New Ontario Regulation Increases Options for Eye Care Services for Ontario Residents

TORONTO (February 19, 2014) — Ontario residents will enjoy greater choice and convenience when seeking eye health and vision care when a new regulation comes into effect on April 15, 2014. The government has approved a new professional misconduct regulation for optometrists, including modernized conflict–of-interest provisions, that enhances collaboration between optometrists and opticians.

"The public of Ontario will benefit from more options when seeking eye care now that many of the restrictions that prohibited optometrists from working in association with opticians, and others, have been removed," says Paula Garshowitz, Registrar at the College of Optometrists of Ontario. "While providing more choice and greater convenience, the new regulation will ensure that all Ontarians continue to have access to high-quality optometric services."

This regulation is the culmination of the efforts of the College and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, in consultation with the College of Opticians of Ontario and with the support of the Ontario Association of Optometrists.

Key amendments include the following:
- More flexible and collaborative working relationships between optometrists and opticians
- Easier access for Ontario residents to their prescriptions
- Greater convenience for Ontario residents in having their prescriptions for glasses and contact lenses filled
- Modernized rules for advertising and the naming of optometry practices
- Updated conflict-of-interest rules for optometrists

The College of Optometrists of Ontario regulates Ontario's more than 2,100 optometrists in the public interest. An optometrist is a doctor of optometry who diagnoses, treats, manages, and prevents diseases and disorders of the eye, and who might also provide, fit, and adjust eyewear.

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