

CODE OF ETHICS

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TOPIC: CODE OF ETHICS

UNIT 1. ASSUMES PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

CORE COMPETENCY FOR OPTICIANS – 1.1 Demonstrate a commitment to patient, the public and profession.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

An optician must:

- 1.1.2 Integrate the Code of Ethics into professional practice as a basis for all decisions and actions***
- 1.1.3 Communicate title and credentials accurately***
- 1.1.4 Recognize and manage professional boundaries***
- 1.1.5 Refer any incompetent, illegal or unethical conduct by colleagues (both regulated and unregulated) or other health personnel to the appropriate authority***
- 1.1.6 Recognize and manage ethical situations***

INTRODUCTION

Opticians registered and/or licensed with the Opticians of Manitoba (OOM) are given the privilege and duty of self-governance under the Optician's Act. Opticians **must** comply with the requirements in the Act, the OOM by-laws and Practice Directives.

Every Optician **must** uphold and advance the honour and dignity of the profession of Opticianry, its high standards of ethical conduct, and adhere strictly to the principles in the Code of Ethics.

- Opticians registered and/or licensed by the OOM **must**:
 - be honest and impartial in serving their patients, the public, and their profession
 - strive to increase the competence and prestige of their profession

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- use their knowledge and skill to improve the health and well-being of their patients and the public, and respect the dignity, professional status and professional relations with their colleagues
- adhere to provincial regulations, standards of practice, guidelines and Code of Ethics related to maintaining professional boundaries
- seek guidance in managing professional boundaries
- report incidents of unauthorized practice or use of title to the Registrar of the Opticians of Manitoba
- report incidents of unprofessional, unsafe, unethical behaviors to appropriate persons (manager, supervisor, regulatory body)
- apply critical thinking to manage ethical situations
- seek guidance in identifying and managing ethical situations
- recognize and manage potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

Duty to the Public

- Opticians **must**:
 - educate the public in the promotion of optical health
 - refrain from making any statement or declaration or signing any certificate or any other document, or induce or permit a patient to sign any certificate or document which they know or ought to know to be untrue, misleading, or otherwise improper. This includes, but is not limited to documents used for insurance claims or third party billings.

Opticians should also provide leadership in community activities whose purpose is to improve the health and well-being of the individual and the community, primarily with respect to eye health and related fields

Duty to Patients

- Opticians **must**:
 - maintain patient confidentiality including not divulging any information acquired in the course of the professional relationship unless expressly authorized by the patient, or as required under the Opticians Act, regulations, OOM by-laws and Standards of Practice, or by law
 - consult and provide treatment to all members of the public with equal diligence, respect, and without discrimination. While recognizing that Opticians registered

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with the OOM have the right to choose who they accept as patients, they must do so in a manner consistent with the Human Rights Code

- keep their knowledge of Opticianry current, continuously enhance their educational and technical proficiency in order that their patients might receive the benefits of all acknowledged improvements in eye health/optical care, encourage and support the education of all individuals in the profession
 - provide eye health care in accordance with the Opticians Act, regulations and current Opticians of Manitoba's Practice Directives
 - inform the patient of any risk(s) associated with the use of an optical appliance(s) and/or eye health care being considered so that the patient may make an informed decision on whether to accept the use of the optical appliance(s) and/or accept the eye health care
 - disclose to the patient any circumstances which may result in a perceived personal or moral "Conflict of Interest"¹
 - provide eye health care to patients only when they are qualified by training or experience to perform the necessary tasks
 - perform only those tasks for which the optician's level of competence is sufficient and current, regardless of training and experience
 - be willing to consult with fellow health care professionals and/or to refer, when advisable, to the appropriate health care professional(s) and foster good relationships among members of the optical professions to facilitate inter-professional relationships and referrals for the benefit of the patient
 - provide only an optical appliance(s) and/or eye health care which they know or believe is appropriate to meet the needs of the patient
 - only continue to provide optical appliances or services which they know or believe are indicated and continue to be effective.
- **Opticians are professionally responsible** for:
 - all services rendered by themselves
 - all services rendered by individuals under their supervision
 - the professional actions and the consequences of those actions of any student optician that they have agreed to supervise.
 - The optician's duty is not to warrant or guarantee the success of any eye health care and/or optical appliance(s), but to provide the highest standard of care and accept full responsibility for the eye health care and/or optical appliance(s).

¹**Conflict of Interest**" is a conflict between the private interests and the official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust.

Duty to the Profession

- Opticians **must**:
 - maintain the integrity of the profession, contribute to, and participate in its activities
 - encourage and support the education of all individuals in the profession
 - share their knowledge and skills with students and colleagues in order to strengthen the profession as a whole.

Opticians should also support the advancement of the profession through local, provincial and national organizations.

Duty to Colleagues

- Opticians **must**:
 - refrain from commenting or passing judgment on the qualifications of, or procedures rendered by other opticians licensed with the OOM, unless such comments are in the best interests of the patient's health and well-being, or are required under the Opticians Act, OOM by-laws, standards of practice, or by law.
 - refrain from competing for patients or professional services by methods which would adversely affect the honour, dignity, or credibility of the profession
 - refrain from comparing their professional competence to that of other licensed opticians.
 - render only the eye health care or services which were specifically requested, In the event of a consultation.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES:

- Opticians of Manitoba Bylaws www.opticiansofmanitoba.ca/about-us/
- Opticians of Manitoba Complaints Resolution Policy www.opticiansofmanitoba.ca/about-us/
- NACOR National Competencies for Canadian Opticians 3rd Edition April 2013 www.nacor.ca/competencies.aspx

LEGISLATION

- Opticians Act www.opticiansofmanitoba.ca/about-us/
- The Human Rights Code <https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/h175e.php>

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