

A CAREER BUILT ON HIGHLIGHTS



DISPENSER DETAILS

Name: Jordan Dyce

Position: In-store trainer and trainee optical dispenser

Location: Specsavers Launceston

Years in industry: 10

1. What initially attracted you to a career in optical dispensing?

I initially applied for a role as an optical assistant when I was in year 11, seeking a job to accompany my studies that I found more engaging than working in a fast-food restaurant or supermarket. I joined Specsavers at the age of 16 and fell in love with optics. Over the past 10 years, I have worked in both independent practice and in larger optical retailers. Following my wife and I's recent move to Tasmania, I have joined the team at Specsavers Launceston as an in-store trainer.

2. What are your main career highlights?

Every time a patient leaves the practice feeling like I have made their life a little better, it feels like a mini highlight to me. Knowing that we meaningfully contribute to the lives of those we interact with has driven me to seek opportunities to use my skills to help others. I had the privilege of participating in Brisbane City Council's Homeless Connect event as an optical assistant on two occasions. Both times, I found the ability to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable members of the community incredibly rewarding.

In July, I will be joining ODA on their inaugural aid trip to Fiji. I look forward to contributing to improved outcomes and engaging with those in need of care in under served communities.

3. What are your strengths as an optical dispenser, and what excites you?

Building a relationship with the patient, having the confidence and knowledge to field any questions they might have, and ensuring the patient understands I am just as committed as they are to finding the perfect solution. My passion for optics has fed an unending curiosity, and I am driven by the opportunity to develop my skills and expand my knowledge to become a more complete optical dispenser and better help people.

4. Have you received any advice that's stuck with you on the journey so far?

Use your mistakes as an opportunity to improve. The best teachers and leaders I have learnt from have helped me transform my missteps into an opportunity for reflection and growth. I would recommend anyone that is early in their journey to seek leaders who encourage them to do the same.

5. What do you see as the key opportunities and challenges facing the future of optical dispensing in Australia?

Our lives have become more digitalised, and technology continues to creep into our everyday lives. We also have an ageing population. An increasing awareness of digital eyestrain and the variety of different activities that make up everyday life has seen lens technology improve in leaps and bounds over the past decade. Optical dispensers now have the opportunity to use the wide range of digitally surfaced lenses at their disposal to help meet the occupational and lifestyle needs of their customers better than ever before.

Of course, improved technology does not come without its challenges. Despite the prevalence of online shopping, I believe there is a level of personalisation and expertise that comes from having a dispenser by your side during the process that simply can't be matched by online retailers. By continuing to

invest in training and development for optical assistants and dispensers and drawing new people to the industry who are willing to go on this journey, we can continue creating value for customers through our knowledge and expertise.

6. How do you ensure your skills and knowledge stay up to date and current in such a fast-moving industry?

I never get tired of learning. Optics is such a fascinating industry, following publications like *Insight* helps me stay up to date on relative news within the profession, and ODA as an organisation continually provides dispensers with opportunities to upskill. Specsavers also have great training programs that promote both professional and personal development.

7. Why did you become a member of ODA?

Because I believe that optical dispensers play a critical role in the success of optometry practices, and ODA takes a big step towards uniting and advocating for the profession and driving the growth of the industry.

8. What would you say to others thinking of joining ODA?

Do it – building a strong dispensing community is a key step towards advancing our profession and ensuring all dispensers are connected, knowledgeable, and well-resourced. ■



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