

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Council

FROM: Standards of Practice Ad Hoc Committee

DATE: October 7, 2019

SUBJECT: 14.0 Draft Standards of Professional Practice

For Decision

For Information

Monitoring Report

Purpose:

To review proposed updates to the Professional Standards of Practice recommended by the Standards of Practice Committee.

Background:

In 2018, the College struck an ad-hoc Standards of Practice Committee to conduct a fulsome review of the College's Standards of Practice and the accompanying guidelines. The committee divided the review into two phases. Refraction and delegation will be reviewed in 2020.

On September 18, 2019, a facilitated focus group stakeholder consultation session on the draft standards was conducted with industry, association and educational participants. Additional feedback was received from registrants in two facilitated webinars. The Standards of Practice Committee met and reviewed the feedback and proposed additional changes to the draft Standard of Practice based on the feedback received.

On September 27, 2019, the Council of the College of Optometrists of Ontario approved an update to their Standard of Practice for Spectacle Therapy (Optometric Practice Reference 6.4). Under the revised standard, optometrists may use professional judgment to determine whether it is appropriate to permit the delivery of prescription eyeglasses prior to in-person fitting

For Consideration:

Suggested updates to the Standards of Practice and Guidelines have been proposed in accordance with Council and Committee's direction, existing risk of harm data, initial feedback received from stakeholders and registrants, and global trends in opticianry regulation.

Practice guidelines have been added throughout the document. A guideline explains the requirements of a standard and sets out a best practice. The chart showing a summary of the changes is **below**. For a tracked changes draft, refer to **Appendix A**. For a clean copy version, refer to **Appendix B**. To view the Optometrists' update to the Standard of Practice for Spectacle Therapy, refer to **Appendix C**.

Recommendations:

That council review the proposed updates to the Draft Standard of Practice and approve the draft to be circulated for stakeholder feedback.

Standard	Changes Proposed
Standard 1: Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard referencing professional judgement has been added • A standard that opticians always act in the patient’s best interest and put the patient’s interest above their own personal or commercial interest has been added.
Standard 2: Professional Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard has been introduced regarding ethical behaviour with a link to the Code of Ethics • The standard regarding opticians’ supervision responsibilities has been updated to include any person to whom they have delegated, and a practice guideline has been introduced to further explain supervision and delegation. • Standards have been introduced to address opticians’ obligations with respect to professional boundaries, sexual abuse prevention and mandatory reporting. • A standard has been introduced regarding an optician's obligation to report unsafe practice or incompetence of a regulated health professional to the appropriate college. • The standard has been modified to focus on overall continuity of care which might include taking steps to ensure that another health professional can assist the patient in the optician’s absence. • Guidance on what it means to be the “most responsible dispenser” has been added.
Standard 3: Dispensing of Appropriate Optical Devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proposed guideline around expiry dates and how to deal with recommendations and notes on the prescription has been included here. • A practice guideline regarding prescription duplication has been added. • Guidelines for opticians who may wish to offer more services via telepractice, including, where appropriate, the delivery of prescription eyeglasses prior to fitting and adapting have been added. • The practice guideline for dispensing contact lenses was updated to provide additional information on who is an established contact lens patient is and obtaining relevant health information before dispensing. • A standard has been developed to outline specific requirements when an optician performs orthokeratology.
Standard 5: Record Keeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The list of things that must be included in the patient record has been updated to include a requirement to include the original prescription in the patient health record, recording details in a patient file when services are discontinued or refused, financial records, notation of services provided to an existing patient and third party coverage. • A practice guideline for transferring patient records has been added. • A standard regarding electronic record keeping has been added. • A practice guideline for record keeping of “a-la-carte” services has been added to provide opticians with guidance for when there is the need to create a patient record when providing services to a person who is not an existing patient.

Standard 6: Patient Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The practice guideline, consent to provide health care services has been updated to define informed consent as well as considerations that must be taken when providing “a-la-carte” services.
Standard 7: Telepractice &Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standard has been introduced for telepractice. • Guidelines for telepractice and the delivery of optical devices has been developed and updated using feedback from the committee and focus group sessions.
Standard 9: Advertising and Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This standard has been developed to ensure any advertising material or social media platform or posts about an optician’s practice conforms with the College’s regulation.