

**Identification of retinal detachment
17HDC01046, 20 February 2019**

Optometrist ~ Floaters ~ Retinal detachment ~ Right 4(1)

A woman presented to an optometry clinic for a check-up. She told the optometrist that she had floaters, deteriorating vision, and inferior visual obstruction to her right eye.

The optometrist performed an examination but found no abnormalities. She did not specifically examine the retina. The optometrist did not provide the woman with relevant and clear follow-up advice for what to do in the event that she experienced further deterioration in her right eye.

The woman's vision deteriorated and she was found to have right eye retinal detachment, which required immediate surgery.

Findings

By not recognising that a dilated retinal examination of the woman's right eye was indicated, and by not providing clear follow-up advice in the event that she experienced further deterioration in her right eye, the optometrist failed to provide services with reasonable care and skill, and breached Right 4(1).

Recommendations

The Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board of New Zealand advised HDC that the optometrist has retired from practice. It was recommended that the New Zealand Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Board conduct a review of the optometrist's competence should she return to practice, and report the results to HDC.

The optometrist provided the woman with an apology.