



ALBERTA college  
of OPTOMETRISTS

*ANNUAL REPORT*

*TO*

*GOVERNMENT*

*2009*

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## President's Report

It has been my pleasure to serve as the President of the Alberta College of Optometrists (ACO) this past year. As a College, our mandate is to carry out our activities and govern our regulated members in a manner that protects and serves the public interest. Although our opinions and actions occasionally differ and conflict with those of the Alberta Association of Optometrists, I applaud the Association for their professionalism and drive to improve the accessibility and provision of vision care services in this province.

One of the main reasons I joined Council and eventually assumed the position of President was to eliminate antiquated legislative restrictions placed on the practice of optometry. I will continue to make this a priority and look forward to the day when all optometrists will be able to practice to their level of competence.

As the regulatory college for the profession in Alberta, we continue to have many challenges ahead of us. The Agreement on Internal Trade will change registration requirements in all provinces. We do not agree it is in the public's best interest to lower registration requirements to the lowest common denominator in Canada. We will continue discussions with other optometric regulatory bodies and the Federal Government to try to make appropriate changes to the legislation. The new Health Information Act will change the definition of custodian as well as the rules of health information transfer. The proposed changes should simplify the exchange of information between health care practitioners as well as ease the movement of optometrists to the Electronic Health Record, while still protecting a patient's right to privacy. The ACO Legislation Committee and Council will be extremely active this coming year reviewing proposed changes to the list of Restricted Activities as well as which professions will be allowed to perform these activities. In addition all professions have been told to plan for the potentially devastating effects of a global pandemic. The ACO is committed to reviewing and updating our current pandemic plan while co-operating with the provincial government to ensure competent practitioners are able to provide vision care services during a pandemic.

On a different note, I am very pleased to announce that we were able to replenish our cash reserves, pay the outstanding mortgage on our building and reduce member dues ahead of schedule. Although, we will continue to have minor yearly project costs (such as new signage on the front of the building), our "real estate" investment has made our financial situation very stable and robust.

On behalf of all members of the profession, I would like to take this moment to personally thank everyone who has taken personal and professional time to work on college committees. It is through members' expertise and commitment that the profession has remained strong throughout the years. For those of you who have not experienced the satisfaction of working on behalf of your profession, I urge you to contact any of your Council, our Registrar or myself and become an active volunteer. I promise that it will be an adventure well worth the effort.

I also wish to thank all members of the ACO Council for their support and input this past year. In particular, I wish to thank our Registrar, Dr. Gordon Hensel, for his dedication to our College and our profession. On several occasions he has proven to be an invaluable guide and advisor, making my role relatively effortless. I would also like to thank Mrs. Betty Gill for providing the bookkeeping and accounting services every organization requires. I would also like to personally thank our Past-President, Dr. Shane Keddie, for being a great mentor and persuading me to become involved with our College a few years ago. It has been a rewarding and invaluable experience.

In closing, I would like to take this time to express a **huge** thank-you to Mrs. Bonnie Sniedze for her 40 years of service to the profession. This will be the last AGM she attends as she is retiring in June next year. Bonnie started working at the Alberta Association of Optometrists under President Dr. Ron Lindberg in 1970 and served under every President since - many of whom are still active in either the Association or the College. She was the cement that held the profession together and her dedication and expertise will be greatly missed. On behalf of the entire profession, thank you Bonnie and I wish you all the best in your well-earned retirement.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Bourdeau, O.D.

# Registrar's Report

The Registrar is involved in many activities such as the preliminary handling of grievances, investigations of formal complaints, review of preliminary investigations, administration of new registrations, processing of optometric professional corporations and communication with other regulatory authorities, associations and government departments.

I am also very involved with the day-to-day operations of all Alberta College of Optometrists Standing and Ad-hoc committees. With the plethora of activity within each committee, I rely very heavily on the committee chairman and their members for their insight and initiative. These individuals should be commended for performing their statutory duties in a professional and compassionate manner. I join all regulated members in thanking:

## **A. Competence Committee**

Dr. Gary Watson - Chairman  
Dr. Rob Eastwood  
Dr. Peter McGuigan  
Dr. Sunil Mehta  
Dr. Sherri Norris  
Dr. Sandra Oshanyk  
Dr. Holly Parker  
Dr. Wesley Prince  
Dr. Christine Russo  
Dr. Dave Thomas  
Dr. Thomas Wilk

## **B. Hearings Director and Membership List**

Mrs. Bonnie Sniedze - Hearings Director  
Dr. Dennis Heimdahl  
Dr. Neil Starko  
Dr. Fran Tatabe  
Dr. Ernie Watson

## **C. Legislation Committee**

Dr. Mark Bourdeau - Chairman  
Dr. Riaz Ahmed  
Dr. Laura Dwernichuk  
Dr. Larry Kanters  
Dr. Craig McQueen  
Dr. Shane Smith

## **D. Mediators**

Dr. Troy Brady (Edmonton and area)  
Dr. Walter Cummings (Northern Alberta)  
Dr. Doug Howes (Southern Alberta)  
Dr. Wayne Klettke (Calgary and area)

### **E. Registration Committee**

Dr. Grant Balen - Chairman  
Dr. Kim Crowe  
Dr. Angela Endres  
Dr. Brian Mah

### **F. Canadian Examiners in Optometry**

Dr. Lori Jaffray - Alberta representative

I would also especially like to thank Mrs. Bonnie Sniedze for performing the daily activities in the College office in an extremely efficient and kindhearted manner. It is only due to her tireless and resourceful efforts that the ACO office continues to run smoothly and efficiently.

As of September 01, 2009, a total of 493 members, 311 Professional Corporations and 1 Limited Liability Partnership were registered with the Alberta College of Optometrists. The total number of regulated members increased by about 6% from last year (the number of female members increased 10% and the number of male members increased 2%). The current membership breakdown is as follows:

Female Regulated Members	197
Male Regulated Members	296
Total Regulated Members	493

A total of 3 interns also practice under direct supervision in the province – Drs. Mineshkumar Kutlerywala, Rowena Liamzon and Aleem Bandali.

On behalf of all regulated members, I would like to welcome the following optometrists who have registered with the ACO since last year's AGM:

Pooja Anand  
Chino Azenda  
John Barkley  
Charles Boulet  
Jenelle Brooks  
Nikko Brar  
Eliza Chaudri  
Salma Chakhachirou  
Stephanie Du  
Jasmintha Ellaurie  
Darryl Fabris – recently moved  
Jessica Galeano  
Raminder Gill  
Sharmin Habib  
Trevor Horn  
Keith Jefferies  
Zain Jivraj  
Waiko Lau  
Kobie Lee  
Ruby Mangat  
Tracey Mathew  
Geetika Mehra

Christy Mushtaler  
Aarti Nayar  
Tran Nguyen  
Jeffrey Nielson  
Navdeep Nijjar  
Patrick O'Brien  
Tariq Rajan  
Mark Ross  
Laura Ann Schmidt  
Jonathan Thom  
Linh Tu Trieu  
Loan Tu Trieu  
Kevin Tsen  
Sarah VanDerPutten  
Natalie Ulmer  
Sukhbir Virhia  
Bunny Virk  
Jay Whitehead  
Kelly Wild

I also serve as the ACO representative and Chair of CORA (Canadian Optometric Regulatory Authorities). We meet twice a year to discuss common issues and challenges, the CSAO national exams, the Canadian Examiners in Optometry, the Waterloo Bridging Program for international optometry graduates, plus legislation and registration requirements in each province. I also attend the CAO Leadership Forum on behalf of the ACO Council. In addition to these duties, I am also the designated contact person for TILMA, the Alberta Federation of Health Professions, the Health Quality Council of Alberta and Alberta Netcare.

Finally, I would like to thank all the regulated members that I have had the pleasure of interacting with this past year. As a self-regulating profession, our mandate is to protect and serve the public interest. Since this mandate may sometimes conflict with the personal interest of members of the profession, I thank you all for your understanding and co-operation as my duties can become difficult at times.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gordon Hensel O.D., F.A.A.O.  
Registrar, ACO

## Privacy Officer's Report

Privacy legislation attempts to balance an individual's right to have their personal information protected and the need of practitioners to collect, use and disclose personal information for purposes that are considered reasonable. Reasonableness can be best ensured from reviewing the situation from an independent, third party standpoint and being fair, rational and truthful.

Since last year's AGM, I have received one complaint with regard to a privacy impropriety. The matter involved the alleged misuse of privacy legislation to gather personal health information of a patient by an optometrist. Unfortunately, since the optometrist is now married to the former spouse of the patient, and marital matters have not been totally finalized by the court system yet, I requested that the Privacy Commissioner and the Courts deal with the matter. My personal opinion was that the optometrist acted properly and the complaint was vexatious. To date, I have not heard from either the Court or the Commissioner with regard to the case - I offered full disclosure of all documents to both parties.

As was the case in previous years, I received many telephone calls from regulated members wanting to know whether the utilization of a post-card type mail-out recall communication is appropriate. The ACO Council agrees with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner that any communication to your patients be done by either:

- a) By a post-card as long as this is stipulated in your Office Privacy Policy; or
- b) In a sealed envelope (when using Canada Post or a courier service); or
- b) Securely encrypted (when using email or other electronic means).

The Government is proposing changes to the Health Information Act. We will update all members when and if the new legislation is proclaimed.

The ACO web-site ([www.collegeofoptometrists.ab.ca](http://www.collegeofoptometrists.ab.ca)) has a complete summary of Privacy Legislation, your requirements as a health care practitioner and several templates to use to ensure your office remains compliant. If you have not already done so, please review these documents immediately and ensure that your office complies.

If you have any concerns or questions about privacy protocols, please review the privacy information in your ACO blue binder or on the ACO website. For further questions about specific issues not covered in the ACO blue binder or website, please contact the Alberta College of Optometrists office or the Privacy Commissioner of Alberta.

Respectfully submitted

Gordon Hensel O.D., F.A.A.O.  
Privacy Officer, ACO

## Registration Committee Report

The Registration Committee consists of the following members: Drs. Angela Endres, Brian Mah, Kim Crowe, and Grant Balen

The purpose of Registration Committee is to review applications for membership to the Alberta College of Optometrists based upon requirements set in the Health Professions Act, Optometrist's Regulation and Bylaws. The registration process is well detailed on the College's website by accessing the tab "Registration with the ACO".

The Registration Committee also creates the jurisprudence exam which is written by all new applicants seeking a practice permit. The results of the test are analyzed and questions are modified based on changes to the Health Professions Act, Optometrist's Regulation and Bylaws as well as test results. In 2009, 36 applicants wrote the test with all but one applicant passing on the first attempt.

A criminal record check has been added as an application requirement within the last year. All provinces have now incorporated this requirement for registration.

The Registration Committee would like to congratulate and welcome all new practitioners to Alberta.

Dr. Mona Purba resigned from the Registration Committee within the past year. Dr. Purba was a long time chairperson and I would like to thank Mona for her past leadership and dedication to this committee and the profession.

Respectfully submitted,

Grant Balen, O.D.  
Chairman

# Continuing Competence Committee Report

The Continuing Competence Committee's (CCC) mandate is to ensure members of this profession are practicing to the required Standards of Practice established by the Alberta College of Optometrists (ACO). The ACO defines competence as having the right skills to perform the right procedure, for the right person, at the right time.

The competency program is an evolving process. Over the past few years the following goals have been established and discussed at yearly think tanks and regular meetings:

- 1) Develop new concepts about how reviews are conducted and evaluated.
- 2) Design a new and simplified review form.
- 3) Develop a consistent process amongst our committee members regarding the method of conducting a review.

After numerous changes to our review form, I believe all three goals have been met. In the past, a practice review was simply checking that a certain number of tests were recorded in the patient's chart. While this is still important, the committee now functions in a more "outcome based" evaluation of a practitioner. The CCC believes this type of evaluation better reflects a practitioner's actual competence. The CCC continues to pursue new concepts and formats as our profession's responsibilities move forward and expand. Any changes in policy will be circulated to the membership via the ACO newsletter as well as ACO Advisories.

Of the 77 reviews conducted since the last AGM report, the following data is provided for your information. The committee meets twice a year and reviews each practitioner by registration number only and the committee as a whole determines all final outcomes.

Satisfactory & Satisfactory with minor notation:	61
Minor Remediation with 30-day compliance letter required:	11
Unsatisfactory with 90-day follow up required:	5

Minor remediation requires the practitioner to inform the CCC in writing within 30 days of receipt of the outcome of his/her review that he/she has complied with the requested improvements and requirements. (The Committee would appreciate that those members receiving this form of remediation note the required improvements, make the necessary changes in their practices, and respond within the 30-day time frame so as to avoid further action.) Major remediation requires a 90-day follow-up which is conducted by a different reviewer than the original reviewer to confirm that the required changes have been made by the practitioner. The follow-up review is conducted at the practitioner's cost and he/she would be billed accordingly by the College.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank committee members Drs. Peter McGuigan, Sherri Norris, Sandra Oshanyk, Rob Eastwood, Holly Parker, Christine Russo, Wes Prince, Sunil Mehta and our two new members, Drs. Thomas Wilk and Dave Thomas, for their dedication and commitment to the profession. They have done an excellent job on our behalf this past year. Their combined input respecting the development of our new review process is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank Mrs. Bonnie Sniedze (Administrative Assistant) for looking after the many details required by this committee and Dr. Gordon Hensel (Registrar) for his assistance and consultation regarding legislative matters. Every one of these individuals has contributed significantly to this important committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gary Watson, O.D.  
Chairman

## Complaint Director's Report

The Complaints Director is responsible for accepting written, signed complaints regarding regulated or former members, and fulfilling the College's mandate of public safety with proper investigation and resolution of these complaints.

Since last year's AGM, a total of 4 written complaints were received at the ACO office. One additional complaint was referred from one of our mediators. All formal complaints were dismissed due to insufficient or no evidence of unprofessional conduct. All complainants were satisfied with the thoroughness of the investigations and the reasonableness of the decisions; however, one patient requested a review by the Complaint Review Committee.

The complaints are summarized as follows:

- 1) The first complaint involved a patient who complained that an optometrist issued a prescription for new glasses and then was told one month later by an ophthalmologist that she required cataract surgery. The patient was angry that she would have to purchase another set of glasses after the cataract surgery. The optometrist was of the opinion that cataract surgery was not required as the patient was able to achieve 6/7.5 VA, with her new correction. The patient did elect to have the cataract surgery. Unfortunately, the surgery left the patient with the same 6/7.5 VA, glare problems and double vision (from a difference of about -5.00 between the two eyes). The optometrist adhered to the ACO Standards of Practice and I dismissed the case due to no evidence of unprofessional conduct. I also requested that the patient contact the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta regarding whether the ophthalmologist adhered to the Alberta Medical Association Clinical Practice Guidelines (which stipulates a lower VA before proceeding with cataract surgery). The patient did not agree with my decision and requested a review by a Complaint Review Committee. The patient did not want to lay a complaint against the ophthalmologist with the CPSA either.
- 2) The second complaint involved a patient who complained about an optometrist's "warranty period" for returning glasses. The patient purchased glasses 1 ½ years before returning back to the optometrist for a refund. The optometrist's office has an established written 90 day return policy. No communication between the patient and optometrist occurred during this 1 ½ year period with regard to the glasses not working properly. The case was dismissed due to no evidence of unprofessional conduct. The patient agreed with the decision.
- 3) The third complaint involved a patient who thought he was charged for 'Nikon' product, but was given a different brand. The preliminary investigator found lab invoices for the patient and his family for Nikon product and an independent lab verified the lenses to be Nikon product. The only difference was that the father had his original Nikon progressive bifocals changed to another brand due to an inability to adapt to the original lens. The case was dismissed due to no evidence of unprofessional conduct.

- 4) The fourth complaint involved a patient who suffered a retinal detachment two weeks after visiting an optometrist because of “floaters”. The patient subsequently left for a vacation and suffered the detachment. The exam findings and retinal photographs taken at the original exam did not show any detachment. The patient chart also had a notation about counseling on symptoms and signs of a retinal detachment. The subsequent exam and retinal photographs did show the detachment and the patient was referred for emergency surgery. The patient did not feel that they were properly advised at the original exam and should not have been allowed to travel on vacation. The optometrist did follow the appropriate ACO Standards of Practice and the case was dismissed due to no evidence of unprofessional conduct.
- 5) The one additional complaint that was referred by the ACO Edmonton mediator was from a patient who complained that her optometrist did not provide her with her P.D. This complaint was lost to further communication once I explained that a P.D. measurement was not part of a regular eye exam, but rather part of a dispensing service. I e-mailed the patient a copy of the ACO Advisory about optical prescriptions and contact lens specifications and P.D. measurements. The patient did not return any of my calls after I provided this information.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Drs. Annette Brouwer, Charles Klettke and Dwayne Lonsdale who each performed preliminary investigations at my request this past year in a compassionate and professional manner.

Respectfully submitted,

Gordon Hensel, O.D., F.A.A.O.

## **Mediator's Report Southern Alberta**

I received 4 patient complaints this past year. The nature of these complaints include: Unhappy with glasses, feeling a doctor missed diagnosing glaucoma, and questioning the need for exams as frequently as the doctor suggested.

All issues were resolved quickly as I received excellent co-operation from the doctors involved. I especially wish to thank each of them for their assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Howes, O.D.  
Chairman

## **Mediator's Report Calgary and Area**

This past reporting period I dealt with 11 mediations. Two of these concerned fees charged, 2 dealt with failure to release contact lens specifications, and the remainder were issues involving spectacle prescriptions.

All of the mediations were successfully resolved to the patients' satisfaction. Once again I would like to commend the membership for their pro-active approach to keeping lines of communication with patients open, dealing with issues as they arise, and keeping patient complaints to a minimum.

I also appreciate the willingness of the members to resolve mediations in a prompt and professional manner when they do arise.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne Klettke, O.D.  
Chairman

## **Mediator's Report Edmonton and Area**

From October 2008 to September 1, 2009 a total of 16 complaints required mediation.

Eight of the complaints dealt with problems with contact lenses or glasses. Of these complaints, five were solved through mediation, two patients were unable to be contacted as the contact information received by the College was incorrect, and one did not require any mediation as the patient had already had her concerns addressed by the practitioner.

Four complaints dealt with perceived poor treatment of the patient and/or unprofessional conduct by the member. Three of those complaints were successfully dealt with through mediation. One complaint was referred to the Registrar in the form of a more formal complaint.

One complaint involved the release of the patient's P.D. measurement for the purchase of spectacles through the internet. This complaint was also referred back to the Registrar as a more formal complaint.

One complaint dealt with a patient having problems with spectacles purchased at an optical location owned by an optician. This was referred to the College of Opticians. Unfortunately, the College of Opticians stated that the individual dispensing the eyeglasses was not one of their registered members.

One complaint involved a patient between the age of 19 and 64 being billed for a service which he felt should be covered under Alberta Health Care. This complaint was successfully dealt with through mediation.

One complaint dealt with the access of patient information from a third party by the member without the consent of the patient. This complaint was referred to the Privacy Officer.

Most complaints could be avoided if better communications existed between the optometrist and patient. I would recommend that members encourage their staff to alert them when there are significant patient concerns so that these concerns may be dealt with directly by the member prior to the patient actually involving the College.

Respectfully submitted,

Troy Brady, B.Sc., O.D.  
Chairman

## **Mediator's Report Northern Alberta**

A total of 3 complaints were registered this past year.

One complaint involved the patient being argumentative and refusing to believe the optometrist's diagnosis whereby a patient/doctor confrontation ensued. The complainant's viewpoint was not obtained as I was unable to locate the patient.

In the second case the patient felt he was not treated respectfully by the practitioner. This was easily resolved and the optometrist apologized for his unintentional demeanour.

The third case involving a slow referral to a glaucoma specialist caused a grievance. This case is in the process of being resolved. Unfortunately, there was difficulty in obtaining a quick referral to the glaucoma specialist. Patient dissatisfaction might not have occurred had the O.D., after discovering that the glaucoma specialist's appointment could not be scheduled promptly, referred the patient to another ophthalmologist in order for the patient to be expediently assessed.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter Cummings, O.D.  
Chairman

## **Hearings Director's Report**

A member appealed his/her case to the Alberta Court of Appeal and the Court upheld the Decision of the Hearing Tribunal and the decision regarding the subsequent Appeal to Council.

No other hearings are scheduled in 2009 as at the time of writing this report.

Respectfully submitted,

(Mrs.) Bonnie L. Sniedze  
Acting Director

## **Complaint Review Committee Report**

The Complaint Review Committee (CRC) has two purposes:

- a) Review, amend, ratify or refuse to ratify a proposed settlement from an Alternative Complaint Resolution (ACR); and,
- b) Review a dismissal of a complaint by the Complaints Director (CD).

The Committee is made up of two representatives from the ACO membership List and one publicly appointed individual. Since decisions made by the CD are always made without discussions or consultations with any outside party, the CRC is a necessary process that ensures that the public interest is always served and that nepotism or favoritism never influences the outcome of a complaint. All complainants are given the option of requesting a complaint review if their complaint had been dismissed.

During this past year, we had only one request (from a complainant) to review the decision of the Complaints Director to dismiss a complaint. The details of the case have already been summarized under (a) in the 2009 Complaints Director AGM Report. Upon careful review of all documents and submissions, the committee agreed that the Complaints Director made the correct decision to dismiss the complaint due to insufficient evidence of unprofessional conduct.

Respectfully submitted,

Neil Starko, O.D.

On behalf of Drs. Dennis Heimdahl, Ernest Watson and Fran Tatebe

## **Membership List - Hearing Tribunal Report**

The Membership List consists of the following ACO members: Drs. Dennis Heimdahl, Neil Starko, Fran Tatebe and Ernie Watson.

No hearings were held since the last AGM Report and none are anticipated as at the time of writing this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Neil Starko, O.D.

On behalf of Drs. Dennis Heimdahl, Ernest Watson and Fran Tatebe

## Public Members Report

During 2009 the Council of the Alberta College of Optometrists was served by two public members: Gary Christopherson of Grimshaw, and Gayle Stevens-Guille of Edmonton.

Public members are normally appointed for 3-year terms. Gayle Stevens-Guille has completed her first term. During the summer, she was appointed to a second 3-year term by Order-in-Council. Gary Christopherson's second 3-year term will end in August 2010. Thus, unless he is reappointed, this will be his last AGM.

If this is the case, Gary wishes to thank his colleagues on Council, the staff and membership for six exciting years.<sup>1</sup> It has been a pleasure working with a profession so thoroughly dedicated to serving the public.

There have been perceptual changes in the last six years in terms of defining the public interest and the role of government. Over the years Council has responded by becoming more policy oriented. The two public members have participated in this process and acknowledge the flexibility and professionalism of the elected councillors and their staff.

Following is the Report of the Public Members.

### **The ACO and the HPA**

In 2003, with the passing of the Optometrist Profession Regulation, Optometry in Alberta fell under the purview of the Health Professions Act (HPA). The HPA requires each self-governing health profession to create a regulatory college. The colleges are given considerable responsibilities and powers.

The responsibilities require colleges to:

- Regulate its members in a manner that protects and serves the public interest.
- Provide direction to and regulate the practice of the profession.
- Establish and enforce standards for registration and of continuing competence and standards of practice.
- Establish and enforce a code of ethics.

The public members note the dedicated commitment of the Alberta College of Optometrists to these responsibilities. Indeed, the public members note with alacrity the general commitment of the membership to the principals of self-regulation.

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<sup>1</sup> During the six years from 2004 to 2009 inclusive, Council was led by: Ken Carlson (2004), Bob De Mara (2005), Gary Wetmore (2006), Gerry Leinweber (2007), Shane Keddie (2008) and Mark Boudreau (2009).

## **The Public Members**

The Health Professions Act also dictates that all self-regulated professions include public representation on their boards. The reason is to provide balance, transparency and of course, to ensure the public interest is protected. Balance is provided, in the case of the ACO, by the ratio of six optometrists to two members of the general public as voting members on the College Board. (The immediate past president of the College also sits as a non-voting director.) The public members examine issues through a “public interest filter” that is not rooted within the profession. Consequently, our contribution to Council debate is often based on perceptions of equity.

Your public members thoroughly enjoy working on Council, and participating in debates. From time to time we are challenged by our lack of detailed knowledge about vision care. However, we have always appreciated the support of the ODs on Council and the registrar in guiding us through difficult issues.

## **Effect of Regulation**

The public members note that amongst the health care professions, optometry has earned a significant reputation for its competence and public service. This may be a consequence of regulation, but more likely it is a tribute to the quality of the women and men that make up the profession.

A measure of this competence is the observation that patient complaints are amongst the lowest of all the health care professions. This finding is the ultimate assurance that the ACO and its members are providing a service which supports the public interest and the regulatory framework of the HPA.

Respectfully submitted,

Gayle Stevens-Guille and Gary Christopherson  
Public Members on Council

2009

Audited Financial Statement

**ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2009

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2009

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## AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of Alberta College of Optometrists:

We have audited the statement of financial position of Alberta College of Optometrists as at December 31, 2009 and the statements of changes in net assets, operations and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the College's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College as at December 31, 2009, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

March 3, 2010  
Edmonton, Alberta

*Tejpar LLP*

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

## Statement of Financial Position As at December 31, 2009

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	2009	2008
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current Assets:	\$	\$
Cash	513,581	495,205
Marketable securities, <i>Note 3</i>	645,752	345,065
Accounts receivable	59,969	17,861
Due from related party, <i>Note 4</i>	-	206,655
Prepaid expenses	<u>12,000</u>	<u>12,000</u>
Total current assets	1,231,302	1,076,786
Capital Assets, <i>Note 5</i>	<u>701,288</u>	<u>736,916</u>
	<u>1,932,590</u>	<u>1,813,702</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	17,235	20,615
Due to related party, <i>Note 4</i>	12,648	-
Callable debt due within one year	-	40,000
Members' dues collected in advance	<u>499,700</u>	<u>574,250</u>
Total current liabilities	529,583	634,865
Due to Related Party, <i>Note 4</i>	-	13,309
Callable Debt, <i>Note 6</i>	<u>-</u>	<u>100,000</u>
Total liabilities	<u>529,583</u>	<u>748,174</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Investment in Capital Assets	701,288	596,916
Internally Restricted for Competency Review, <i>Note 7</i>	-	2,126
Unrestricted	<u>701,719</u>	<u>466,486</u>
Net Assets	<u>1,403,007</u>	<u>1,065,528</u>
	<u>1,932,590</u>	<u>1,813,702</u>

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

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*The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of these financial statements.*

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

## Statement of Changes in Net Assets For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

	2009			
	Unrestricted	Restricted for Competency Review	Invested in Capital Assets	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance, beginning of year	466,486	2,126	596,916	1,065,528
Excess of revenues (expenditures)	375,376	-	(37,897)	337,479
Internally restricted for competency review, <i>Note 7</i>	2,126	(2,126)	-	-
Investment in capital assets	<u>(142,269)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>142,269</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance, end of year	<u>701,719</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>701,288</u>	<u>1,403,007</u>
	2008			
	Unrestricted	Restricted for Competency Review	Invested in Capital Assets	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance, beginning of year	86,940	2,126	808,303	897,369
Excess of revenues (expenditures)	210,031	-	(41,872)	168,159
Investment in capital assets	<u>169,515</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(169,515)</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance, end of year	<u>466,486</u>	<u>2,126</u>	<u>596,916</u>	<u>1,065,528</u>

*The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of these financial statements.*

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

## Statement of Operations For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

	2009			2008 Actual \$
	Actual \$	Budget \$	Variance Favourable (Unfavourable) \$	
<b>Revenues:</b>				
Member dues	583,200	567,000	16,200	551,300
Fines and cost recoveries	91,480	12,000	79,480	370
Rental income	8,553	12,000	(3,447)	11,949
Rental income adjustment	-	-	-	(18,336)
Application and registration fees	22,545	10,850	11,695	25,175
Professional Corporation dues	26,750	16,900	9,850	27,050
Interest	6,425	5,150	1,275	14,389
	<u>738,953</u>	<u>623,900</u>	<u>115,053</u>	<u>611,897</u>
<b>Expenditures:</b>				
Administrative and executive, <i>Schedule I</i>	298,025	357,300	59,275	324,185
College committees, <i>Schedule II</i>	65,552	141,500	75,948	77,681
	<u>363,577</u>	<u>498,800</u>	<u>135,223</u>	<u>401,866</u>
Excess of revenues before other expenditures	<u>375,376</u>	<u>125,100</u>	<u>250,276</u>	<u>210,031</u>
<b>Other expenditures (recovery):</b>				
Amortization	37,897	-	(37,897)	41,872
Capital recovery	-	(221,000)	(221,000)	-
Contingency	-	16,164	16,164	-
Mortgage principal	-	40,000	40,000	-
	<u>37,897</u>	<u>(164,836)</u>	<u>(202,733)</u>	<u>41,872</u>
Excess of revenues	<u>337,479</u>	<u>289,936</u>	<u>47,543</u>	<u>168,159</u>

*The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of these financial statements.*

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

## Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

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CASH PROVIDED FROM (USED IN):	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
	\$	\$
OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Excess of revenues	337,479	168,159
Amortization	<u>37,897</u>	<u>41,872</u>
	375,376	210,031
Changes to non-cash operating assets and liabilities:		
Accounts receivable	(42,108)	5,384
Prepaid expenses	-	(12,000)
Accounts payable	(3,380)	(25,561)
Members' dues collected in advance	<u>(74,550)</u>	<u>38,750</u>
	<u>255,338</u>	<u>216,604</u>
FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Net change due to related party	(661)	13,309
Payments on callable debt	<u>(140,000)</u>	<u>(399,999)</u>
	<u>(140,661)</u>	<u>(386,690)</u>
INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES:		
Net change to marketable securities	(300,687)	(160,718)
Net change to due from related party	206,655	(206,655)
Purchase of capital assets	(2,269)	(78,785)
Proceeds on disposal of capital assets	-	410,000
Amount receivable on disposal of capital assets	<u>-</u>	<u>238,299</u>
	<u>(96,301)</u>	<u>202,141</u>
INCREASE TO CASH	18,376	32,055
CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR	<u>495,205</u>	<u>463,150</u>
CASH, END OF YEAR	<u>513,581</u>	<u>495,205</u>
SUPPLEMENTAL DISCLOSURE:		
Interest received	<u>10,312</u>	<u>13,418</u>
Interest paid	<u>1,445</u>	<u>22,781</u>

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*The accompanying notes and schedules are an integral part of these financial statements.*

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

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### 1. PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION:

Alberta College of Optometrists is responsible for the registration, conduct and discipline of optometrists in Alberta and strives to ensure that the practice and promotion of optometry is conducted in the best interests of the public. Alberta College of Optometrists is incorporated under the Health Professions Act and is a not-for-profit organization under the Income Tax Act.

### 2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES:

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles and reflect the following policies:

#### (a) Marketable Securities:

Marketable securities are valued at the lower of cost and quoted market value.

#### (b) Capital Assets and Amortization:

Amortization is recorded using the following annual rates, without residual values:

Building	5% declining balance
Asphalt and parking areas	10% straight-line
Furniture	20% straight-line

#### (c) Revenue Recognition:

Alberta College of Optometrists follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Unrestricted contributions and internally restricted investment income are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

#### (d) Donated Services:

The work of the College is dependent on the voluntary services of many individuals. Since these services are not normally purchased by the College and because of the difficulty of determining their fair market value, donated services are not recognized in these financial statements.

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

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### 2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES, Continued:

#### (e) Use of Estimates:

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

### 3. MARKETABLE SECURITIES:

Marketable securities consist of term deposits and an investment savings account capable of prompt liquidation. These investments are recorded at cost plus accrued interest, which approximates market value. Interest rates on term deposits range from 0.2% to 0.5%.

### 4. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS:

- (a) The College and the Alberta Association of Optometrists (AAO), an organization with common membership, share certain common expenses paid to outside third parties. Reimbursements to AAO during the current year amounted to \$34,757 (2008 - \$89,082).

In addition, during the prior year AAO purchased real estate from the College for total proceeds of \$648,299. \$410,000 of this amount was received in the prior year and the remaining \$238,299 was received in the current year from AAO.

These transactions are in the ordinary course of operations and are measured at the exchange amount, which is the amount of consideration established and agreed to by the related parties.

- (b) The balance receivable at year-end, without security, interest or specified terms of repayment is nil (2008 - \$206,655).
- (c) The balance payable at year-end, without security or interest is \$12,648 (2008 - \$13,309).

In addition, accounts payable includes \$2,614 (2008 - \$2,959) due to AAO.

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# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

5. CAPITAL ASSETS AND ACCUMULATED AMORTIZATION:

	2009		2008	
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Land	189,188	-	189,188	189,188
Building	561,739	77,029	484,710	511,477
Furniture	106,015	87,332	18,683	26,300
Asphalt and parking areas	12,439	3,732	8,707	9,951
	<u>869,381</u>	<u>168,093</u>	<u>701,288</u>	<u>736,916</u>

6. CALLABLE DEBT:

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
Demand term bank loan repaid during the year	-	140,000
Callable debt due within one year	-	40,000
Due beyond one year	-	100,000

7. RESTRICTIONS ON NET ASSETS:

In 2000, a special levy was assessed for purposes of conducting a competency review in accordance with the Health Professions Act. These funds, in the amount of \$34,000 plus investment income, were internally restricted for expenditures relating to the completion of the competency review. As at December 31, 2008 the balance remaining in this fund was \$2,126. Based on the motion passed at the 2009 Annual General Meeting, these funds have been transferred to Unrestricted Net Assets as at December 31, 2009.

8. CREDIT FACILITIES:

The College has access to a revolving credit facility with a maximum limit of \$10,000. This facility is secured by a general security agreement, bears interest at prime plus 0.75% per annum and has a balance outstanding of nil as at December 31, 2009.

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

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9. COMPARATIVE FIGURES:

Certain of the 2008 comparative figures have been reclassified to conform with the financial statement presentation adopted for 2009.

10. BUDGETS:

Budget information, while not forming a part of the audited financial statements, is included for information purposes.

11. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS:

The College's financial instruments consist of cash, marketable securities, accounts receivable, accounts payable and due to related party. It is management's opinion that the College is not exposed to significant currency or credit risks arising from these financial instruments. Unless otherwise noted, the fair value of these financial instruments approximates their carrying values.

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

Schedules to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

<u>Administrative and Executive</u>	<u>SCHEDULE I</u>			
	2009			
	Actual	Budget	Variance Favourable (Unfavourable)	2008 Actual
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Annual general meeting	5,382	7,000	1,618	3,959
Audit	6,510	8,500	1,990	6,363
Bank charges	2,156	2,000	(156)	2,163
Building - insurance	1,239	2,000	761	1,128
Building - loan interest	1,445	5,000	3,555	22,781
Building - property tax	7,327	10,000	2,673	4,993
Building - repairs and maintenance	10,912	10,000	(912)	13,134
Building - utilities	5,988	8,000	2,012	9,859
Computer maintenance	23,157	8,500	(14,657)	31,058
Council travel, accommodation and per diem	38,745	41,200	2,455	27,406
Honorarium	12,000	12,000	-	12,000
Insurance	678	2,500	1,822	887
Legal fees - disciplinary action	21,930	20,000	(1,930)	12,589
Legal fees - general	669	20,000	19,331	6,921
Office supplies	4,557	8,600	4,043	5,471
Postage and courier	7,070	8,000	930	10,064
Printing	5,585	8,000	2,415	9,158
Telephone	5,357	6,000	643	5,414
Wages, benefits and subcontract	137,318	170,000	32,682	138,837
	298,025	357,300	59,275	324,185

# ALBERTA COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS

Schedules to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2009

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	<u>College Committees</u>			SCHEDULE II
	2009		Variance	2008
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Favourable</u> <u>(Unfavourable)</u>	<u>Actual</u>
	\$	\$	\$	\$
CORA/CEO	6,783	20,000	13,217	17,289
Communications and Public Relations	3,011	5,000	1,989	4,087
Competence Committee	52,495	60,000	7,505	44,906
Continuing Competence Program	-	2,000	2,000	-
Hearings Tribunal	-	12,000	12,000	908
Intra/Interprofessional Relations	-	3,000	3,000	-
Legislative	500	6,000	5,500	500
Mediation (Complaints Resolution)	1,676	1,000	(676)	7,534
Planning	-	1,000	1,000	-
Preliminary Investigation	-	5,000	5,000	-
Registration	1,087	1,500	413	2,457
Think tank	-	25,000	25,000	-
	<u>65,552</u>	<u>141,500</u>	<u>75,948</u>	<u>77,681</u>