



COLLEGE of OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

a B.C. Health Regulator

Automated Refraction One Year Anniversary

June 2011

True Vision Architects

May 1, 2011 marked the one year anniversary of the new *Opticians Regulation* allowing independent automated refraction ("refraction") by opticians. For over a decade, refracting opticians have been conducting sight tests in British Columbia and there are now more than 300 refracting opticians across the province. The change in legislation increased the optician's scope of practice, allowing opticians to practice to their full potential.

Under the new regulations, refracting opticians are permitted to use the full extent of their skills, independently providing health care consumers with an assessment of their visual acuity using a refraction system. There is no longer a requirement to obtain an approval of assessment from an optometrist or ophthalmologist. Subject to certain limits, refracting opticians can fit and dispense eyeglasses and contact lenses using the results of the assessment.

Opticians from all around the world are now focusing on BC and the new opportunities available for BC opticians both professionally and economically. Perhaps the most valuable outcome for a refracting optician is the ability to understand what a prescription truly means.

"To be able to service a health care consumer from beginning to end means I can build something and know exactly how its going to work for them. I can be a full vision architect," says Chris Lee, a BC refracting optician.

The Government of BC amended the Opticians Regulation a year ago because they acknowledged the decade-long safe practice of refraction by opticians under supervision of a prescriber as well as the voluntary training and certification completed by the several hundred opticians currently conducting refraction in British Columbia. The College is working to maintain the safe practice of refraction by refracting opticians though licensure requirements and education.

British Columbians (between the ages of 19-65) have the ability to choose between a sight test or eye health exam and not have one or the other mandated by government. These consumers now have increased access into the health care system and will be using opticians to their full practice potential. Opticians in British Columbia have become true vision architects.

For more information on opticians refracting, click here to visit the Ministry of Health webpage on optician refraction.
http://www.gov.bc.ca/fortherecord/eyewear/ew_healthcare.html?src=/healthcare/ew_healthcare.html

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Blue Cross Accepts Assessment Records By Opticians

[Click here](#) to read Pacific Blue Cross' announcement.



Mandatory Refraction Jurisprudence Seminar Reminder (Metro Vancouver)

With changes in legislation, which permit opticians to conduct independent refractions, current refracting opticians must attend a seminar to ensure understanding of the "jurisprudence" or the laws affecting refracting opticians. Refracting opticians will receive 6 EC credits upon completion.

The first mandatory seminar will be for refracting opticians in Metro Vancouver at 6:30PM on



July 13, 2011 at the Best Western Hotel (5411 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC).

Refracting opticians do not need to register. Since the refraction jurisprudence seminar is mandatory, we will keep track of seminar attendees.

We will be organizing seminars or alternative methods of completing the jurisprudence requirement for refracting opticians residing outside the Metro Vancouver area in the near future.

If you have questions regarding this seminar, please contact Connie Chong at cchong@cobc.ca or 604.278.7510 extension 24.

How To Become A Refracting Optician in BC

You've decided you want to be able to practice to your full potential. There are three accredited refraction educational programs available:



Douglas College 15 week online program (additional optional 4 hour live workshop)

This course will provide learners with the knowledge of the core refracting competencies as required by the College of Opticians of British Columbia. The course will include topics in prescreening, initial evaluation, automated refraction, and ancillary testing processes. The learner will acquire an in depth understanding of the complete automated refraction process and tests involved. Current techniques in tonometry will also be reviewed. A thorough review of the relevant COBC Standards of Practice pertaining to automated refraction will be conducted. The course is delivered entirely online through Blackboard learning management system. The 4 hour optional workshop will provide learners with the skills necessary to conduct automated refraction on qualified patients using the Eyelogic automated refraction equipment. The course will include skill training for the complete automated refraction process from the point the patient enters the room to the point the patient leaves with a copy of their prescription. The relevant COBC Standards of Practice procedures pertaining to automated refraction will be adhered to. For more information, please contact Tony Viani, Douglas College Program Coordinator, at vianit@douglas.bc.ca

NAIT 12 week online independent study program

Offered by the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), this course is designed both as an educational resource and as a training vehicle for those provinces requiring a training pathway for automated refracting certification. Public education and safety are major themes running through all phases of the Automated Refracting Course. Topics include pre-screening format, interview protocols, recognizing elements of family/personal medical history requiring referral, documentation requirements, privacy issues, design and execution of general public education and client education programs and client consent forms, knowledge of automated refraction equipment and interpretation of results of automated refraction equipment. The course contains a course of study governed by prescribed textbooks and online course material. Students must complete online assessments and assignments, participate in online discussions, and complete a written final examination. For more information, <http://opticians.ca/index.asp?id=26> or email education@opticians.ca



NAIT 2 year online independent advanced study program

This refraction program offered by NAIT is an advanced practice course. This program consists of two years of theory and a practicum component. For more information, <http://opticians.ca/index.asp?id=26> or email education@opticians.ca

Continuing Education Opportunities

July 13, 2011 - Mandatory Jurisprudence Seminar for Refracting Opticians (6 EC credits)

As part of refracting optician's continued refracting certification by the COBC, refracting opticians residing in Metro Vancouver are required to attend a seminar on the "jurisprudence" or the laws affecting refracting opticians.

Date & Time: July 13, 2011 at 6:30PM

Location: Best Western Hotel (5411 Kingsway, Burnaby, BC)

Registration: No RSVP required. Attendance will be taken at the seminar.

Fall 2011 - Douglas College Year 2 Advanced Opticianry, Contact Lenses and Refraction Technologies Diploma

This two-year diploma will give you the strongest employment tool with the contact lens skills most employers demand. If you are already a licensed Dispensing Optician, and want to gain contact lens fitting qualifications, you may be eligible for Direct Entry into the second year of the program.

Program Delivery Options: Face-to-face delivery or distance delivery (6 seats remaining)
Location: David Lam Campus (1250 Pinetree Way, Coquitlam, BC)
Registration: Contact Marion Kloseck at 604-777-6407 or email kloseckm@douglas.bc.ca

October 14-16, 2011 - Vision Canada and COBC AGM

This three-day event will feature continuing education lectures and trade exhibits. For registration details, visit its website at <http://vision-canada.ca>.

Date & Time: October 14-16, 2011

Location: Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel

Registration: [Click here](#) to register online <http://vision-canada.ca/index.asp?id=81>

The **Annual General Meeting of the College of Opticians of BC** will be held in conjunction with Vision Canada and will take place **at 12:15 am, Sunday, October 16, 2011**. Vision Canada will also host the national meetings for the Opticians Association of Canada, the Opticians Council of Canada, the Canadian Association of Opticianry Educators and the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators.

