

# SPOTLIGHT ON BRITISH COLUMBIA

By Claudia Rojas, Director – Opticians Association of Canada – BC Chapter



Dear members,

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of the activities that the OAC- BC Chapter has been involved in over the past few months, and also to reach out to you for your input and ideas to better serve you.

On Sunday, November 04<sup>th</sup>, 2018 the OAC – BC chapter hosted Visions British Columbia Fall Event, a full day of learning, brainstorming and networking. During this event attendees had the choice between two exceptional tracks of continuing education: Refine your skills with Level 1 of the OAC Master Program, or take part in market and contact lens informational training. This was a very successful event enjoyed by our members, where we had a full house with nearly 200 attendees!

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) is making changes to the Health Benefits Program (formerly NIHB), specifically the dental, vision, medical supplies and equipment benefits. The OAC-BC chapter has engaged and shared information with FNHA through discussions regarding the overall experience of the vision benefit billing process and provided feedback on existing challenges to providing care to FNHA clients. The goal of the discussions was to gain better understanding of some of these processes to remove barriers, where possible, by improving benefit administration. Moving forward, FNHA intends to improve vision benefits by partnering with a third-party partner who will help them create and manage a new vision benefit plan modernizing the current administrative process. OAC- BC chapter has assisted in this process by providing recommendations based on our members' experiences throughout our province with the current processes, and by writing a letter of endorsement for a well trusted and widely used by Opticians third party potential partner for FNHA, to be included with their bid.

This year, we started our professional awareness initiatives by participating in a partnership campaign to celebrate Vision and Accessibility. This was done through a publication that had exposure in many markets through recognized publishers such as the White Cane Magazine, and online at [personalhealthnews.ca](http://personalhealthnews.ca). I would like to invite you to read our article titled "[How Eye Care Professionals Collaborate to Improve Your Vision](#)". This was a great opportunity for us to promote the importance and relevance of Opticians in Canada towards the general public as well as the blind and low visions communities.

On Sunday March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, OAC-BC Chapter will be hosting Visions British Columbia, our next continuing education series geared towards the professional development of Opticians and other ECPs hosted by the Opticians Association of Canada. This event will bring outstanding speakers and topics that you do not want to miss!

Coffee anyone? I am very excited to share with you that we will also start a new project called “Insight of Joe”, an Opticians’ coffee club in different cities throughout our province, where we will have the opportunity to network, brainstorm, share our knowledge, and support our members’ activities. This will also be a great opportunity to make myself available to acknowledge your feedback and be responsive to your needs to better support Opticians. Stay tuned for more information.

We have many Opticians in B.C. with great ideas and tremendous energy and we’d love to have you get involved with the OAC – BC Chapter. Perhaps you’d be interested in coordinating a study group, a seminar on specific topics of research, or a club on a particular specialty in our profession? I welcome all ideas and feedback regarding how I can better support you and provide you with learning opportunities.

In order to set us up for success your participation is paramount. I would like to invite everyone to get involved in the upcoming events. Together we can strengthen our profession and help each other grow through shared learnings.

Please feel free to contact me at [oaedirector@opticians.bc.ca](mailto:oaedirector@opticians.bc.ca) if you have any questions or would like to get involved. Also, please visit our website [opticians.ca](http://opticians.ca) for information, updates, and events.

Sincerely,

Claudia Rojas  
Director – Opticians Association of Canada – BC Chapter