



## **OPTICIANS OF MANITOBA**

### **ANNUAL REPORT OF COUNCIL 2013/2014**

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

We have been blessed this year with newer members to our Council who are both energetic and dedicated, and they bring new perspectives to our group.

I particularly want to thank Kerri Guralnick, who has taken over the Complaints Resolution Committee as Chair and has excelled at the helm. She has had a steep learning curve and has benefited from the depth of knowledge and experience that several of her committee members bring to the table. Unfortunately, it has been a very busy year for her committee. They now meet by teleconferencing to make it easier to respond in a timely manner to the demands of this committee. I would also like to thank our long serving Public Member, Lillian Allan who works on this committee and several others.

Senada Hajdarevic has taken over the Education Committee and also made it her own. She has been ably assisted by a number of excellent volunteers. Shervin and Jess have also plunged in as co-Vice Presidents and are taking over the Community Outreach and Communications area. Our longer serving members, such as Nada Lefko and Lillian Allan have provided the solid foundation upon which our newer members have been able to flourish. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our Council members from the bottom of my heart; they are a dedicated group. I could not be more proud of them and all the work that they have accomplished.

We have a new *National Competencies for Canadian Opticians*, which was updated and formatted quite differently through the work of NACOR. Currently we are working on updating the Standards of Practice to tie directly into the format of this document. This involves a great deal of work by Carol and our Standards of Practice working group.

We will be updating our strategic plan with the help of Barb Gemmell in early 2015.

Our website has been upgraded making it easier to navigate, more user friendly and is now compliant with the requirements of the Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act. There are still a few things we would like to improve, (ex the Optician's search engine) but we plan to tackle those items in 2015. The new database, designed to meet the needs of a regulator has been incorporated. This database was developed to be incorporated nationally and was a joint venture between Alberta and British Columbia through NACOR. The cost of

incorporating this database was funded by a grant obtained by NACOR. This is one of the many benefits that we receive by having an active and vital national group.

As with most IT undertakings, there have been some hiccups but our staff has been working hard to fix these. If you have any difficulties or notice any thing amiss on the website please let Sheila Barker know. She is responsible for incorporating changes on the website.

I also want to take this time to thank our dedicated staff. Carol with her vast experience and amazing organizational skills, has been invaluable in achieving our many goals. She has been ably assisted this year by our newest staff member, Sheila Barker, who came to us from the OAC.

Your council continues to work hard to keep costs down as we work towards compliance with the new Regulated Health Professions Act and the Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act. We have also signed on with Legal Shield, for both for our legislative work and for Complaints resolution both of which have legal costs associated. So far it has worked out extremely well, and has helped keep our legal costs down.

We met recently with Manitoba Health, and although they cannot confirm exactly when we will be incorporated under the new act they have told us that we can start submitting some of our work ahead of time to be pre-approved so that we will be further along when our time comes.

There are 2 Licensed Optician campaigns that will be taking place this year. We are currently in the middle of the We Love Your Eyes online contest which will wrap up at about the same time as our AGM. The other campaign has developed 2 excellent animated and humorous commercials about the pitfalls of internet ordering which we will be previewing at the AGM. Early in 2015, the Manitoba Alliance of Health Regulatory Colleges (MAHRC) will be starting a public education campaign about the role and the relevance of the Health Regulator to the public. OOM is a member of the MAHRC and this campaign will help to raise the public's awareness about our role as a Health Regulatory College.

We had two of our public members resign due to increased work loads and other time commitments, and we are trying to replace them. Currently we are looking at interviewing several candidates for the treasurer's position. We still would like to have another public member in the HR field and/or legal field. If any one knows of someone who might be interested in serving on Council as a public member, please let us know.

One highlight this year was being nominated for a PEARL award (the Pursuit of Excellence in Assessment and Recognition of Learning) and actually winning this prestigious award. Most of these awards are won by businesses or educational facilities. Apparently this is the first time that they have honored a regulator. So this was very exciting and rewarding. They were particularly impressed with our foreign trained professional portal on the website. They were also impressed with how much we have accomplished with so little resources, and the amount of volunteer hours that we access to accomplish our goals.

## REGISTRATION REPORT- CHAIR HEATHER POWER

As of September, 2014 we have:

- 17 inactive members
- 273 active members
  - 155 Licensed Opticians
  - 117 Contact Lens Licensed Opticians
- Students for 2014/2015
  - 11 Eyeglasses-Year 1
  - 10 Eyeglasses- Year 2
  - 0 Advanced Practice-CL-Year 1
  - 1 Advanced Practice-CL-Year 2
  - 0 Advanced Practice-Sight Testing

There were 2 PLAR candidates.

Non compliant - MOC requirements – 8 as of August 31, 2014

This year, we are concentrating on improving compliance with our Act and By-laws, so that we can make the best use of our staff and volunteers' time. Every member who is non-compliant increases the cost of membership to all other members, through increased staff time, legal fees etc. Full compliance means our staff can spend their time doing more important tasks like legislative review, scope of practice review, etc.

We continue to make changes to bring ourselves in compliance with the Regulated Health Care Professions Act (RHPA), which will allow a smoother transition to the new legislation when we are rolled into the Act.

Our current MOC cycle runs September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2015. Next year we will need criminal record checks and new photos for the next set of licenses (2016). MOC must be completed and evaluated prior to the renewal deadline. We continue to fine tune and streamline the renewal process. We will be automating part of it, eventually, but we will still need original signatures on the declaration form which can only be delivered or mailed as per 2 legal opinion.

We continue to provide orientation to newly Licensed Opticians and students. Our next orientation will be November 24, 2014. We will also be developing an ethics/jurisprudence module which will eventually be mandatory for all members.

## **LEGISLATION REPRESENTATIVE REPORT HEATHER POWER**

I believe that we are now, if not fully compliant, extremely close to compliance with the Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act. We had an action plan to become compliant and we have completed everything that we can complete at this time.

The Regulated Health Professions Act has now been proclaimed. This means we are now in a queue to be brought under the Act. Although currently Manitoba Health is working with the Nurses and the Doctors to bring their professions under the Act they have told us that we can pre-submit portions of our work for review. We also now have the benefit of more up to date templates which should allow us to work through the process in a much more expedited manner. Bringing the first profession under the Act is always more work because you are blazing the trail at that point. Once the trail is set, it is much easier for those who follow. We still have many more meetings and a great deal of work to finish before we will be rolled under the new legislation. However, thankfully, a great deal of work has already been done by the OOM.

Both our work nationally with NACOR and our work provincially with the Manitoba Alliance of Health Regulatory Colleges (MAHRC) have helped to formulate our best pathway for both sets of legislation. We have had a very busy year with many meetings scheduled. In 2015, MAHRC will be running a public awareness campaign about the role of the health regulatory colleges. A similar campaign was run in BC by their MAHRC equivalent, with good results.

Bill C313 did pass and we are now working on phase 2: getting Manitoba Health to regulate the dispensing of these lenses in Manitoba. Bill C313 returned plano/cosmetic contact lenses to the regulated realm, where they have always belonged (as there is no less risk of harm to the eye health from plano contacts than there is from contacts with a power for refractive correction). Bill C313 was a necessary first step before the provinces would regulate the dispensing of these lenses. We are currently working with Manitoba Health to define contact lenses more broadly to incorporate this change into the Regulated Health Professions Act. This is also what the federal regulators recommended when they passed Bill C313. They also knew it was only the first step.

### **NACOR REPORT- HEATHER POWER**

There are two meetings of the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators (NACOR) held per year. In 2013 the second meeting was held in Vancouver, BC in November. In 2014 the first meeting was held April in Charlottetown, PEI and the second meeting is slated for Toronto, Ontario in November. I represent the Opticians of Manitoba at NACOR and starting at the November 2013 meeting, Jess Gonzales became our backup member representative (for continuity). Our registrar, Carol Ellerbeck also attended. In Vancouver, an extra 2 days were

added to work on the PLAR interview improvement/revision and administrative harmonization. At the next meeting in Toronto there may be additional work done, but it is a bit up in the air right now. As per recommendations by the language experts we are revamping the PLAR process to increase consistency and increase plain language content.

In Manitoba, under the auspices of NACOR we did our first long distance interview (part of the PLAR process) as a pilot project. Our applicant was in Saudi Arabia. We wanted to make sure that we could effectively, securely, and safely administer the interview before the applicant actually emigrated. This ensures an easier transition, because the applicant then knows the exact pathway they must take to get their License and the likely time frame. If any bridging is required, they may even be able to take that remotely as well. The interview went well and the data and research we collected was well received at NACOR. The infrastructure for reliable monitoring exists in most countries. There is a network of places that are suitable for this type of long distance interview and we now know how to access them. Technology is wonderful.

Currently the Gap Analysis (another part of the PLAR process) is resident on the BC database and is used by all provinces. The PLAR process is administered by each province individually. As smaller provinces may only do 0-2 applicants a year, it is difficult to become truly proficient in the interview process. Once long distance interviewing has been adopted and the process has been perfected, it will be possible to draw from a pool of experienced interviewers from all over Canada.

NACOR has developed its third edition of the *National Competencies for Canadian Opticians*. It replaces the second edition which was published in April 2007. NACOR undertook a third edition of *National Competencies for Canadian Opticians* to ensure that the competencies are relevant and reflect current Canadian Opticianry practice. The format of the new competency document is quite different from its predecessors and was the “fruit” of an enormous collaboration and consultation between the provinces and various experts.

To meet the increased public demand for competence and accountability, national competencies are required to measure and evaluate safe and ethical professional practice. NACOR and the individual provincial optician regulators (who are the members of NACOR) recognize the importance of establishing national competencies to define the minimum expectations for Opticianry practice in Canada and support the evaluation of Opticianry knowledge, skill, judgment and attributes. National competencies are the foundation for entry requirements, registration with the provincial regulatory colleges, continuing competence programs and the determination of professional misconduct or incompetence.

OOM has now has the new (national) database incorporated into the brand new OOM Website. This database was developed originally by Alberta and BC to meet the needs of Optician regulators. As we are now a regulator only, it meets our needs much better, uses Regulator terminology and has several very helpful program features. These features streamline several processes that currently are difficult, tedious, if not impossible to do with the old database software. Most of the training of staff, and attaching us to the database was covered under a

grant that NACOR received to harmonize the programming across Canada. However, developing the new website was a separate cost. We have a few upgrades that we would like to make but they will be done in 2015.

As part of our responsibilities under the Fairness Legislation we now have a portal specifically designed for foreign trained professionals. An important part of the new website was writing it in “plain language”. This was one of the requirements under the legislation and was part of our Action Plan to become compliant.

BC informed us about a public awareness campaign led by a collaborative group of more than 20 regulatory colleges governed by the health professions act and the social workers act in B.C. The purpose of the campaign was to deliver a common message about the role of professional self-regulation, to inform the public that health professionals work under legislation and professional standards and ethics, and on how the public can contact a regulator. A similar campaign is being worked on in Manitoba, through the Manitoba Alliance of Health Regulatory Colleges (MAHRC).

There are 2 Licensed Optician campaigns this year. The first is the “We Love Your Eyes” Licensed Opticians on-line contest, which is taking place September to October 5. This campaign educates the public on the role of Licensed Opticians and they can win prizes by answering 35 questions over 5 weeks. All the answers can be found on the FAQ page, which encourages the public to peruse and be educated about our role. It was quite successful last year and looks to be as, or even more successful this year. Please check it out. The second campaign is a video series which focuses on why the public should choose a Licensed Optician rather than the internet. This is being produced by the same company that did the “I am a Licensed Optician” video series. The newest videos use humour to spread our message through media buys on YouTube, print and digital. You will be able to preview the videos at the AGM.

## **STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **EDUCATION SUB COMMITTEE- CHAIR SENADA HAJDAREVIC**

In 2013/2014 the Education committee has worked on and changed the MOC credits. We have used and followed NACOR’s accreditation system, as their plan is to have the same credits form used across Canada. A new field has been added “RF” (Related Field) which will replace the “OTHER” category. All of the forms included as Appendices in the Opticians of Manitoba policy “Maintenance of Competency” [www.opticiansofmanitoba.ca/about-us/](http://www.opticiansofmanitoba.ca/about-us/) are still the same and still have to be submitted to the Education Committee for approval of the credits.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT - CHAIR HEATHER POWER**

### **TEDDY BEARS PICNIC - AMANDA VANDALE & HEATHER POWER, CO- COORDINATORS**

We took part in the Teddy Bear Picnic May 25, 2014, which was our 6<sup>th</sup> year working the “Bear Eye Care Tent”, (5<sup>th</sup> year sharing with the Optometrists). This is a very popular, fun, and educational event in support of the Children’s Hospital Foundation. I would also like to thank our sponsors for this event; Alden Optical (Silver) , Centennial Optical(Bronze), Contact Lens Services (Bronze), CooperVision (Gold), Essilor/Perspectics (Gold), Hoya (Silver), Transitions (Platinum), Viscon (Silver). The level of support for this event was from highest to lowest, Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze. Please take the time to let these sponsors know that you appreciate their donations.

I would also like to thank the many volunteers that supported this event in 2014. I would also like to send an extra big thank you to our “regulars”, some who have been volunteering since OOM’s very first Teddy Bears Picnic. We had a great turnout and we had a lot of attendees at the tent. We are a popular destination, partly because we are very efficient, and deal with our line ups very quickly. We make custom designed pipe cleaner glasses for all the furry stuffed companions that attend, after they have their “eye exam”. Furry friends can be teddies, horses, rabbits, etc., from 2 inches tall to 6 feet. Some can be quite challenging to fit. Please contact Amanda Vandale if you would like to volunteer for this event. It is a lot of fun and you can earn MOC credits as well.

### **WORKER’S COMPENSATION BOARD HEALTH FAIR**

This year was our 2<sup>nd</sup> year attending this event. We distributed a lot of information to several attendees and answered a lot of optical health questions, and we promoted Opticians.

### **SCHOOL VISION SCREENING - NADA LEFKO**

Vision screening was performed by volunteer opticians at 3 schools last year. Over 1000 children were screened during these important days. At inner city schools the parents and teachers do not always understand the importance of eye exams so these screenings reveal the need for these children to be referred for exams. These children are excited to have the screenings at the schools and when referred they are anxious to go to the Dr. for exam and then get glasses to correct their visual needs. The students and opticians have fun at these days.

Thank you to all the volunteers that make this program a success.

## COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION COMMITTEE - CHAIR KERRI GURALNICK

The Complaints Resolution Committee received and acted upon the following complaints in 2013

**New Complaints Received in 2013** 15

**By Category:**

- Product/Quality/Sales Complaints 8
- Conduct 7
- Boundary 0
- Clinical Competence 0
- Low Impact 0

Fifty percent of the Complaints in the Product /Quality/Sales category were related to the sale of cosmetic contact lenses by non-eyewear professionals. These complaints were addressed through a Registered Letter which was sent to all of the businesses selling the lenses, advising them of the passing of Bill C-313 and the risks to consumers who purchase them. Until such time however that legislation regarding the sale of the cosmetic lenses is enacted in Manitoba, we can only hope that the retailers of these lenses will respond as we would hope to our request that they stop selling them.

**Complaints closed in 2013** 16

The complaints closed in 2013 also included complaints that had been received in 2012.

**Investigations:** There was one investigation of a complaint initiated in 2012 related to professional conduct and one initiated in 2013. Both of these investigations have been completed and will be referred to an Inquiry Committee and hearings.

### OAC REPORT -TODD SMITH

DECEMBER 2012 – APRIL 2013

**Membership: Recruitment and Retention.**

The OAC continues to work on the development of the Manitoba Chapter of the OAC. Manitoba had a round table formed and are reviewing a document which could become the template for Chapter formation and governance in other jurisdictions where no local representation advocacy group exists.



The OAC and Ontario Opticians Association (OOA) have signed a new collaboration agreement. This new document outlines a plan for future development of both organizations in Ontario.

*“The Opticians Association of Canada and the Ontario Opticians Association agree to foster collaborative relations, to promote prosperity and growth for Ontario Opticians, while maintaining the sustainability and integrity of both organizations”*

Specifically the agreement will formally define the sharing of resources and the cross promotion of Inside and Vision Canada. A copy of the agreement is included for review.

The OAC staff is suggesting that the national organization should have formal written agreements with each of the provincial organizations that are not chapters of the OAC. The formal agreements will help to preserve and encourage continuity with regards to:

- ❖ Member communications
- ❖ Annual membership dues
- ❖ Cross promotion of regional and national Trade shows
- ❖ Professional development offerings

Formal collaborative agreements between organizations are very common and encouraged as a best practice in the association world.

### **Industry Alliances and Organizational Partnerships:**

The OAC continues its partnerships with Essilor, Transitions, Hoya and The Optical Group, Johnson and Johnson, and Younger Optics. The OAC is especially pleased that after a one year absence J & J has returned as a corporate sponsor in addition to its long standing presence at Vision Canada. The public awareness campaign to alert the public of the dangers of night time driving and the need to consult an ECP to identify issues and possible solutions has come to an end but much information continues on the web and the OAC was very pleased to partner with Bausch & Lomb and the Canadian Association of Optometrists. This was the first time the OAC Executive met at Vision Expo East and was considered a beta test. The meeting were an absolute success and I believe a worthy endeavour. The Executive is encouraged to consider future meeting venues.

#### **New Partnership:**

1. Jobsons The OAC has entered into a three year agreement for Jobson to supply educational content for our professional development online portal. We will be offering more free and paid con-ed while at the same time gaining access to educational grants as provided by industry partners. The US has employed this strategy for years although in Canada we appear to have missed this revenue source. Jobsons will share grant money and OAC will share revenue from Jobson modules purchased by Canadian Opticians.

## Legislation and Legal Update

### Bill C313

Currently, C-313 is awaiting the development of regulations to define what requirements will be in effect once it comes into force. All Bills passed by parliament have a 'coming into force' provision. . In the case of C-313 it states the Bill comes into force "*...on a day to be fixed by order of the Governor in Council*". This essentially provides time for regulations to be developed to accompany the Act before it can take effect. The process for C-313 will include a public consultation, common to all new legislation, which will result in publication of draft regulations for the new Act in the *Canada Gazette* I. A 60-75 day comment period is provided to stakeholders to comment on draft regulations that will accompany the Act. Following that period comments are reviewed and adjustments made and a second publication of the proposed final regulations is done to communicate with industry stakeholders and affected parties of the pending changes. With this final publication, the regulations will 'come into force'.

Bill C-313 will not have any impact on who is able to sell non-corrective contact lenses or the requirements for a prescription. Those regulations are established provincially. In many provinces those determinations are covered under the restricted acts of the health professions.

The rationale for pursuing this Bill from day one (over 10 years ago) has been for non-corrective contact lenses to be regulated the same as corrective contact lenses. Once Bill C-313 comes into force, that objective will be accomplished at the federal level, but there is still work to be done provincially.

### Financial Outlook

It is important to note this as the OAC has developed **new revenue streams** in the area of product recommendations/ endorsements, website advertisement and partnering for educational grants through Jobsons. We have also **refined our existing revenue streams** to reflect a more appropriate level of compensation as related to the investment of financial and human resources. That said the expected deficit in 2013 is considerable less than expected. The OAC because of PLI included in membership shows increased expenses in 2013. The true success of the organization should be measured by its **goal achievements and mandate fulfilment**, that said' this administration is pleased at the current financial picture at the OAC and is looking forward to fiscal **balance**.