



OPTICIANS OF MANITOBA

ANNUAL REPORT OF COUNCIL NOV 2015

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We have had a great group of council members this year, but we have struggled a bit without a full complement. You should be very proud of the volume of work that your current council has completed.

Full council meets every 2nd month and our executive meets on alternating months. We have transitioned to teleconferencing for our meetings, to make it easier for our council members to meet, and to make it easier for members from outside of Winnipeg to serve on council. We need more public

We completed our strategic plan with the help of Barb Gemmell in May 2015.

Senada Hajdarevic was the Chair of the Education sub-committee of the Standards committee, and does a lot of work for the Teddy Bear Picnic every year. However, since we no longer provide/administer primary education a lot of the workload disappeared for the Education Sub-Committee. Maintenance of Competency is still a responsibility, but does not require having a separate committee. Therefore the Standards Committee has absorbed the Education Sub-Committee. Kerri Guralnick continues to chair the Complaints Resolution Committee and now chairs the Standards Committee. The Complaints Resolution committee has been very busy this year (unfortunately). Susan Tkachuk, and Barb Grant serve on the complaints resolution and the Standards committees, respectively. Shervin and Jess our co-Vice Presidents have taken over the Community Outreach and Communications area. Nada Lefko continues to co-ordinate the school vision screening program (a huge endeavor), as well as provide support to our newer council members. She also serves as the OOM Secretary. Jan Ross and Tricia Fedeniuk, both from Brandon, were appointed this year to fill vacant seats. Lillian Allan our dedicated Public member, continues to help on many committees and provides excellent advice. 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.

Our work to update the Standards of Practice to tie directly with the new *National Competencies for Canadian Opticians* has for the most part been completed. We are now looking for Opticians from various work environments to volunteer on focus groups that will go through the draft Standards of Practice for comment and review. We will have a sign-up sheet

for this and MOC credits will be available for this work. These documents will form the basis for practice audits which we must start doing as soon as we come under the RHPA, and also for complaints resolution investigations. We will be living with these documents for some time and that is why they have to be done well. The more eyes that review them the better they will be.

We have done further upgrades to the website. We received a grant from the Office of the Fairness Commissioner to complete a video overview of the process for internationally educated Opticians to become licensed in Manitoba. This has been completed and added to the website. The List of Optician's search engine has been improved.

I also want to take this time to thank our dedicated staff. Carol with her vast experience, particularly in the legislative area and her amazing organizational skills, has been invaluable in achieving our many goals. Sheila Barker, assistant to Carol, has assumed more responsibility this year in financial and website duties.

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 been working 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 have been communicating with Manitoba Health since bill C-313 was passed so that dispensing of cosmetic contacts will be a reserved act, but the work has not been finished yet. We likely will not have it come into play until we are rolled into the RHPA. We are currently trying to meet with Manitoba Health in conjunction with the Optometrists, about this issue. Right now the Nurses and Doctors are being incorporated under the RHPA. Unfortunately these groups have very complicated requirements and we don't know when they will be completed.

There are 2 Licensed Optician campaigns that took place this year. We just concluded the 2015 We Love Your Eyes online contest, which was well received. This is the 3rd year we have done this campaign, and the following grows every year. However, we need all our members to participate fully to make them even more successful. Tell your patients about it; share on social media! Make sure you register to be located on the map. The other campaign developed 2 excellent animated and humorous commercials about the pitfalls of internet ordering which we were previewed at the 2014 AGM. Early in 2015, the Manitoba Alliance of Health Regulatory Colleges (MAHRC) aired a public education campaign about the role and the relevance of the Health Regulator to the public. The commercial which aired, can be viewed on our website under News and Events. OOM is a member of the MAHRC; this campaign helped to raise the public's awareness about our role as a Health Regulatory College.

REGISTRATION REPORT- CHAIR HEATHER POWER

As of October 2015 we have:

- Inactive members
 - 3 CL and 6 EG
 - Active members
 - Licensed Opticians-156
 - Contact Lens Licensed Opticians -120
- Total of 285
- Students for 2015/2016
 - Eyeglasses Year One – 19
 - Eyeglasses Year Two – 7
 - Contact Lenses – 5
 - CL 2 – 0
 - Sight Testing - 0

There were 2 PLAR candidates.

11 members were non-compliant with MOC requirements for the 2012/15 cycle which ended on August 31, 2015.

This year, we continue to concentrate 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. For the 2015 year there was some improvement, but there is still room for more improvement.

We continue to make changes to bring ourselves in compliance with the Regulated Healthcare 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, 2015 – August 31, 2018. For our licence renewals for 2016, due today, we need criminal record checks and new photos. We continue to fine tune and stream line the renewal process. This year we had to stop collecting renewals for the OAC, as per Manitoba Health; that required revamping the renewal documents. We will still need original signatures on the declaration form which can only be delivered or mailed as per 2 legal opinions.

We continue to provide orientation to newly Licensed Opticians and students. We held two sessions this year, Feb 24 and June 17. Our next orientation will be early 2016. We will also be developing an ethics/jurisprudence module which will eventually be mandatory for all members.

LEGISLATION REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

HEATHER POWER

We will be going through the review process this year to confirm compliance with the Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act. 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. We also have a video overview of the process which was developed through a grant from the Office of the Fairness Commissioner.

The Regulated Health Professions Act has 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. 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. Early in 2015, MAHRC ran 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 cosmetic contacts than there is from contacts with a power for refractive correction). Bill C313 was a necessary first step before the provinces were willing to 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. However, this has been slow going. The Optometrists and Opticians are also trying to set up another in-person meeting to resolve this issue with Manitoba Health. This is also what the federal regulators recommended when they passed Bill C313. They knew it was only the first step towards our goal of regulating the dispensing of these lenses. Realistically, however, we will likely not see any change in our ability to stop this, until we are rolled under the RHPA.

NACOR REPORT- HEATHER POWER

There are two meetings of the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators (NACOR) held per year. In 2014 the second meeting was held in Toronto, Ontario November 13. I am the voting NACOR representative for Manitoba, and Jess Gonzales is my back-up. Carol Ellerbeck also attends. The 2015 meetings were held March 14, in Kananaskis, Alberta and October 1, in Vancouver, B.C. Governance training was done in March as well as strategic planning this year.

The PLAR process has been revamped. New CGA questions were developed, and completed with a provincial grant from Ontario. This was done under the guidance of Wickett Consulting. A pool of item writers from across Canada was consulted to develop the questions. The original CGA questions were mostly technical knowledge based, while the new questions are more balanced as they incorporate application and critical thinking questions. The interview is now using behaviour based questions. These questions were developed using iComp Consulting for proper validation. A pool of item writers from across Canada was consulted to develop them. All regulatory boards under NACOR pooled funds to develop these questions. Once developed interviewers from across Canada were trained as part 2 of the provincial grant from Ontario using iComp Consulting. The program has *inter-rater reliability* so that candidates are marked in a consistent manner.

Through a joint BC/Alberta grant proposal the BC government has agreed to fund two very important pieces of the PLAR revision. A pre-assessment readiness tool will be developed to act as a guide for international applicants to assess their readiness to enter the profession in Canada, while still in their home country. The second part involves creating 7 videos to help explain the PLAR process to candidates.

There were 2 Licensed Optician campaigns this year. The first was the “We Love Your Eyes” Licensed Opticians on-line contest, which took place September 14 to October 18. This campaign educated 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. You can still view the campaign questions and video introduction at the website. This is the third year of the contest and it will be continued next year. The second campaign was a video series which focused on why the public should choose a Licensed Optician rather than the internet. These were 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. The videos were previewed at the 2014 AGM.

Accreditation of 2 new schools is in process and the original 4 colleges that were accredited, are going through the full accreditation process this year, as their first cycle has expired.

In addition New Brunswick now requires the entire education and licensing process must be available in both French and English. NACOR is working with them to become compliant. That work will be available to all provinces once completed.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

EDUCATION SUB COMMITTEE- CHAIR SENADA HAJDAREVIC

This year we did not go through many changes, it has been a quiet year for us. Most of the activity that we had was assigning MOC credits for members that went through different training's. Also, as of this year "Education Sub Committee" and "Standards Committee" are one committee.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT - HEATHER POWER

TEDDY BEARS PICNIC - HEATHER POWER, JESS GONZALES, SHERVIN SHAHIDIAN CO- COORDINATORS

We took part in the Teddy Bear Picnic May 24, 2015, which was our 7th year working the “Bear Eye Care Tent”, (6th 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), 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 2015. Many stepped up at the last minute as we found ourselves a bit short at the last minute; a heartfelt thank you to these volunteers. 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 an amazing turnout, because the weather was very nice. 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 Senada Hajdarevic, 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 3rd 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 5 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 2014-2015

New Complaints Received 46

By Category:

- Product Quality 11 (Majority were cosmetic contact lenses)
- Professional Conduct 35
- Clinical Competence 0
- Low Impact 0

A majority of the Complaints in the Product/Quality/Sales category were related to the sale of cosmetic contact lenses by non-eyewear professionals. The 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 2014/15 41

Appeals opened – 2

Appeals closed -2