

REPORT

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Fazal Khan, Registrar, CEO

DATE: October 6, 2020

SUBJECT: 17.1 Registrar's Report

Highlights:

- Registration Exams
- COVID19 Activities
- Physical Premises
- Remote Operations
- External Relations
 - Collaboration with other Regulators
 - External Events
 - CNAR Speaking Engagement
 - Optometry Job Action
- Board and staff member update
- Media Inquiry

Registration Examinations:

With the cancellation of the Spring Exam session and the Georgian College campus not being available to host the fall examinations session, the Registration department has been working diligently to find an alternate site and incorporate social distancing measures. We are fortunate to have Seneca College offer to host the examinations between October 24th to October 28th. The COO, NACOR and Seneca are working collaboratively to ensure a safe and productive examinations session.

COVID19 Activities:

The College continues to provide updates to the registrants (20 updates since March) regarding practice guidance. With the reopening of most optical dispensaries in June, the need for the Directory of Urgent Care Providers was suspended unless the need arises again. The College's website, FAQ page and social media channels continue to be updated on an ongoing basis.

Physical Premises:

Contractors have been on site to complete some renovations to the administration section of the office. Multiple hand sanitizer dispensers are being installed throughout the office and a glass partition has been installed in the waiting area.

Remote Operations:

The College continues to operate remotely with no impediment to timelines or workflow. Return to office planning is underway to address requirements for greater distancing in the workplace to maintain health and safety. The office will be open to administration staff as a resource if needed but the intention is to continue working remotely till the end of the year and reassess at that point.

External Relations:*Collaboration with Regulators and Other Stakeholders:*

The College staff continue to participate in regular board meetings of HPRO - Health Professions Regulators of Ontario (formerly FHRCO) with the current focus on the pandemic and coordinating with the Ministry of Health.

We continue to attend daily briefing meetings run by the provincial COVID19 task force and Ministry of Health meetings as they arise.

There has been a reduction in collaborative projects between the College of Optometrists since the departure of the previous registrar. Mr. Ira Teich has been appointed Interim Registrar as the College searches for a permanent replacement.

External Events:

- The College held an information session in August for registrants considering running for election. This session was hosted by our Deputy Registrar and was well received with 9 attendees.
- The College will be participating remotely in Continuing Education days with the Ontario Opticians Association (OOA) and the Academy of Ophthalmic Education (AOE) this fall.
- The College, in collaboration with the College of Optometrists and the College of Dental Surgeons presented at the prestigious Canadian Network of Agencies of Regulators (CNAR) kick off session on September 10th. The College's

presentation covered the challenges of disruptive technology and the use of Standards of Practice to address these challenges.

Optometry Job Action:

The Optometry Association of Ontario (OAO) commenced a 'Job Action' program in an effort to start a dialogue with the Ministry of Health over funding concerns under the OHIP program. Currently children up to age 19 and seniors over the age of 64 are covered under OHIP for eye examinations. Under the job action, patients in these two groups are being directed to emergency rooms for eye care or are facing delayed availability whereas patients who are paying directly for their eye exam are being seen much more quickly. The OAO is citing financial pressures due to the new reality of the impact of COVID19.

The College of Optometrists has confirmed that patients are not obliged to undergo any additional non-insured procedures to access and OHIP funded eye examination.

Board Member and Staffing Update

The Office of the Public Secretariat has appointed Mr. Murray Angus for a term of two years beginning August 20, 2020. Mr. Omar Farouk has been reappointed for a three-year term. We await direction from the Office of the Public Secretariat regarding the reappointments of Ms. Jacalyn Cop-Rasmussen and Ms. Diana Bristow.

The call for nominations for District 1, 5 and 8 closed Thursday August 10th. The results are as follows:

District 1

Current incumbent - Mr. Ed Viveiros

Acclaimed for 2021-2023 - Ms. Elsa Lee

District 5

Current incumbent - Ms. Dorina Reiz

Election Candidates for 2021-2023 term, Ms. Dorina Reiz and Mr. Seyedparham Abtahi

District 8

Current incumbent - Ms. Neda Mohammadzadeh

Acclaimed for 2021-2023 - Ms. Neda Mohammadzadeh

The election in District 5 will run from October 9 – November 9 in the registrant portal.

With the departure of Ms. Gena Zheng and Ms. Mayte Anchante, the College welcomes Ms. Shelby Sargo to the position of Coordinator, Professional Practice (formerly Quality Assurance and Clinical Practice), Ms. Davneet Shah, Projects Assistant and Ms. Fizza Asad, Accounting and Human Resource Specialist. Ms. Asad will assist Ms. Amy Stein in the role of Acting Deputy Registrar while Ms. Melanie Woodbeck is on maternity leave starting this fall.

Media Inquiry

A reporter from the CBC reached out to the College on September 23rd to inquire if the College was advising its registrants against in-person services. The College provided our updated Standards of Practice regarding the ability for registrants to utilize remote practice as well as our Return to Practice Guidelines outlining guidance to registrants during the pandemic. It appears that other regulatory colleges are being canvassed with a similar inquiry.

Respectfully submitted by:

Fazal Khan, RO
Registrar, CEO