

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Council

FROM: Patient Relations Committee

DATE: December 2 and 3, 2019

SUBJECT: 11.0 Patient Bill of Rights

☒ For Decision

☐ For Information

☐ Monitoring Report

Purpose:

To review the proposed College of Opticians Patient Bill of Rights

Background:

During the College's strategic planning sessions in January 2018, the Patient Relations Committee was tasked with considering whether to develop a Patient Bill of Rights. The aim of the document was to educate patients on the role of opticians as health care providers and to provide some basic advice about how patients can protect their eye health. This would act as a resource for members of the public to understand what to expect from a registered optician.

The Patient Relations Committee intended for the document to further the College's goals of being transparent and public-focused. Therefore, a draft proposal was prepared and presented to the February 2, 2019 Citizen's Advisory Group (CAG) meeting for stakeholder feedback.

The CAG welcomed the document and stated that it increased their comfort level by outlining parameters and boundaries of care, and that it helped them feel respected and part of the process.

On May 28, 2019, the Patient Bill of Rights was put before Council for their feedback. Council requested edits be made and that it go back before the Patient Relations Committee and then on to the Standards of Practice Committee for final review. The Patient Relations Committee made the edits requested by Council, and the revised draft was sent to the Standards of Practice Committee.

The Standards of Practice Committee made additional amendments to the Patient Bill of Rights and recommended that it go before Council at the next meeting in December.

For Consideration:

See attached draft Patient Bill of Rights.

Recommendations:

- That Council approve and adopt the proposed Patient Bill of Rights as set out in the attached draft
- That the proposed Patient Bill of Rights be added to the College website with an explanation about its purpose, and with information to encourage opticians to download the one-page document and share this resource with patients in a way that fits with their practice
- That the proposed Patient Bill of Rights be shared on College social media, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and all other online media and resources at the College's disposal

College of Opticians of Ontario Patient Bill of Rights

When you see a Registered Optician, you are seeing a regulated health professional. Opticians are trained to provide prescription eyewear, based on the prescription of an optometrist or ophthalmologist. Opticians work with patients to identify the most appropriate type of eyewear based on a patient's prescription, individual circumstances, occupation and daily activities. As an opticianry patient, you can expect an optician to:

1. Treat you with dignity and respect
2. ~~Obtain~~ Receive your informed consent ~~prior to (written or verbal) in order for them to provide~~ ing health care services
3. Provide you with knowledgeable, safe and competent care
4. Take appropriate measurements and accurate health history to determine the suitability of the eyewear you are receiving
5. Check that you understand the care you are receiving and why, including any future care
6. Keep your personal information confidential and ensure your personal health information is stored securely
7. Keep complete and accurate records of your file
8. Provide you with a copy and/or timely transfer of your records for no more than a reasonable cost-recovery fee
9. Obtain your written consent to send you electronic marketing communications
10. Allow you to withdraw consent at any time, including to online communications
11. Provide clear information about the eyewear you are receiving, including information about warranties, billing and returns, and what to do if the eyewear does not perform as expected
12. ~~Only deliver services that registered opticians are permitted to provide. Opticians can~~ Dispense prescription eyeglasses, and contact lenses and low-vision aids (including preparation, adaptation and delivery of eyewear) based only on a valid prescription of an optometrist or physician such as an ophthalmologist. In extenuating circumstances, the optician may be able to copy a prescription off of an existing pair of lenses if the optician feels it is in the patient's best interest to do so. Opticians cannot prescribe eyeglasses and contact lenses, and cannot diagnose health conditions
13. Communicate with your prescriber about your prescription when needed
14. Refer you to another health professional where appropriate
15. At your request, provide contact information for the College of Opticians of Ontario to make a complaint about the optician, as well as information about how to submit a complaint
16. Comply with the College of Opticians' [Regulations](#), [Standards of Practice](#), and [Code of Ethics](#)

As an opticianry patient, here are some things you can do to help protect your eye health:

- **Get a regular eye exam:** It is important to see an eye doctor (optometrist or ophthalmologist) regularly for eye health exams and to ensure your prescription has not changed
- **Provide complete health information to your optician:** Contact lenses may not be appropriate for you if you have diabetes or use certain medications which may dry out your eyes. It is important to ensure that a contact lens product is safe, appropriate and is not contraindicated because of any health condition or medication you may take

- **Consult with a registered optician, optometrist, or ophthalmologist** if you have any issues with your eyewear

For more information about making a complaint about an optician to the College of Opticians, [click here](#).

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