



NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

John Butler | Chairman of the Board

It is nice to see 2021, and put 2020 in the past! I hope it is a better year for everyone!

The NSCDO has continued to work with the Health department regarding guidelines and protocols. Any changes to such will be updated on our website so please check in periodically.

The College continues to work diligently to provide public safety and to ensure our profession remains strong and necessary in the public eye. In order to maintain and improve our mission the NSCDO is involved with education (NEC), labor mobility including Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), competency gap analysis CGA, OCC, OAC and NAIT. These are some of the groups working for the betterment of Opticians in Nova Scotia and in Canada.

Please take the time to review the Registrars report in this newsletter for information on our new on-line Registration and any questions regarding Registration please contact Brigitte at the Board office.

Accreditation Canada is looking for opticians to act as surveyors for the accreditation of optical programs and they have asked NACOR to help find surveyors for them. They are looking for opticians that have previous experience as preceptors, peer assessors, accreditation, or have a strong understanding of entry to practice competencies. I have sent a separate email to all of the optician programs asking them to circulate this recruitment notice to instructors at their individual programs.

Did you know most inquiries coming into the Board office can be answered on the NSCDO website at www.nscdo.ca?

Please take the time to visit the website and review the information there as you will find it can be very informative with many related links to peruse.

I would like to thank all the directors on the Board and the Opticians involved on the many committees for their hard work, also I would like to recognize Marion Landers who served on the Board for over 19 years and helped with numerous tasks including developing CE guidelines and Chairing that committee thank you Marion for your many years of serving on the Board.



NACOR REPORT

Tanya MacPhee

The purpose of the National Alliance of Canadian Optician Regulators (NACOR), is to support the provincial regulatory boards and colleges by being a forum for information distribution, tool development and tool sharing. NACOR is staffed by two full-time employees, Jodi Dodds and Jaime Hay. It is important to note, however, that while NACOR has a staff of two, their actions are directed by the decisions of the provincial optician regulatory boards and colleges.

What has been happening lately? This past year certainly has been like no other! With the arrival of COVID-19, NACOR staff were quickly able to adapt their operations to allow work to continue on the many ongoing national projects. Meetings and other communication are being held virtually. The two national meetings were held online in April and November with one or more representatives from every province in attendance, including 3 attendees from Nova Scotia.

In April 2020, the NACOR board of directors opted to change the name of NACOR from the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators to the National Alliance of Canadian Optician Regulators.

In 2019, the National Competencies for Canadian Opticians, 4th Edition was completed and released. A copy of this document can be found on the NACOR website. This document guides the development and revision of assessment tools and education. Every time a new edition is created, the tools and education have to be updated.

In 2020, NACOR has worked in collaboration with the College of Opticians of British Columbia to create 480 new items for the new Competency Gap Analysis and a new Continuing Competency Assessment. Some of these questions were tested in a pilot that was sent to opticians across the country in December 2020. If you were an optician who participated in this project, thank you!! It shows you really care about the profession! (and who doesn't love free credits?)

News in other provinces include a massive health reform for regulating health-care workers in British Columbia. This is still a work in progress but it appears that rather than opticians having a self regulated stand-alone regulatory board/college, they will instead be regulated under a larger group of health professionals called The Regulatory College of Allied Health and Care Professionals. This means that registration, discipline, complaints and so on will be handled by one large oversight body responsible for multiple disciplines, including opticians, optometrists, dietitians, occupational therapists, hearing professionals and respiratory therapists. This hasn't happened in other provinces – yet! Who knows what the future holds? It will be interesting to see how this develops.

Did you know that optical programs in Canada undergo a rigorous accreditation process to make sure they meet the high standards necessary to educate people to become opticians? In previous years, NACOR handled this process but in 2019, the regulatory boards passed a motion to move the process to a third party, Accreditation Canada.

As usual, I am enthused by the efforts and accomplishments being made by NACOR. This is a very collaborative and effective group with measurable results. I look forward to seeing what's next.



REGISTRAR'S REPORT

Brigitte MacInnes

Licensed Opticians as of March 31 2021

Total Membership: 260

Dispensing Opticians: 164

Contact Lens Fitters: 81

Non-Practicing: 15

New Members: 18

Total Students: 31

Dispensing Opticians: 22 Contact Lens: 9

We continue to make improvements to the online registration process.

This year we opened the functionality that allows members to enter their own in CE/PD credits through the members portal. Because credits are verifiable, once entered through the portal, the Registrar can simply verify any credits with the original source; members no longer need to send in paper copies as proof of completion.

The coming year will continue to see improvements to the registration process. If you have ideas on what worked and where improvements might be made, please let the Registrar know by emailing your comments to registrar@nscdo.org.

Wishing you a safe, healthy, and happy year!

OFFICE OF THE
REGISTRAR

NATIONAL EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

Tanya MacPhee

Despite the perils of COVID-19, the national exams were held in the fall of 2020 in all western provinces, as well as Ontario and Nova Scotia. The National Exam Committee met virtually to approve modifications that allowed the exams to be conducted in a safe environment. The Nova Scotia exams were held in Halifax October 3rd and 4th.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Shelley Smith-Bona

As we say goodbye to 2020 and hello to 2021, we are reminded that our continuing education credits are needing to be completed.

Continuing Education is an important part of any profession. As an Optician it is equally important to continue to do CE to keep your mind sharp, to expand your scope of practice, and to also get all those important credits for your license.

As a Licensed Optician, it is your responsibility to manage your CE Credits. The NS College of Dispensing Opticians has been working on making this easier for you and we now have the portal ready for you to enter your credits on-line throughout the year.

Make sure to keep a copy of all the credits that you achieve each year for your personal records.

You can still submit credits by scanning and e-mailing to registrar@nscdo.org or by mailing them in to the NSCDO office.

For a full listing of credits types, please visit the website at

https://nscdo.ca/pdfs/NSCDO_PD_Guidelines.pdf

OCC REPORT

Glenna Locke

The Opticians Council of Canada now has only NACOR as a member. Individual schools and provincial associations that wish to join the OCC are welcomed.

National meetings were held in April and November 2020 via video conference. The OCC executive is now named as President, Vice President, and Treasurer.

The Regulators mandate is to protect the public, the Associations advocate for the profession and Schools educate.

The OCC works on all areas where all groups can collaborate and share information.

Public Awareness Campaign: The Become an Optician website, videos, and Facebook page have all been translated into French. The direction of the campaign for 2021 would stay in line with what was done in 2020.

PLAR

Tanya MacPhee



Are you working with someone who learned how to do similar work of an optician from another country or learned through other means? They might be able to become an optician by following a different professional path called PLAR.

PLAR, or Prior Learning and Recognition is a process that allows potential optician candidates to receive credit and recognition for knowledge, skills and abilities they already possess. This is most often intended for people who have received training in another country but sometimes it is used for those working in Canada with extensive on the job training or other learning methods.

The process is rigorous but it can reduce the time and cost of fully enrolling in an optical program, as well as reduce redundant learning.

More information can be found in the PLAR section of the NSCDO website.

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Please check the following web links for updated information and guidelines on returning to work.

<https://nscdo.ca/?action=covid19>

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/alerts-notice/>

<https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/resources/>

**ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

5:30 pm, Thursday, June 10, 2021

*Please RSVP by Friday, June 4, 2021

Main Floor Boardroom,
1718 Argyle Street, Halifax, NS

NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Glenna Locke

NSCDO is asking for Opticians interested in serving on the Board of Directors to submit their names along with a bio/resume. Candidates may also be nominated by at least two registrants or by the Nomination Committee. This year we have three positions available for a two-year term; two of the current incumbents will be re-offering to serve.

If you are interested in serving, please forward your intentions to us on or before May 25, 2021. The final slate of candidates will be confirmed by May 26, 2021 and communicated to you by email. If an election is necessary, we will use Lime Survey as we did for the past election. Should we require an election, the survey will be emailed to you by May 31, 2021 and elections would take place on June 2, 2021.

If you have any questions, please refer to our By-laws or contact the College at registrar@nscdo.ca

Mailing Address: Attention: Glenna Locke
Chair of the Nomination Committee
Nova Scotia College of Dispensing Opticians
Halifax Professional Centre
342 - 5991 Spring Garden Road,
Halifax, NS B3H 1Y6

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MEETING**

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Main Floor Boardroom
1718 Argyle Street, Halifax, N.S.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Butler; Chair

Glenna Locke; Vice Chair

Shelley Smith Bona; Treasurer

Brigitte MacInnes; Registrar/Recording Secretary

Lynn Countway; Director

Anne Cox; Director

Angela Hume; Director

Susan Long; Director

Tanya MacPhee; Director

Marilyn Swaffer; Director

Graham Sweett; Director



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