

NEW PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT REGULATION

The College is pleased to announce government approval of a new Professional Misconduct Regulation, including modernized conflict-of-interest provisions. This new regulation comes into effect on April 15, 2014.

Changes to the regulation have been in process since 2005, when the College first submitted its proposals. Member and stakeholder input has been valuable during the process.

What does the new regulation mean for you?

There will be many changes to how members may run their practices. You will now be allowed to practise in association with opticians, corporations, or others, as long as you remain independent. There is more flexibility in advertising and promoting your practice. Most restrictions on what you may name your practice have been lifted. You will now be required to provide a copy of a prescription for eyewear without request from the patient.

Some other notable changes: you may now practise in more than three locations as long as the College is notified of all locations. There is more flexibility in how you charge patients for goods and services. And you

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE COLLEGE HAS MOVED

You can find us now at **65 ST. CLAIR AVE. E., SUITE 900, TORONTO** — a short walk east of Yonge. Our new location takes us back to our roots on St. Clair, where the College offices were located for many years. Sincere thanks to Hanan Jibry, Assistant Registrar, for all of her hard work in making this move a painless one.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Council Meeting
April 7, 2014

**Ontario Optometric
Jurisprudence Exam**
May 3, 2014

Council Meeting
June 6, 2014

**Ontario Optometric
Jurisprudence Exam**
June 17, 2014

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

**A word from
the President** page 2

Registrar's report page 3

**The new and improved
College brand** page 4

**Deadline set for drug
certification** page 5

Website relaunch page 6

Our members write .. page 6

**Your 2014
College Council** page 7

**Welcome to our new
members** page 8

NEW PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT REGULATION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

may have a financial interest in ventures such as optical stores or surgical centres as long as you disclose your ownership when referring patients.

The College has provided members with important information about the regulation. Visit our website at www.collegeoptom.on.ca for in-depth guidelines and a web-based seminar that explains the amendments in more detail. If you have questions, email us at feedback@collegeoptom.on.ca. We will post a list of FAQs based on your input.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



It's been a time of change in our profession. Change has come quickly and at every level of optometric practice. Not a week goes by, it seems, without some new development promising to profoundly alter the way we look

after Ontarians' eyes. These changes bring with them exciting opportunities, but also interesting challenges.

Many of these new challenges and opportunities have come from our stakeholders in the regulatory world. From our growing involvement with the Office of the Fairness Commissioner, to our new mandate regarding therapeutic pharmaceutical agents, we have much to which we must respond.

But just as the regulatory environment is shifting, so too is science and technology. The limits of how we can diagnose and treat vision problems are ever expanding. There have been advances in therapeutic drugs, and improved instrumentation that will allow us to indicate patients' well-being objectively and accurately. The way we provide eye care is different now. It's an exciting time.

So with all of this change, how is it that we have responded? We've increased our role among the other Canadian regulators, an area in which we've shown considerable leadership ability. We've made it easy for practitioners to renew their licences online. We've increased our staff to cope with an increased workload. Soon we'll be updating our infrastructure, including a new database to better manage a growing number of licenced practitioners. And we continually update the Optometric Practice Reference (OPR) and revise Quality Assurance (QA) methodology to ensure that our members maintain the skills and knowledge they need to deliver high-quality health care.

So many changes, but with one goal in mind: the best eye health and vision for everyone in Ontario, through excellence in optometric care.

Dr. Dennis Ruskin, O.D.



REGISTRAR'S REPORT

Wikipedia defines a mission statement as a description of the fundamental purpose of an organization. It succinctly describes why that organization exists and what it does to achieve its vision. The College's new mission statement describes its purpose as its authority to guide the profession in the delivery of safe, ethical, progressive, and quality eye care at the highest standards. But how does the College guide its members?

Colleges are required under the *Regulated Health Professions Act* to have reactive and proactive processes. Reactive processes are necessary and include the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports process and the Discipline process.

The College must have proactive processes, such as the Quality Assurance program, that help members to ensure that they provide safe, ethical, progressive, and quality eye care. The Quality Assurance program is another way that the College can guide its members.

The College can also be proactive and guide its members through effective communication of expectations related to regulations, standards,

guidelines, and policies so that members clearly understand what they need to do or how they must conduct their practices. As an example, the College will be communicating often in the coming months to roll out the new Professional Misconduct Regulation, which comes into effect on April 15, 2014, including a web-based presentation to explain the new regulation to members.

It is a goal of the College to provide clear, interesting, and timely communications so that our members will know what to do in any given situation. To that end, we have made a number of changes to how we engage with you. The first obvious change is our updated logo and colour scheme, in addition to a redesigned website. As well, College staff has been expanded to include a Communications Coordinator, Mr. David Whitton, who will oversee all things communication for the College; we welcome him to the staff.

We hope that our new communications plan will offer improved engagement with both members of the public and members of the profession to achieve the College's mission: "The best eye health and vision for everyone in Ontario, through excellence in optometric care."

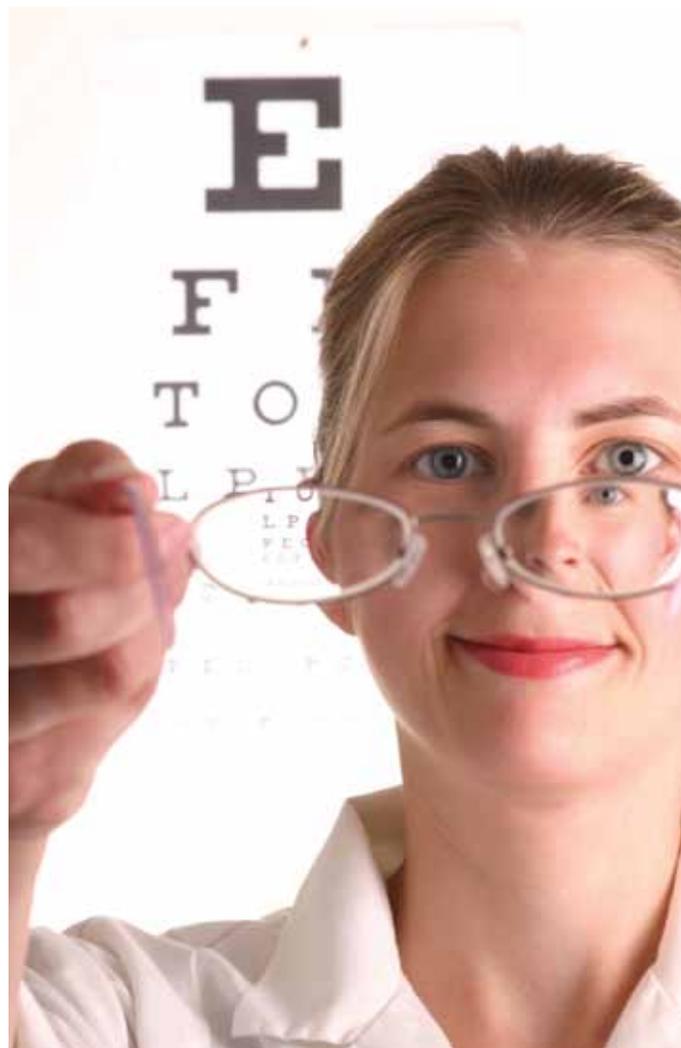
Wishing us all an early spring,
Paula L. Garshowitz, O.D.



THE NEW AND IMPROVED COLLEGE BRAND

In the College's revised 2012 Strategic Plan, we recognized that the profession had evolved in positive ways, and that it was important that the College's growing role be well understood and trusted by all stakeholders, especially the people of Ontario. A Communications Committee was struck in 2013 to formulate an improved vision and mission, and to articulate the personality of the College. Once this was done, we would be in a position to express that personality in a renewed image and graphic identity.

We first established that the College's reason-for-being was to educate and protect the public, advance the quality of eye health, and guide the profession. We further agreed that Ontario—as the



province with the largest number of optometrists and the greatest resource base—had both the honour and the duty to demonstrate world-class leadership.

The Committee identified attributes of the organizational personality that it wanted to reinforce. The College must be easy to access, timely in its response, clear, honest, transparent, respectful of diversity, non-threatening, and undisputed in its competence and expertise. We needed to emphasize our commitment to recognizing the modernization of the profession, and to a style of directness and clarity in our communications with members, governments, partners, and the public. Mostly, we wanted our audiences to understand that we care about the eye health and vision of all the people of Ontario. Accordingly, we changed our logo from the “wheel style” corporate seal to a more modern image. This new image carries a double meaning: both an eye icon and a symbol of the College personified and embracing and protecting the community.

As for our vision, it was important that we set our standards high. The old vision served the College and the profession well, but it was developed at a time when optometry dealt mostly with refraction, and not the broader dimensions of diagnostics, eye-health management, and a host of other professional and technical developments. We also recognized that access to optometric care must be for all people, regardless of geography or socioeconomic status. The vision also had to be short! Here it is:

The best eye health and vision for everyone in Ontario, through excellence in optometric care.

Whereas a vision is an aspirational statement that seeks to paint a picture of an ideal yet achievable future state, a mission is a statement of the College's role within the vision. The main dimensions of that role were described as first serving the public. It is important it be better known that, as a regulated health college, we possess the authority to regulate quality of care by setting educational and practice standards, managing the complaint and remediation system, and ensuring that Ontario's optometrists practise safe, quality care. As ambitious as this might sound, Ontarians deserve no less. And so our revitalized mission becomes:

To serve the public by regulating Ontario's optometrists. The College uses its authority to guide the profession in the delivery of safe, ethical, progressive and quality eye care at the highest standards.

The Communications Committee spoke at length with the Council and received their blessing to move forward with this new vision, mission, and graphic image, all of which will drive the brand. It is up to each member of the College to live the brand. Whenever a member or any of the member's staff comes into contact with a patient, it becomes an opportunity either to reinforce that brand, or undermine it. The College expects that every member will act in a manner that strengthens our brand, and, in so doing, strengthens the trust and image and positive influence of the College and of the entire profession.

Ira Teich, Chair, Communications Committee

DEADLINE SET FOR DRUG CERTIFICATION

College members who are not currently certified to prescribe drugs have until January 1, 2016 to earn their certification. Council approved the deadline at its January 17, 2014 meeting. Members and applicants who wish to prescribe drugs have just under two years to provide proof, satisfactory to the College, that they have met the specific requirements. Members who choose not to be certified can still practise after the 2016 deadline, but must continue to refer patients in need of drug therapy to a certified optometrist or a physician.



WEBSITE RELAUNCH

The College is pleased to announce the launch of our newly redesigned website. Sporting a fresh, contemporary look inspired by our new branding, collegeoptom.on.ca is easier on the eyes, more intuitive to navigate, and mobile friendly so that you can access important information anywhere and anytime.

Looking for news, important dates, or practice information? It's all right there. Information is more clearly organized, so you can find what you're looking for quickly and easily. We made sure the new site puts our visitors, be they members of the College or members of the public, at the forefront of the experience. But optics are not the end of it. You can expect even more changes over the coming weeks and months, like refreshed content and more frequent updates.

Spearheaded by our Communications Committee, the new site is part of a continual effort to enhance our connection with our members and stakeholders. It reflects the evolving role of the College: who we are now and where we see ourselves going.

Take a look around and tell us what you think. We'd love to hear from you. And while you're at it, check out our new Facebook page and Twitter feed, two new ways you can find information about the College.

Web/mobile: www.collegeoptom.on.ca

Like us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/collegeoptom

Follow us on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/CollegeOptom



OUR MEMBERS WRITE

The College appreciates when members contact us with their concerns on a variety of issues related to optometric practice and public protection. Lately, several issues have been brought to our attention this way. Here is a sampling of these issues and the College's position:

[Internet Sales of Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses by Unregulated Providers](#)

The Internet provides a platform where the public may purchase goods, including eyewear. Most Internet providers of eyewear are unregulated. Under Ontario's laws, dispensing of eyewear is a controlled act, that is, it can only be performed by optometrists, physicians, and opticians. The College has collaborated with the College of Opticians of Ontario to bring to account insurance companies that reimburse plan members for eyewear illegally dispensed via the Internet and other methods. In addition, the College has met with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to express its concern about the risk of harm to the Ontario public that is inherent in the purchase of eyewear from unregulated providers. The College continues to monitor this situation with other eye-care organizations to determine how it might best protect the public.

Web-based Discounted Certificates

The College has been made aware that some members are promoting their practices through the use of web-based discounted certificates or “deal of the day” websites. Fee-sharing schemes such as these are a conflict of interest and are prohibited under both the current regulations and the new Professional Misconduct Regulation, which comes into effect on April 15, 2014.

Accordingly, such advertisements or promotions,

where a patient purchases discounted optometric services through a third party, and where the optometrist shares the fees with the third party, are prohibited.

The College will provide ongoing information about these and other new topics of interest to members and the public. We appreciate that members take the time to write to the College with their concerns and we will attempt to address these in future issues of *In Focus*.

YOUR 2014 COLLEGE COUNCIL



Back row, left to right:

Ms. Luisa Morrone, Mr. Ira Teich, Dr. Bill Chisholm, Mr. Emad Hussain, Dr. Derek MacDonald, Dr. Dino Mastronardi, Dr. Marlee Spafford, Mr. Francis Christopher, Mr. John Costen, Dr. Patrick Quaid

Front row, left to right:

Dr. Areef Nurani, Dr. Pooya Hemami, Dr. Thomas-A. Noël, Dr. Dennis Ruskin, Dr. Richard Kniaziew, Ms. Irene Moore, Mr. John Van Bastelaar

Not pictured:

Mr. Craig Bridges

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

The College is pleased to welcome the following individuals who became members between September 4, 2013 and February 3, 2014:

Dr. Sadeq Jameel Al Mubarak

Dr. David Bierbrier

Dr. Kar Man Cheung

Dr. Krupa Kapil Chothani

Dr. Rubana Chowdhury

Dr. Murad Mohamed El-Serafi

Dr. Johnathan Wesley Field

Dr. Melissa Furfaro

Dr. Narineh Galoostian

Dr. Simran Grewal

Dr. Anisa Jeewa

Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Khan

Dr. Diana Khrapatch

Dr. Maggie Lee

Dr. Daphne McCulloch

Dr. Mariam Nahal

Dr. Chanh Le Trung Ngo

Dr. Dayna O'Connor

Dr. Sejal Parmar

Dr. Marco Roncone

Dr. Maria Eugenia Sanchez

Dr. Naveed Siraj

Dr. Amy Smith

Dr. Jason Stein

Dr. Arunjot Takhar

Dr. Andria Tinkham

Dr. Vanessa Marie Varriano

Dr. Debby Hiu Tung Yeung

Dr. Melissa Wai Yee Yuen



College of Optometrists of Ontario
65 St. Clair Ave. E., Suite 900
Toronto, Ontario M4T 2Y3
Telephone (416) 962-4071
Toll-free (888) 825-2554
Facsimile (416) 962-4073
Website www.collegeoptom.on.ca

Ordre des Optométristes de l'Ontario
65, avenue St. Clair Est, Suite 900
Toronto (Ontario) M4T 2Y3
Téléphone (416) 962-4071
Sans frais (888) 825-2554
Facsimile (416) 962-4073
Site web www.collegeoptom.on.ca