



The Opticians of Manitoba

"Our Focus Is Your Eyesight"

Annual Report 2012

President's Report

We had many great new members join council this year, bringing many new perspectives. At first it was a steep learning curve for the new council members, but we now have a wonderful working team. We were blessed this year to add two public members to the council, which is also a requirement under the Regulated Health Professions Act. Halina brings a great accounting background, which is of great help in the finance area and also has a daughter who is an Optician. Martin is a lawyer, who not only brings his background in law, but also extensive experience in sitting on other boards. Our council members contribute 120 to 300 hours of volunteer work to the OOM a year.

Again this year we have been very busy moving towards compliance with the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA). Many of the OOM by laws, policies and terms of reference have been updated to meet the requirements of the Act. Updating the OOM Standards of Practice is also a major project that is currently underway.

Barb Gemmell returned in October 2011 and led a workshop for our Council members on governance and facilitated a session to update the OOM strategic plan. The governance workshop was helpful for both old and new council members in defining their role on Council.

The OOM continues our fight against internet sales. We sent letters out to insurance companies and Provincial Government programs responsible for funding eyewear, advising them that internet suppliers of eyewear are not necessarily licensed. As a result, we have been invited to address the Canadian Insurance Companies Association Annual Fraud Conference, which will be held in May in Ottawa. With the help of Heather Power, Robert Dalton from the OAC, and a lawyer who is also an Optician from Ontario, a presentation will be made at this conference on behalf of all Opticians across Canada.

Your council has been working very 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 held an open budget and council meeting on January 17, 2012. I am happy to say we had 2 very concerned Brandon Opticians arrive for this meeting--they were however the only guests at the meeting. =This year we need to begin the process of upgrading our website to make it easier to navigate, more user friendly and we need to add new features required under the new legislation. We plan to do this work over a three-year period and have budgeted for this accordingly. We are also working towards implementing a new database, designed to meet the needs of a regulatory body as opposed to simply an association. NACOR has obtained a grant to integrate a national database, which is the creation of Alberta and BC called the COABC. The implementation costs of the new database and the staff training that will be required will be funded through the grant. As this database is regulator-based, it will

be more effective in terms of meeting the needs of our staff with respect to keeping required information and submitting reports as needed.

Speaking for staff I am happy to say Carol has agreed to stay on for another 3yrs. We also have a dedicated employee from the OAC working for the OOM on a part time basis. Linell has been a really big help to Carol and the OOM.

I am very thankful for all the staff and members who have contributed their time and energy to our organization as we move forward with excitement into the future.

Standards Committee Report

Education Sub Committee- Chair Todd Smith

As we draw nearer to the end of our continuing education cycle once again we encourage you to take it upon yourself to check the status of your credits. Log on to the Opticians of Manitoba web page and log in to see where you are in your credits. If you need credits please remember that if you are a member of the Opticians Association of Canada there is a bank of credits available to you for being a member. This is a great perk to join the Association and take advantage of doing the credits if you are finding it hard to attend the seminars that are put on for you. Whether it is because of your schedule for working or your personal time that you find it hard to get to the seminars this is one way you can add to your education profile.

We will be holding our annual MOC event on October 20 2012. We will post more info about this coming event as we get closer to the date. Just mark the date down so you are aware. We are also looking into having a two day event that weekend the second day being on the Sunday. We are lining speakers up from out of town and we are waiting to see how many are available for these dates.

This year we have enrolled in our courses, 12 Eyeglass year one, 13 Eyeglass year two, 6 Advance practice year one, 9 Advance practice year 2, and 1 Advance practice 2 Sight testing.

Professional Standards of Practice

Working Group- Chair-Laurie Humphreys

The focus of the work of the Professional Standards of Practice Working Group is to continually review and revise current OOM Standards and guidelines to ensure that they reflect Best Practices in the industry and meet legislated requirements for the profession as well as researching, developing and implementing new standards and guidelines as the need arises. The Committee is currently in the process of updating the existing OOM Professional Standards of Practice document for approval by council and is responding to the recommendation from the Complaints Resolution Committee for Standards and guidelines in areas of practice where complaints investigations have highlighted the need for such.

Legislation Representative Report – 2012

Heather Power

We have had a very busy year with many meetings scheduled for the Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act. We still have more work to accomplish to become compliant with both sets of legislation.

Fair Registration Practices In Regulated Professions Act

The “Fair Registration Practices in Regulated Professions Act” received royal assent November 8, 2007 and was passed April 15, 2008. The purpose of this Act is to help ensure that regulated professions and individuals applying for registration by regulated professions are governed by registration practices that are transparent, objective, impartial and fair. To help ensure that this occurs and to help the professions become compliant with the act, the Office of the Manitoba Fairness Commissioner (OMFC) was created. They have become the unofficial liaison between the Immigrant services systems and the professions.

We are slated to undergo a review of our registration practices by the OMFC in the summer of 2012. The review of all of the regulated professions is expected to be completed by April 2013. We have completed most of the work required and it now has to be reviewed and approved by the Fairness Commissioner. There are website components, plain language requirements, etc. We have applied and been approved for funding to have the profession of Opticianry in Manitoba benchmarked for language proficiency so that we can be certain that the language level requirements that we are requiring of internationally educated Opticians applying for a license in Manitoba are fair, defensible, based on evidence gained from actual research done in the field by individuals qualified to do so. As this work will require the direct observation of the work of Opticians in a variety of settings, both urban and rural, we will be contacting dispensaries and Opticians within the next few months to see who would be willing to have the researchers observe them in their daily work.

We continue to attend regular meetings with the Fairness Commissioner (on average every 6 weeks, 8:30am to 11:00 am). In addition we attend seminars on various topics relevant to best practices in the areas of registration, the assessment of prior learning and addressing the particular needs and struggles of internationally educated professionals in Canada in all aspects of the registration and licensing process including website access which accommodates language barriers and other programs available to immigrants.

The goal is to have a synergistic approach between the government and the professions in helping new immigrants go through the Foreign Qualification Recognition process as painlessly as possible. Our version of this is known as the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), which is a nationally developed process (through NACOR).

Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)

We have our first meeting with the Legislative Unit of Manitoba Health to begin discussions regarding transitioning under the RHPA.

[The Regulated Health Professions Act \(RHPA\)](#) was assented to June 11, 2009. Copies can also be purchased at Statutory Publications for approximately \$21 each. The act will not come into effect until the first profession-specific regulation, it's accompanying council regulations, as well as the necessary Lieutenant Governor in Council and ministerial regulations are developed and approved. The Physicians were the first health profession to begin going through this process but it looks as though they may not be the first to be completed. It is expected that the first profession will be ready by mid-2012, at which time the legislation will be proclaimed. The RHPA has transitional provisions for professions until they come under the RHPA. Although Professions will be rolled into the legislation gradually, we are expected to make changes prior to our “roll in”, to be in a position to be incorporated more quickly. We are now just beginning to see some of the

templates, and protocol that will have to be followed. It is expected that the process to incorporate all the health professions will take between 3 to 5 years. As yet, we do not know when we will be slated.

We continue to work towards becoming compliant so we are not caught having to accomplish a large amount of work in a short period of time. That is why you have seen changes to registration requirements over the last couple of years.

We are working through the various requirements for a scope of practice increase and taking the necessary political steps to make this happen. Community involvement is a big part of raising the profile of our profession with politicians. Events like the Teddy Bear Picnic, Vision Health Month, and vision screening in schools by Opticians, etc., become even more important in this context.

NACOR Report- 2012 Heather Power

There were two meetings of the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators, in Moncton, NB, April 2011 and in Vancouver, BC, October 2011. Sandra Blanchette and I represented the Opticians of Manitoba. Our registrar, Carol Ellerbeck also attended. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in Edmonton, Alberta in April of 2012. A great deal has been accomplished this year, with some major long-term projects being completed. Several more projects are underway and are in various stages of development.

It has been discussed that the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) pathway to licensing be administered by NACOR. New software and processes provided by Yardstick Solutions will likely be incorporated to update the delivery of the on-line Gap Analysis, and to provide a secure national platform. Their software is also able to provide more detailed feedback on individual questions in the databank, for language proficiency, validity, etc.

Currently the Gap Analysis 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. It has been discussed that the interviews be contracted out to BC and Ontario who have several experienced interviewers.

NACOR has received the first part of a two part grant application for a Harmonization Project (national approach) from the funding arm of "The Pan Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications". This legislation is the Canadian equivalent of Manitoba's Fairness Legislation. The grant will cover a gap analysis of all competencies (eye glasses, contact lenses and refraction), database harmonization (original development completed by Alberta and BC), website harmonization, and complete review of registration examinations based on the results of the reviewed competencies.

OOM is working on adopting the COABC (national) database, as it has been developed to meet the needs of Optician Regulators. As our main responsibility is as a regulator, 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 current database software. Training of staff, and attaching us to the database is covered under the grant (see above), but there are some other costs which are still being researched.

NACOR will be reviewing the Canadian Competencies for Opticians in 2012. The Canadian landscape for Opticianry has changed a great deal since the first Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) was inked. Therefore it was felt that it was time to redo the competencies upon which everything (education, examination, licensing, etc.) is based.

A Strategic Plan for NACOR was worked on in October 2011.

Practicum requirements for the 4 accredited educational institutes are to be standardized nationally. Practicum information was submitted by the schools (except Georgian as their practicum does not exist as a separate document, rather it is imbedded into their program) and analyzed. A document was produced that summarized the practical skills that are or should be taught. This was then sent back to all 4 schools for review and comment.

NACOR has adopted the ANSI standard as the national standard. It is the most easily defensible. There is still some work to be done on dissemination of this material to the provinces in the most cost effective manner.

The annual review required to maintain accreditation by the 4 Optician Educational Institutes were all submitted and completed for 2011.

It was recommended that the provinces all adopt a new standard annual License that has both the Licensed Optician (official mark) and provincial Logo. Manitoba has already complied.

The fee structure for NACOR was radically altered in April 2011 as a result of deficits that will not likely improve in the future (loss of 1 school).

National Exam fee increased from \$650 to \$725 effective Jan 1/2012.

Submissions to NACOR for accreditation of continuing education activities have increased significantly. The fee for this service increased from \$30 to \$75 per module effective Jan 1/2012.

The annual reviews required by the 4 accredited Optician Educational Institutions, increased from \$400 to \$500, effective Jan 1/2012.

The seat fees increased from \$8/Optician to \$10/Optician and the maximum cap amount increased from \$5,000 to \$10000.

A policy on exam eligibility was passed by the National Examination Committee (NEC) and will be incorporated into the Examination Policy Handbook as follows.

“To be eligible to take the Optical Sciences 1—Eyeglasses examination or the Optical Sciences 2—Advanced Practice Contact Lens examination, an applicant must demonstrate that he or she has:

1) Graduated from an optical program accredited by NACOR

OR

2) If the applicant has not graduated from an optical program accredited by NACOR, they must have:

a) Applied to an Optician regulator in any Canadian jurisdiction

b) Undergone a prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) process administered within the framework agreed upon by NACOR

AND

c) Completed any bridging required by that regulator, with the exception of the examination or examinations for which the applicant is applying.”

Registration Committee Report – 2012 Chair – Heather Power

As of April 4, 2012 we have:

- 32 inactive members
- 237 active members
- 140 Licensed Opticians
- 97 Contact Lens Licensed Opticians
- 41 Students
- 12 Eyeglasses-Year 1
- 13 Eyeglasses- Year 2
- 6 Advanced Practice-CL-Year 1
- 9 Advanced Practice-CL-Year 2
- 1 Advanced Practice-Sight Testing

2011/2012 has seen several changes to the registration process, which are bringing us into line both with other health care professionals in Manitoba, into line with the requirements under the Regulated Health Care Professions Act (RHPA), and in line with best practices used by the majority of other Optician regulators.

More changes will take place over the next few years. In order to facilitate the new processes and the timelines required under the RHPA, we are changing the cut off dates for MOC credits, and the Licensing Renewal deadline. The deadline for License renewals will move up to November 1, 2012 (from November 15), to allow sufficient time for all data to be entered before the end of the year.

This year all of you received the new License to Practice badges (which are required under the RHPA). We took the opportunity to use the suggested national format to further our “branding” process by identifying ourselves as Licensed Opticians with the LOGO on our Licenses. Once the RHPA is proclaimed and we have completed the transitioning process, the wording on the badges will change slightly to reflect the new legislation.

Community Outreach Committee Report 2012 - Chair Heather Power Teddy Bears Picnic - Amanda Vandale and Heather Power, Co- Coordinators

We will be taking part in the Teddy Bear Picnic May 27, 2012, which will be our 4th year working the “Bear Eye Care Tent”, (3rd year sharing with the Optometrists). This is a very popular, fun, and educational event in support of the Children’s Hospital Foundation. We also took part in the 25th annual Teddy Bear picnic on May 29, 2011. This was the third year that we participated. It was extremely successful, with a huge turnout. We gave out 1085 optical bags, filled with informational pieces and “goodies”, which were distributed one to each family. This means we saw around 3000 – 4000 people.

We again shared the “Bear Eye Care Tent” with the Optometrists and in 2011 (and again this year) we shared the fund raising jointly. We did a survey, and had a draw for 2 prize packages. We had at all times 8 – 16 Opticians and helpers making pipe cleaner glasses, with 4 -5 Optometrists “refracting” teddies and other furry friends. We also did “sight testing” for the furry companions. This event gives us an opportunity to both educate on the importance of early pediatric eye care and raise the public’s awareness of our Profession. I would also like to thank our sponsors for this event; Alcon, Bausch & Lomb, Cooper, Essilor/Perspectics, Leis, Nikon, Precision, Transitions, Viscon. 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 2011 and those who have signed up for 2012. 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.

We prepared a survey with 3 possible answers. 1175 surveys were submitted:

- People who have children that have all had eye exams: 524/1175 | 44.6%
- People who have children that have not had all of them tested: 344/1175 | 29.3%
- People who do not have children or who did not answer the survey: 307/1175 | 26.1%

So of those who participated in the survey who had children (868), we had 60.4% (524/868) who had all their children tested, and 39.6% (344/868) who had not had all their children tested. Only one entry per family was allowed.

We also managed to get some media coverage; we were mentioned before the event in a “what’s happening” column in the Free Press. As a result of the press release that was done, we ended up having a spot on Shaw TV, which featured a pediatric Ophthalmologist, a pediatric Licensed Optician, a young child with a lazy eye and her parent. It played on a 2 hour loop for several days and we also were asked to arrange a spot on Breakfast Television, a morning show on Citi TV (Rogers).

May CNIB Vision Month – Heather Power – Co-Coordinator

We also took part for the first time in the May 2011 CNIB Vision Month (2nd year for the event). We are also currently doing the prep work to take part in the May 2012 CNIB Vision Month. There are several ways that you and/or your optical can donate to this very worthy cause:

\$1.00 (or any amount that you decide) per each eyeglass and/or contact lens sale.

Ask your customers if they would like to add a donation (\$1.00 - \$5.00 was what I found most donated) when paying for their bill.

- Loose change receptacles available for CNIB Vision month at the till – we can arrange to send one to your office
- Give an individual donation
- Get together with your co-workers and make a joint donation from the Opticians at [X] Optical

The CNIB has some incredible programs for both their low vision and blind clients. They are a very worthy cause. We have a strong connection to them. Contact Heather Power 942-0838 for more information on how to get involved in this initiative.

Rotary Club Career Symposium

OOM took part in the Rotary Club Career Symposium, in 2011, and handed out over 100 packages regarding our profession. We were unable to do it this year as we were not able to get enough volunteers.

School Vision Screening

The OOM also continues to perform sight screening in elementary schools in Winnipeg and another year of vision screening was successfully completed. Most of these children from the inner city have never had an eye exam. The Opticians screen children in kindergarten, Grades 1, 3, and 5. The children at the schools are always eager to have the screening performed and enjoy the days with the volunteers. Every year we see a decrease in the numbers of students referred to optometrists and ophthalmologists since the vision screening in the schools began. Thanks to all the volunteers that participate at the vision screenings. These individuals are passionate about this necessary service which detects vision errors that are then referred to the doctor for a complete exam.

Once again thank you to all the volunteers that take the time out of their busy schedules to perform the screenings. Nada Lefko is the co-ordinator for sight screening in schools. Senada Hajdarevic has been assisting and they are always on the lookout for volunteers.

If you are interested in receiving MOC credits for volunteering you may contact Nada Lefko at 255-0660 or contact OOM.

Complaints Resolution Committee 2012

Chair Laurie Humphreys

The Complaints Resolution Committee received and acted upon the following complaints in 2011.

New Complaints Received in 2011: 14

Category	#
Product/Quality/Sales Complaints	9
Conduct	4
Boundary	0
Clinical Competence	1
Low Impact	0

All 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 letter writing campaign to the Federal Minister responsible for the Food and Drugs Act initiated by the Opticians of Manitoba regarding the risks associated with the sale and use of cosmetic lenses and the need to amend the Food and Drugs Act (non-corrective contact lenses). This letter writing campaign was subsequently adopted across the country by other Optician Regulatory bodies and associations as well as by Optometrists and Ophthalmologists. We are pleased to report that the private member's Bill C-313 is now in third reading before the House in Ottawa and once passed, cosmetic

contact lenses will be classified as medical devices and be regulated accordingly under the Food and Drugs Act.

Complaints closed in 2011: 6

The complaints closed in 2011 also included complaints that had been received in 2010
Investigations: There were none in 2011 but there are three investigations in process related to three complaints in the Conduct category, which were received in 2011.