



NSCDO
NOVA SCOTIA COLLEGE OF
Dispensing Opticians

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

John Butler | Chairman of the Board

Welcome to 2017. The last year has seen some changes to the College with two new directors and a new Registrar. The NSCDO would like to welcome Tanya Wohlsclagel and Lynn Countway as Directors and Gail Stacey as the new Registrar. Serving at the College can be a very interesting and rewarding way to give back to your profession. There are numerous ways to be involved with the College and there are many committees provincially and nationally requiring NS representation. If you have strong interest in getting involved, please read the Nomination Committee section in this newsletter or visit our website at www.nscdo.ca.

The NSCDO is involved with education (NEC), labour mobility including the new development for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), competency gap analysis (CGA), OCC, OAC and NAIT. NSCDO and the NSSDO continue to work with UDWG (Unregulated Dispensing Working Group); these are some of the groups working for the betterment of Opticians in Nova Scotia and in Canada.

I would like to thank the directors on the Board and the Opticians on the many committees for their hard work. Because of their involvement, we continue to grow in our professionalism as Opticians.

Opticians are often the entry point into the eye health system, and have the responsibility to direct the public into the correct avenue for their eye health needs. We should take pride in all aspects of our profession. As Opticians it becomes evident to the public that we are an essential part of the ECPs.

**ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING**

6:00 pm, Wednesday, June 7, 2017
***Please RSVP by May 31, 2017**

**Main Floor Boardroom,
1718 Argyle Street, Halifax, NS**



NACOR REPORT Glenna Locke

The National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators met on November 3rd and 4th, 2016 in Toronto, Ontario.

A Public Relations firm (Hill & Knowlton) has been hired to gather information and statistics from each province regarding refracting as an increase in scope of practice. This will be a very slow process before being ready to go to government.

A few of the schools say they are ready to offer manual refracting/sight testing and there are a few schools checking into the possibility of adding this to their current curriculum. NACOR has given a competencies guideline to all of the educators.

The Continuing Competency program is designed to update or replace the current education credit system. When one sits in on seminars this does not guarantee that one understands what the topic was about or if they were even interested. "We don't know what we don't know". This will be a way to ensure that members remain competent over the lifetime of their career. The framework of this program is as such:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. CCA Tool and Plan | 5. Specialty Practicum |
| 2. Bridging | 6. Final exam of Competency |
| 3. Specialty Program | 7. Recognition. |
| 4. Specialty Module | |

NACOR is looking into eventually having a National Database. The main features will provide:

1. National ID Generation (demographics will search to see if any record on a particular individual),
2. Member Transfer ID (member transfer in/out province to province. Sometimes provinces have different codes. May need to tweak codes i.e. Licensed Optician vs Registered Optician so system will recognize Optician by status (practicing/non-practicing),
3. Upload to NACOR and national reporting.

Only published data will be visible – not visible individually.

Current Issues: Huge demand for Opticians in BC, aging population, as well as lacking Opticians in rural areas.

Current Situation Goals: Cover GAP, lower cost of bridging, improve accessibility, average cost of bridging to cost recovery, increase amount of international applicants, decrease time to registration.

NACOR was formed to help the provincial regulatory boards comply with the terms of Ch.7 of the Agreement of International Trade (AIT).

NACOR eyeglass exam has been translated with minor edits to be made and will be ready for June exams. The handbook has been translated as well, and they are working on the Contact Lens exam.

NACOR is looking at implementing a time limit (nationally) on how long a candidate has from the time they graduate or complete PLAR to the time they must attempt the National Exam.

The next meeting date for NACOR is April 21st and 22nd, 2017 in Kelowna, BC.



REGISTRAR'S REPORT

Gail Stacey

Licensed Opticians as of February 28, 2017

Dispensing Opticians	267
Contact Lens Fitters	65
Non-Practicing	18
Eyeglass Students	19
Contact Lens Students	3

New Dispensing Opticians

Josée Allain	Bernadette Power
Danielle Avery	Ross Sherwood
Dawn Gillis	Carolyn Taylor
John Halliday	Elyse Theriault
Lauren Keen	Leslie Trenholm
Karen Maynard	Mitchell Wagg
Jessica MacDonald	Danielle Williams
Natalie Phillips	

New Contact Lens Fitters

- Josée Allain
- Karen Maynard
- Jessica MacDonald
- Natalie Phillips
- Bernadette Power
- Elyse Theriault

NATIONAL EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

Tanya Wohlschlagel

The National Exam Committee Meetings were held in Ottawa, February 3rd, 4th and 5th, 2017. The meetings were attended by representation from all provinces with the exception of Prince Edward Island, with Nova Scotia being represented by Tanya Wohlschlagel.

The first portion of the meetings was used to evaluate exam statistics from educational institutions across the country. The group then focused its attention on some items on the contact lens exam. The remaining time was spent rating and evaluating questions that will be added to the Competency Gap Analysis databank. The rating process was facilitated by Dr. John Wickett of Wickett Measurement Systems. The rating exercise was also attended by Tim Schmidt, representing the Canadian Association of Opticianry Educators.

It was a busy three days. Time was well spent and a lot was accomplished. The Competency Gap Analysis (CGA) is a critical tool used to test candidates who are applying for licensure through PLAR. It is encouraging to see that the process is measurable and scientific, and should produce results with high levels of validity and reliability. In other words, people who do well on the CGA during the PLAR process know their stuff!



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Marion Ripley

Another year has passed and the trend for continuing education online continues. There are more Opticians taking online CE courses and I expect this trend to continue well into the future. Continuing education is very important and helps us stay fresh and up to date on new advancements in our profession.

Just a reminder that you can check out the NSCDO website, www.nscdo.ca, under "Cont Ed Providers" for seminar guidelines and an application form. The guidelines ensure that ALL seminars are given the proper category as well as the credits warranted for the content given. (EG) Eyeglass Dispensing, (CL) Contact Lens Dispensing, (EC) Eyeglass or Contact Lens, (PS) Professional Service, (RF) Related Field.

If you are attending a course or seminar and you want confirmation of accreditation or any other information, please contact Gail Stacey, NSCDO Registrar at nscdo@ns.aliantzinc.ca. All Seminar submissions can be sent directly to the NSCDO.



OCC REPORT

Glenna Locke

The Opticians Council of Canada is comprised of three member organizations: OAC (Opticians Association of Canada), NACOR (National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators) and CAOEE (Canadian Association of Opticianry Educators).

The Opticians Council of Canada met for National meetings on November 3rd and 4th, 2016 in Toronto, Ontario. The OCC has made a five-year plan with regards to keeping Opticianry relevant with the hopes of increasing scope of practice (refracting) and attracting more students.

The OCC has hired a Public Relations firm, Hill & Knowlton, to gather information and statistics from each province regarding refracting as an increase in scope of practice. This will be a slow process but we need to get actively involved with government.

The CAOEE are willing to collaborate and be in line with NACOR and OAC. They will need to get approval from their faculty with regards to adding refracting to current curriculum, and will teach as per competencies provided by NACOR. Schools need to attract new students and keep the profession going.

The Public Awareness Campaign for 2017 will change direction from only public awareness to making the profession look attractive.

With the aging population in mind as well as labor market statistics from a presentation from Alberta and British Columbia, the forecasted statistics show that we are going to need more people in Canada to work in order for our economy to grow. We will need to recruit from outside of Canada.

PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition) is a process that allows applicants who have not received education through an accredited and recognized provider, to demonstrate and obtain recognition for learning that they have required.

The OAC website is now available in French.

The next meeting date for OCC is April 22nd and 23rd in Kelowna, British Columbia.

UDWG

Lynn Countway

The Unregulated Dispensing Working Group (UDWG) met with provincial representatives from the Department of Health and Wellness on February 22, 2017 to discuss the importance of federal Bill C-313, which classifies cosmetic contact lenses as class 2 medical devices.

Stephen Ashford, DO, representing the NSSDO and Drs. Alison Scott & Stephanie Blackmore, representing the NSAO and NSCO respectively, took the lead on the discussion with the provincial representatives. Lynn Countway, DO, Robert MacLeod, DO and Shelley Smith Bona, DO were also present and contributed to our meaningful discussion of Bill C-313.

The goal of the meeting was to have the information pertaining to federal Bill C-313 posted on Nova Scotia provincial government health sites, in an effort to properly inform the public of the dangers involved in unregulated dispensing of decorative, cosmetic, colour or fashion lenses. As of July 16, 2016, these contact lenses were regulated as class 2 medical devices and distributors were given a one-year grace period to meet the new regulations.

The UWDG will continue with its Fall public education campaign through 2017 in an effort to educate the public of the dangers of unregulated optical dispensing.



NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Michelle Ashford

NSCDO is asking for Opticians interested in serving on the Board of Directors to submit their names along with a bio/resume to Michelle Ashford, Chair of the Nomination Committee. Candidates may also be nominated by at least 2 registrants or by the Nomination Committee. This year we have four positions available. If you are interested in serving, please forward your intentions to us on or before April 28, 2017.

The final slate of candidates will be confirmed by May 15, 2017 and communicated to you by email. If necessary for Elections, electronic ballots will be forwarded to you by May 22, 2017 and Elections would take place on June 7, 2017.

If you have any questions, please refer to our Bylaws or contact the College at nscdo@ns.aliantzinc.ca.

Mailing address:

Attention: Michelle Ashford

Chair of the Nomination Committee

Nova Scotia College of Dispensing Opticians

Suite 430, Halifax Professional Centre

5991 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, NS B3H 1Y6

PLAR

Tanya Wohlsclagel



Nova Scotia, like other provinces, is now offering PLAR! Prior Learning and Recognition allows an individual to apply for and possibly receive recognition for prior knowledge and skills not obtained from an accredited optical program in Canada. Some individuals have learned their skills in other countries or through other means.

Click on the PLAR link on the NSCDO website for more details.

IN MEMORIAM

This year, our Optical community lost two well-known and respected Dispensing Opticians:

Kathryn Anne Dickens

May 30, 1954 - November 22, 2016

Kathy Dickens was a long-time Optician, and the co-owner of Eye World. She was very active in her profession, having served as President of the Nova Scotia Society of Dispensing Opticians and as Chair of the Nova Scotia Board of Dispensing Opticians. She was predeceased by her husband, Ray Dickens. The NSCDO extends its sincere sympathies to Kathy's family.

Joseph Lloyd LeBlanc

Joe Leblanc passed away December 1, 2016 at age 67. Joe began his optical career in 1972, and spend his later years as an optician with Hakim Optical and Walmart Vision Center, before retiring from the profession in 2011.

Joe was well-known and admired by his customers and co-workers for his customer service skills, sense of humour and engaging smile. The NSCDO extends its sincere sympathies to Joe's wife of 44 years, Pat Leblanc, and the rest of his family.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Butler; Chair

Michelle Ashford; Vice Chair

Shelley Smith Bona; Treasurer

Lynn Countway; Director

Susan Feltmate; Director

Glenna Locke; Director

Marion Ripley; Director

Graham Sweett; Director

Tanya Wohlsclagel; Director

Gail Stacey; Registrar



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