue to drive healthcare needs. In the past year we saw the successful roll-out of optometrist-led Community Eye Clinic (CEC) in the public sector. It is now available in seven locations across the island. Through the collective effort by the eye care professionals and stakeholders, we will strive to reduce the burden of chronic eye conditions.

In the private sector, the Clinical Optometry and Community Screening (COCS) programme has also been successfully rolled out in a pilot programme. Through this programme, the three health clusters,

National Healthcare Group (NHG), National University Health System (NUHS) and Singapore Health Services (SingHealth), collaborate with a group of trained optometrists to provide Level 2 functional screening, including dilated fundus examination. Other programmes will follow.

In addition, OOB has taken a step forward by launching the Orthokeratology Practice Guidelines. This document consolidates the best practices in this advanced contact lens fitting field, emphasising on the importance of quality training programmes, corneal topography during the fitting process, patient record retention periods, and compliance with recommended aftercare schedules, which I am sure will serve many of us well.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all committees, experts and secretariat for their invaluable contributions to our mission. Your dedication has been crucial in achieving our goals of reducing healthcare burdens and safeguarding the vision health and well-being of the population. Let's carry this momentum into the new year together as we look forward to our future achievements.

**Prof Lim Tock Han**

**Chairman**

**Optometrists and Opticians Board**

# Optometrists and Opticians Board

## Chairman

**Prof LIM Tock Han**

Ophthalmologist, National Healthcare Group

## Registrar

**Dr Harold TAN**

Director, National Mental Health Office, Ministry of Health

## Representative for Director-General of Education

**Dr Kingsley MUK Chee Yong**

Optometrist, Singapore Polytechnic (*from 15 October 2024*)

**Ms Jessica YANG Shan Mei**

Optometrist, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (*until 14 October 2024*)

## Members

**A/Prof WONG Hon Tym**

Ophthalmologist, Tan Tock Seng Hospital

**Mr KOH Lian Buck**

Optometrist, Pearl's Visioncare Pte Ltd (City Gate)

**Mr Daniel CHEONG Lip Keong**

Optometrist, Ming Optique

**Ms Jacqueline TAY Li Xin**

Optometrist, Singapore National Eye Centre

**Mr Ken TONG Wei Jian**

Optometrist, The Eyecare Initiative - Optical Pte Ltd

**Mr Steve LIM Ngia Teck**

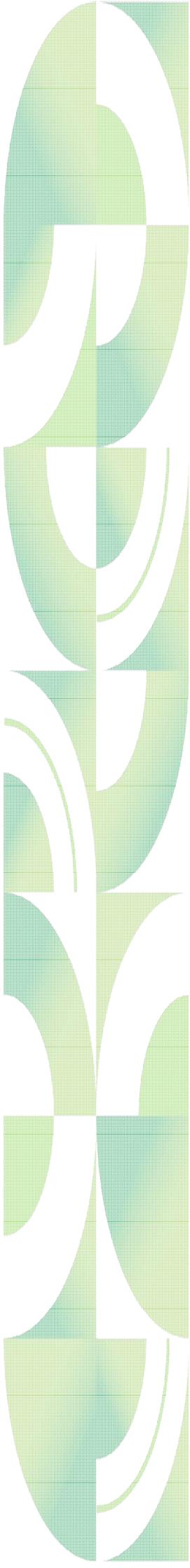
Optician (Refraction and Dispensing), Eye's Vision & Optics (Bedok)

**Ms Charlie TAN Soon Hua**

Optician (Refraction and Dispensing), Yi Specs Pte Ltd

**Dr Sethuraman RAMA**

Head of Quality and Regulatory Asia Pacific, Roche Diagnostics Asia Pacific Pte Ltd



# Committees of the Board

## **Accreditation Committee**

The Accreditation Committee is responsible for accrediting courses of instruction related to optometry and opticianry for the purpose of registration and recommending acceptable displayable higher qualifications.

## **Assessment Committee**

The Assessment Committee is responsible for developing competencies for opticians and optometrists and determining the structure and content of qualifying examinations.

## **Credentials Committee**

The Credentials Committee is responsible for conducting reviews and providing recommendations on all registration matters, including conditions for different types of registration.

## **Continuing Education Committee**

The Continuing Education Committee is responsible for developing and reviewing policies and standards for continuing professional education (CPE), accrediting CPE programmes and approving applications for CPE claims.

## **Practice, Ethics & Conduct Committee**

The Practice, Ethics and Conduct Committee is responsible for developing standards and guidelines for the professional conduct and practice of optometrists and opticians.

# Introduction

The Optometrists & Opticians Act (Chapter 213A) (the “Act”) was passed in Parliament in July 2007. The Act empowers the Optometrists and Opticians Board (the “Board”) to register and regulate all optometrists and opticians and their practices in Singapore.

The Board sets the standards required for registration, approves the registration, issues Practising Certificates (PCs) as well as regulates the conduct and practice of optometrists and opticians. These functions ensure that registered practitioners are qualified and properly trained so that members of the public receive safe and quality eye-care services.

As of 31 December 2024, the Board has in its Registers, a total of **2,797** registered optometrists and opticians.

## No. of registrants in each category from 2020 to 2024

Register Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Optometrists	1,263	1,325	1,370	1,367	1,410
Opticians (Refraction & Dispensing/RD)	1,271	1,280	1,286	1,272	1,317
Opticians (Dispensing/D)	102	68	67	59	56
Opticians (Contact Lens Practitioner/CLP)	17	16	16	14	14
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,653</b>	<b>2,689</b>	<b>2,739</b>	<b>2,712</b>	<b>2,797</b>

## Who Are Opticians?

Opticians are eye care providers equipped with the skills to dispense and fit glasses based on prescriptions from optometrists or ophthalmologists.

Opticians are registered in the following categories:

1. **Opticians (Dispensing only)** – these opticians are only qualified to dispense and fit glasses.
2. **Opticians (Refraction and Dispensing)** – these opticians are qualified to:
  - a. Perform refraction on patients who are 8 years of age or older; and
  - b. Dispense and fit glasses to correct vision problems such as short-sightedness, long-sightedness, and astigmatism.
3. **Opticians (Contact Lens Practice)** – these opticians are qualified to:
  - a. Perform refraction on patients who are 8 years of age or older;
  - b. Dispense and fit glasses and contact lenses to correct vision problems such as short-sightedness, long-sightedness and Astigmatism; and
  - c. Provide aftercare to patients, including monitoring to detect, prevent and manage problems or complications arising from the use of contact lenses.

### **Who Are Optometrists?**

Optometrists are primary eye-care providers who specialise in performing vision assessment and eye examinations. Through these examinations, optometrists can detect important eye conditions such as cataract and contact lens complications.

In general, optometrists are qualified to:

1. Perform refraction on adults, children or adolescents;
2. Prescribe and fit optical appliances such as glasses and contact lenses to correct vision problems such as short-sightedness, long-sightedness and astigmatism;
3. Perform eye examinations and refer patients to other healthcare practitioners such as ophthalmologists for further management if any eye conditions are detected; and
4. Provide other forms of eye-care which are part of opticianry (e.g. dispensing and fitting of glasses).

# Key Highlights

## 5.1 Continuing Professional Education (CPE)

Under the Board’s Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Guidelines (articles 5.4 and 6.4), all registered optometrists and opticians are expected to participate in CPE activities to ensure that their optometry and opticianry knowledge and skills remain current and relevant, and that a reasonable level of competence is maintained.

Each qualifying period (QP) begins from 1 October to 30 September in the following year; a fully registered practitioner will go through a two-year cycle. The targeted number of points within the QP of two years is 40 points for opticians and 50 points for optometrists.

For QP ending September 2024, 92% of the practitioners achieved the minimum CPE points required.

### Percentage of practitioners achieving minimum CPE points

	QP ending 2020	QP ending 2021	QP ending 2022	QP ending 2023	QP ending 2024
Percentage of practitioners who met min. CPE points	92%	40%	90%	93%	92%

### CPE Events

In 2024 there were a total of 240 events accredited under Category 1A (Local events) while 65% were conducted virtually.

### Category 1A events

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Category 1A	74	144	144	169	240

## 5.2 Supervisory Framework

Under the OOB's Supervisory Framework, all provisionally and conditionally registered optometrists and opticians ("Supervisees") are required to practise under the supervision of qualified fully registered optometrists and opticians ("Supervisors") and fulfil the Supervisory Framework and/or prescribed conditions during the entire period of their provisional or conditional registration.

To ensure that supervisors carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively, the OOB has been conducting Supervisory Framework briefings for supervisors annually since 2014. The OOB requires each supervisor to attend at least one briefing session before or during the period of undertaking. Selected practitioners on provisional registration are also invited to attend.

Each session is normally conducted over two half-days, with one session for supervisors of provisionally-registered optometrists and the other for supervisors of provisionally-registered opticians.

The supervisors were briefed on the requirements of the Supervisory Framework and the prescribed conditions for case submissions. To enable supervisors to better understand and apply the case review criteria, attendees were separated into workgroups for discussions using real case records from past logbook submissions by supervisees. The feedback received from the supervisors had been positive and encouraging.

Since 2023, OOB divided the online briefing session into two parts to be delivered asynchronously with pre-recordings in YouTube and synchronously with live streaming via Zoom, focusing on case study discussion and aided by interactive polls, while not compromising the learning objectives and experience.

One round of briefing was conducted at the end of September 2024, and a total of 52 supervisors attended the briefing.

Since 2020, OOB has also delivered talks to optometry graduates at Singapore Polytechnic and Ngee Ann Polytechnic during their annual career sharing day to better prepare them for registration and fulfilment of supervisory framework requirements when they are ready to join the industry.

### 5.3 Professional Conduct

The Board received a total of three complaints since 2020. No complaints were received in 2024. As of 31 December 2024, three cases were pending investigation and one case, which was received before 2020, was pending conclusion.

#### Number of complaints received

Complaints received	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Opticians (D)	0	0	0	0	0
Opticians (RD)	0	0	0	1	0
Optometrists	0	0	0	2	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

## 5.4 Meeting with Health Minister and Delegates from Indonesia

On 19 March 2024, Chairman and Registrar, along with a few Board members hosted an Indonesian delegation led by Health Minister His Excellency Budi Gunadi Sadikin at the College of Medicine Building, Ministry of Health.

The OOB representatives shared insights into Singapore's primary eyecare model, particularly in the training of optometrists and opticians, their involvement in the community, and initiatives to address the increasing needs of a growing elderly population.



Front Row (from left to right):

Drg Arianti Anaya, Deputy Minister of Health Workforce, Indonesia; Dr Harold Tan, Registrar, OOB; H.E. Budi Gunadi Sadikin, Health Minister of Indonesia; Prof Lim Tock Han, Chairman, OOB; Prof Dr Nicolaas C. Budhiparama, Chair of the Special Competency Evaluation Sub-Committee, Joint Adaptation Committee, Indonesia

# Registration Data

*The data in this section is based on practitioners who are on register with valid practising certificates.*

## 6.1 New Registrations

Since the Board started regulating the professions in 2008, there has been a steady increase in the number of optometrists and opticians over the years. The figures provided in the table below represent new registrants each year for all registration types (full, provisional, conditional and temporary registration).

### Registration type

Register Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Opticians (D)	22	19	0	2	1
Opticians (RD)	41	63	30	107	65
Optometrists	126	165	143	143	127
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>193</b>

## 6.2 Practising Certificate Renewal 2024

A total of 1,786 registered optometrists and opticians were required to renew their PCs which were valid till 31 December 2024. Among these, 1,706 (96%) practitioners submitted their applications and successfully renewed their PCs for two years from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2026.

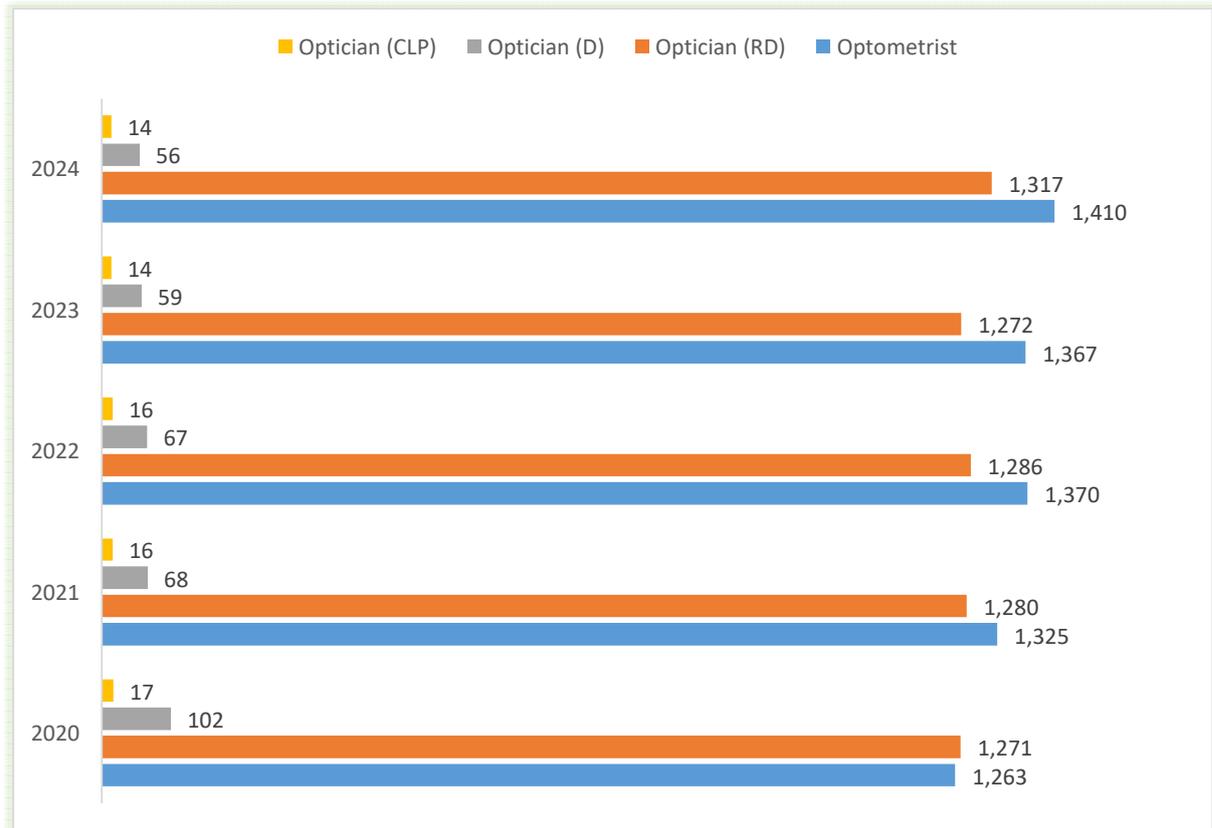
### Number of PCs renewed

Register Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Opticians (D)	61	5	50	5	45
Opticians (RD)	997	154	971	166	957
Opticians (CLP*)	14	2	12	1	11
Optometrists	594	441	637	480	693
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,666</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>1,670</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>1,706</b>

\* *Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category*

### 6.3 Registration by Categories

N=2,797

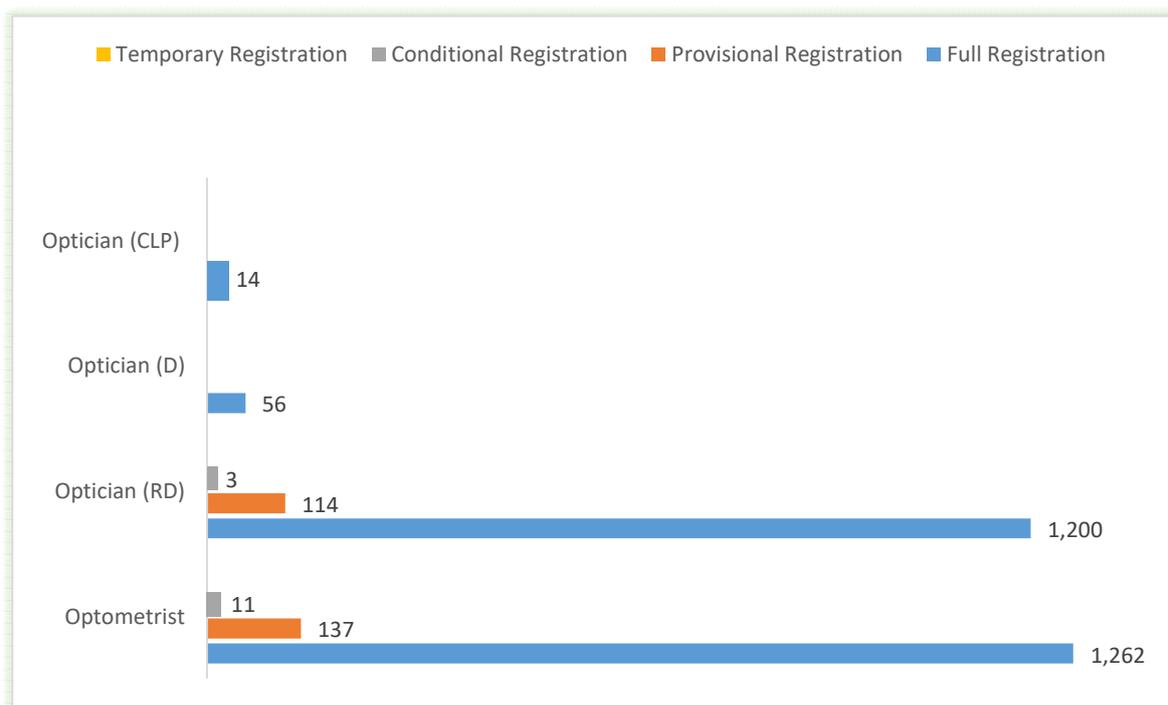


Register Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Optometrists	1,263	1,325	1,370	1,367	1,410
Opticians (RD)	1,271	1,280	1,286	1,272	1,317
Opticians (D)	102	68	67	59	56
Opticians (CLP*)	17	16	16	14	14
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\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category

## 6.4 Registration by Type

N=2,797

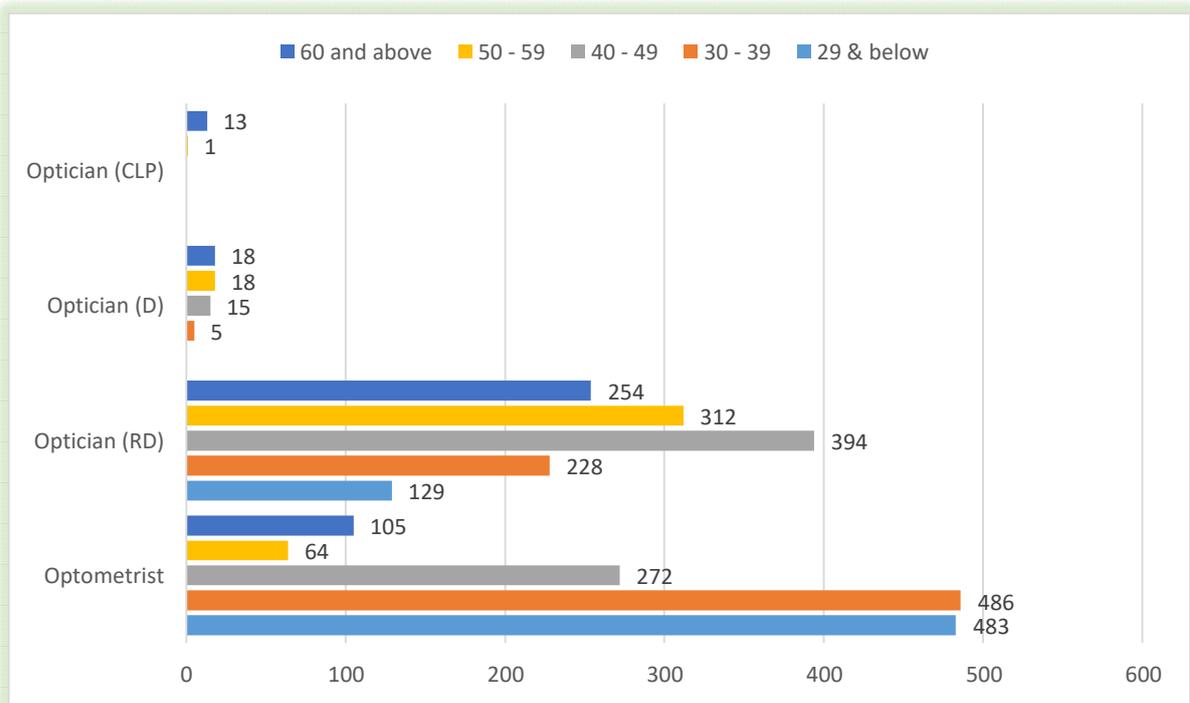


Register Type	Optometrist	Optician (RD)	Optician (D)	Optician (CLP)*
Full Registration	1,262	1,200	56	14
Provisional Registration	137	114	0	0
Conditional Registration	11	3	0	0
Temporary Registration	0	0	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>1,317</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>14</b>

\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category

## 6.5 Practitioners by Age Group

N=2,797

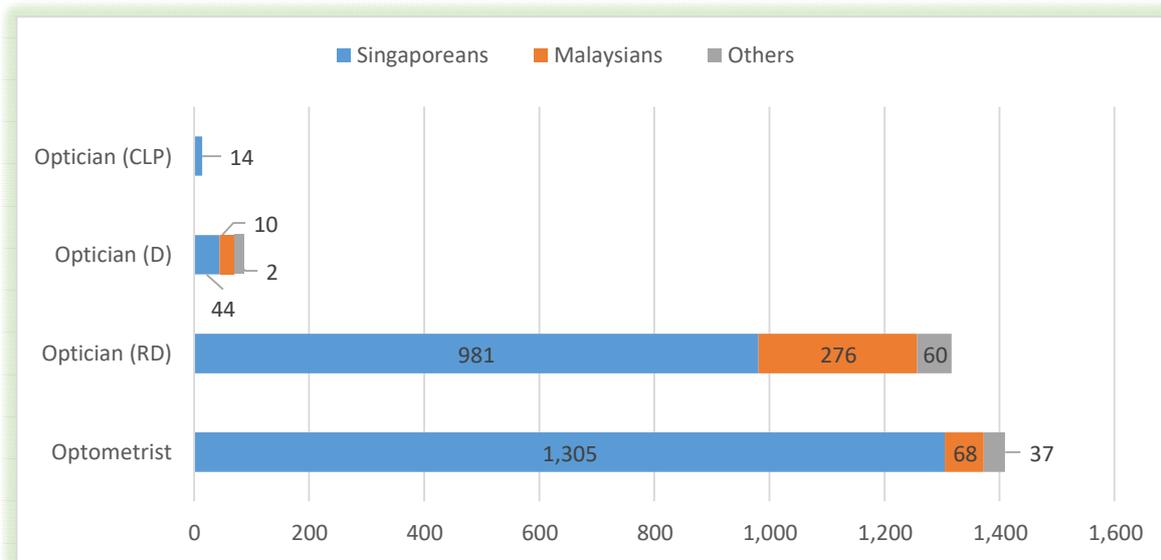


Age Group	Optometrist	Optician (RD)	Optician (D)	Optician (CLP)*
29 & below	483	129	0	0
30 - 39	486	228	5	0
40 - 49	272	394	15	0
50 - 59	64	312	18	1
60 and above	105	254	18	13
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>1,317</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>14</b>

\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category

## 6.6 Practitioners by Nationality

N=2,797

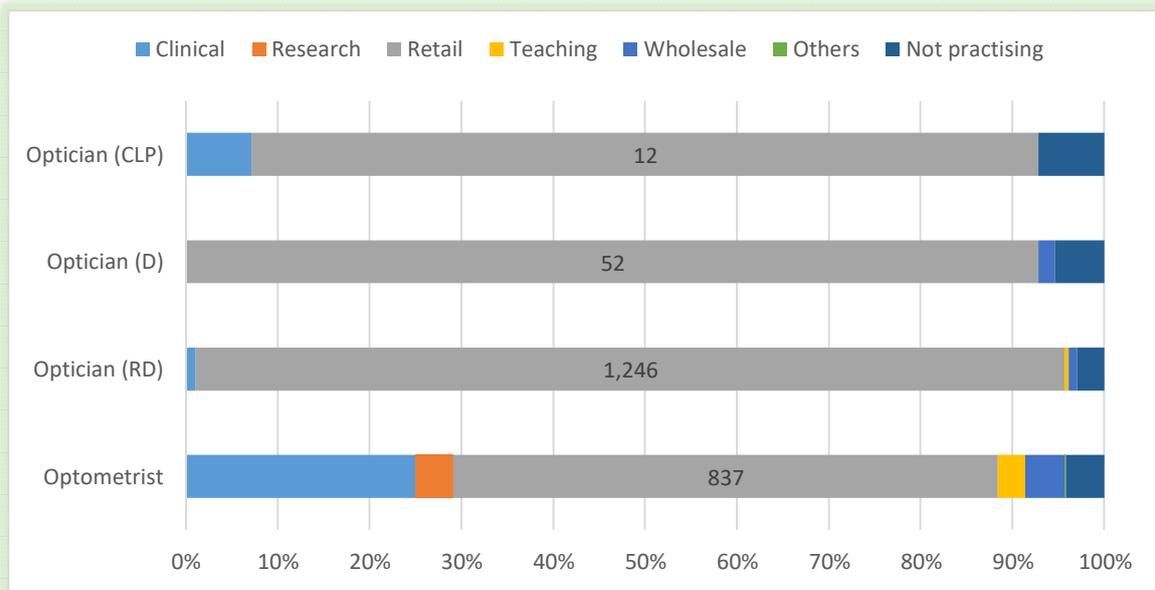


Nationality	Optometrist	Optician (RD)	Optician (D)	Optician (CLP)*
Singaporeans & PRs	1,305	981	44	14
Malaysians	68	276	10	0
Others	37	60	2	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>1,317</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>14</b>

\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category

## 6.7 Practitioners by Fields of Employment

N=2,797



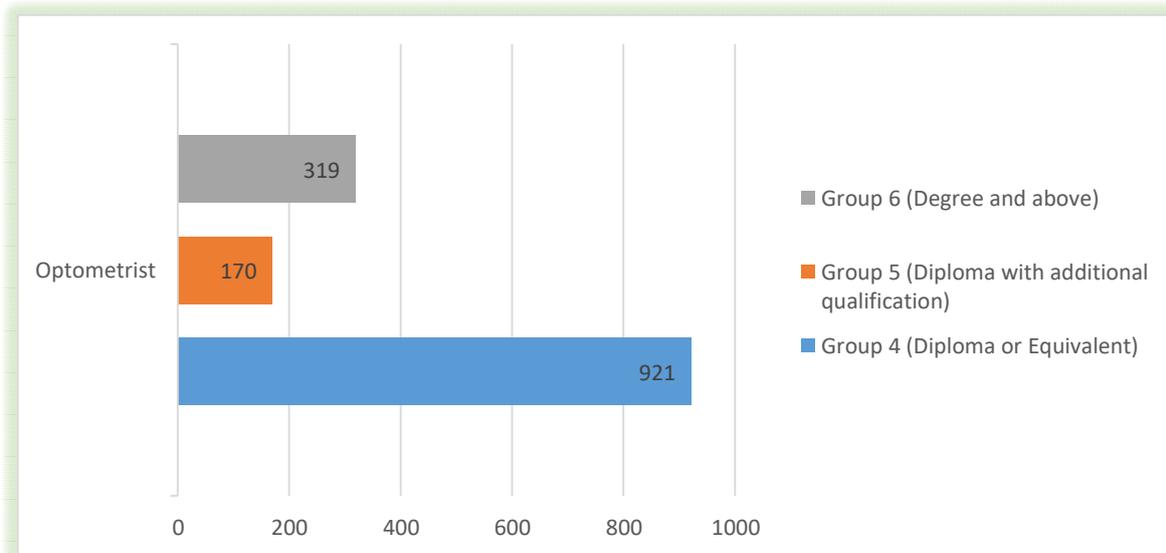
Employment Type	Optometrist	Optician (RD)	Optician (D)	Optician (CLP)*
Clinical	353	14	0	1
Research	57	0	0	0
Retail	837	1,246	52	12
Teaching	42	6	0	0
Wholesale	61	12	1	0
Others	1	0	0	0
Not practising	59	36	3	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>1,314</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>14</b>

\* Optician (CLP) is a closed registration category

## 6.8 Registration by Basic Qualifications

N=1,410

### Qualification Type for Optometrists



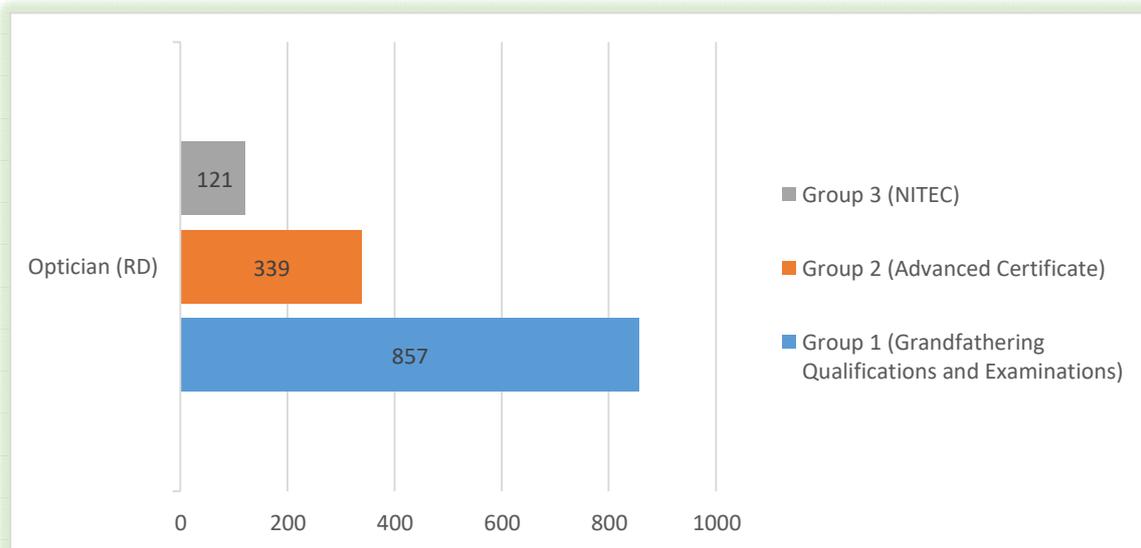
Qualification Type for Optometrists	2021	2022	2023	2024
Group 4 (Diploma or equivalent qualifications)	890	912	894	<b>921</b>
Group 5 (Diploma with additional qualification) *	132	151	164	<b>170</b>
Group 6 (Degree and above)	303	307	309	<b>319</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,325</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>1,367</b>	<b>1,410</b>

*\*Additional qualification refers to any other qualifications that are recognised for display in practice but not for the purpose of registration by the optometrists and opticians (Registration and Practising Certificates) Regulations, and may be diplomas, degrees or higher qualifications*

## 6.8 Practitioners by Basic Qualifications

N=1,317

### Qualification Type for Opticians (RD)



Qualification Type for Opticians (RD)	2021	2022	2023	2024
Group 1 (Grandfathering Qualifications and Examinations)	904	903	860	<b>857</b>
Group 2 (Advanced Certificate)	291	217	307	<b>339</b>
Group 3 (NITEC)	85	95	105	<b>121</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>1,272</b>	<b>1,317</b>



**Optometrists & Opticians Board**

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