2011 Annual Report



YOUR VISION, OUR FOCUS



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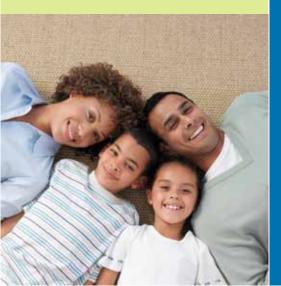
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OUR MISSION

To protect the public by keeping them informed and by pro-actively regulating and educating our members.

OUR VISION

To be dedicated to providing quality service by competent and educated health practitioners. We strive to achieve our vision by being progressive, accountable and accessible to the public and our members.

OUR VALUES

Accountable, Ethical, Fair, Effective, Open, Transparent



OFFICE STAFF

The initiatives we undertake to better serve our members and the public are completed with hard work by our staff.

Maureen Hussey, RO, RCLP - Executive Director/ Registrar

Belinda Swann, RO, RCLP - Regulatory Standards Director/ Complaints Director/Privacy Officer

Kristie Gross - Executive Assistant

Lynda Willey - Registration Administrator

Kristina Glover - Administrative Assistant

Zaneta Ilievska - Accounting Manager

Drew Jeffries, RO, RCLP - Consultant

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YOUR VISION, OUR FOCUS

INTRODUCTION

About the College

The College of Opticians of Alberta (COA) is the regulatory body established to govern the practice of Opticianry in Alberta.

The College of Opticians of Alberta (COA) exists to regulate and improve the practice of Opticianry by ensuring that Opticians provide quality professional care in eye health.

The College of Opticians of Alberta (COA) was established in 1965. The COA ensures Opticians are providing competent and effective care to their patients. The main function of the COA is to protect the public.

The COA is responsible for:

- Assessment, registration and licensing of all Opticians and Contact Lens Practitioners in Alberta
- Interpretation of the Health Professions Act, the Opticians Regulation and the Opticians Act
- Public and registrant complaints and inquiries
- Establishment of standards of practice and guidelines
- Monitor the competence of Opticians by continuing education
- Protect the public from unsafe or unethical Opticianry practice
- Protect the use of regulated title designation and initials, RO and RCLP
- Review the professional conduct of members based on complaints
- Provide continuing competency to Opticians that will promote ethical practice and provide tools and resources for our Opticians to continue to enhance their knowledge and skills



About the Profession

The College of Opticians of Alberta was established as the Alberta Guild of Ophthalmic Dispensers in 1965, became the Alberta Opticians Association under the Opticians Act in 1992 and most recently was proclaimed under the Health Professions Act as the College of Opticians of Alberta in March of 2011. The regulatory function of the college is not new to Opticians although the new name establishes it beyond doubt.

We have been assigned three public members who participate at our board of director's level. They are provided an incentive by the government to ensure impartiality but they participate fully in the operations. We are very happy with the caliber of volunteer for the public member positions and wish to extend our thanks not only to the government for providing them but to each individual for their healthy and helpful involvement.

The board operates in a fairly informal fashion which allows participation at all levels. It is not unusual that the president will be seen with pink hair and the Registrar bald in support of the members' activities. Elections are held at the Annual General Meeting and each term is three years as outlined in the bylaws. Two Committees have been established to assist in newly required functions to assure that staff members are supported in decision making. We have established a Complaint Advisory Committee which is not required, to give assistance to a fledgling Complaint Director. We have also established a Registration Committee to assist the Registrar in difficult decision making and a Finance and Audit Committee to provide consultation and oversight.

Our financial year extends from the beginning of January to the end of December for each year. Our registration year matches this with renewal required before December 1st of each year to facilitate shipping of current Practice Permits to be displayed prominently as required. Our continuing competence cycle extends for three years for all members from July 1, 2011 to June 30 2014.

We have developed a membership list for providing qualified people to sit on Hearing Tribunals and Complaint Review Committees. Since we are fairly inexperienced with hearings and appeals we have been taking advantage of many extensive training opportunities.

The COA also serves Opticians as the Association within Alberta. We provide opportunities for learning and growth of the members and opportunities for members to get out into the community to work with the public in a volunteer capacity. Under our member services blanket is the communications committee which is working with national groups to brand the profession and communicate with the public who opticians are and what we do. Other committees in this vein are those that work toward the annual convention to provide lifelong learning opportunities and address the interests of the members in training and education. There are also those that deal with assisting the students in success outside of the educational institution and those that connect with the community through attendance at such functions as Grey Matters, Hair Massacure, Homeless Connect or travel to other countries assisting in bringing better vision abroad.



We present this report with approval and on behalf of the Council of the College of Opticians of Alberta. It gives us a sense of satisfaction to be counted among the Regulated Health Professions governed under the umbrella legislation of the Health Professions Act of Alberta.

Opticians work within the Eyecare field as part of a team

Opticians are one of the three health professions that are concerned with eyes and eye health. The other two "O's" responsible for eyes are Ophthalmologists, and Optometrists.

Opticians are health professionals trained to supply, prepare and dispense optical appliances. Opticians interpret prescriptions prescribed by Ophthalmologists and Optometrists while considering factors that affect the design, fabrication and verification of the finished appliance. When the appliance is complete, Opticians then fit, adjust and adapt the corrective optical appliances as required. In Alberta, Opticians and Contact Lens Practitioners are regulated by the College of Opticians of Alberta.

Ophthalmologists are medical doctors who specialize in eye and vision care, diagnosis and the treatment of eye diseases and provide eye exams, prescribe corrective lenses, prescribe and administer medication and perform surgery.

Optometrists are health professionals trained to address the eye and visual system and ocular motor disorders and dysfunctions of the eye and visual system and diagnose disorders. An Optometrist prescribes and dispenses corrective devices and prescribes therapeutic drugs.



Rick Miller

President Message

Well, it's been another eventful year at the College of Opticians of Alberta. I think this year should be designated "the year of giving", the college was challenged by Anthony to participate in the Valentine's Day Hair Massacure as team Optician. Many of you may have seen us sporting pink hair and in some cases no hair. I participated and dyed my hair pink (and suffered quite a few chuckles and stares) and was thrilled to raise over \$2,100 in donations to help bring team Optician over the \$10,000 mark. All the proceeds went to support the Stollery Children's Hospital, and the Make a Wish foundation, two great causes that truly make a difference in sick children's lives. I was also moved when I heard of Belinda Swann's initiative at Christmas to help out families in need, her and the girls from the office delivered hampers to help three Edmonton families this Christmas. It appealed to me so much I decided to support a family of four in Lethbridge as well. It was such a good feeling, I will be doing it for many years to come, I encourage everyone to give back to the community in whichever way you are moved or interested in. It is good for the community, yourself, and brings recognition to what most of us became Opticians for in the first place, to help people.

It was good to see that there were more people tossing their hat in the ring this year for council, it has been a while since we have had an election and thanks to those who showed interest in running for council. Thanks to Nola, member services, and the staff, for another great convention and AGM this year in Calgary. It was a real honour for us, your council to receive a standing ovation from the membership. Thanks so much everyone, for your show of support for us, sometimes on council we wonder if the decisions we make will be well received, and if the membership is in favour of what we do. This year it was apparent that we must be doing something right, it has been a monumental year with us being announced as a College by the Alberta government. If that wasn't enough we also purchased and moved into a new office that will give us financial stability, decreased monthly overhead, and room to grow into the 21st century.

When I first started on council we joked around about how great it would be if we could actually purchase our own office, and stop paying rent, and now just 4 short years later that dream has turned into a reality. Thanks so much Mel for the financial wizardry and Nola for looking at some very "interesting" real estate, and doing the groundwork to find the best home for us, and the rest of the council and staff for all the hard work and decisions to make it a reality.

Last year's convention in Calgary, was one of the more interesting ones I have attended in a while. The stand out to me was the Sunday panel on internet dispensing. Kudos go to Robert Dalton and the Opticians Association of Canada for putting together a very timely and informative discussion of the hottest topic that is on everyone's mind these days. There has been much discussion, which has at times turned heated, in the internet dispensing debate. I am old enough to remember the hew and cry that laser eye surgery would make Opticians obsolete. Today, years later there are more Opticians than ever, there are more dispensaries than ever, and the profession is growing and thriving, and giving more opportunities than ever for Opticians. Don't fear the Internet, or technology, embrace it, and you will find years from now we will be looking back on this paradigm shift and saying "remember when we thought internet dispensing would make Opticians obsolete, that is almost as funny as when we thought all the computers would crash and the world would come to an end in the year 2000."

Respectfully Submitted,

Rick Miller, RO, RCLP COA President



Maureen Hussey

Executive Director/Registrar

I am pleased to announce that as of March 23, 2011 we were proclaimed the College of Opticians of Alberta under the Health Professions Act. This re organization meant, among other things, having new Bylaws which have now been posted.

We have worked this year in several regulatory areas specifically Mandatory Registration, the introduction of Practice Review and the continuation of the code of conduct courses.

Mandatory Registration was introduced to us under the Health Professions Act HPA. It is the understanding that anyone who is trained and educated as a health professional and is eligible for registration must register with the appropriate College. The concept is that a trained health professional must be accountable for their own actions and cannot hide behind another's registration in the same or a different college. This is a hot topic and we are having to fight through the process. The first step has been to go after those who were at one time registered and have let their license lapse. Many of these former members are still practicing as Opticians but have not kept up their registrations. There have been misunderstandings such as the thought that if I do not call myself an optician I do not have to register. It is true that if you are not registered you may not call yourself an optician. This protection of title is clear in the Health Professions act.

This title protection, however, is covered in a completely separate area from Mandatory Registration. Another misconception is that an Optometrist may shelter an Optician under their license. While it is true that an Optometrist may hire untrained individuals and have them working in their office under their responsibility, it is not true for an optician in that same situation. If you were trained and got the job because of your knowledge in dispensing why would someone else be accountable for how you perform. It makes no sense to let your license lapse and be under the power of another if you are capable of doing it yourself. Now the law just follows the logic. The law and the logic say that a licensed person is competent and an unlicensed person has not proven their competence.

Practice Review is also something that the HPA has allowed. We plan to have the program vetted by the end of this year and have it running at full capacity by January. The concept is assisting Opticians to excel in practice. We plan to offer best practice advice and the opportunity to retrain in areas where competence is low. This is part of the continuing competency program and is not designed as a disciplinary module.

The Code of Conduct courses are not new. We introduced the first module for the last three year cycle of continuing education. All current members have undertaken the ethics module. The next two modules have to do with the Health Professions Act, regulations and bylaws as well as diverse topics from the Health Information Act and PIPA to the employers obligations. Module two and three will be required to complete this current three year cycle. As before each module will be worth five continuing competency credits so half of most members three year requirement can be attained with these two modules and is available on line. These are mandatory modules. Module four will be introduced in the next cycle. Together these four Code of Conduct modules make up Opticians Jurisprudence requirements under the HPA.

We have utilized the funding provided by the Government to implement a project of Occupational Health and Safety. We used the services of a standard setting group in Edmonton called Yardstick. They have a solid reputation in psych matriculation and employ several PHDs in this area. With the funding we have developed a list of competencies for Opticians. This series of competencies has been sent to the National Organization to have them vetted by a larger group. The next steps include implementing them into the standards of practice and into the practice audits. We are also working to develop a training module for Opticians to help improve practice. We are considering using the course as part of the practice audit.



Executive Director/Registrar continued

On the national front we have applied for and received funding to revisit all of the competencies for Opticians and will be offering some of your expertise to the national program to introduce new practices and to vet the existing competencies.

This is necessary from time to time to make sure the competencies that we require you to learn and update are current and cover new technology. If any of you are interested in participating in focus groups or in national surveys please contact the office and give your information to Kristina. This funding also covers the data base project that we worked on last year. The other provinces will be brought up to speed with that project and we will gain any new pieces that are added. Next year we will be focusing on introducing the updated competencies to the education and examination processes nationally. As you can imagine, this all-encompassing project will take some resources besides the funding that has been received.

The council and staff have undertaken a series of charity events over the past year including volunteering for Homeless Connect, providing and delivering Christmas Hampers and securing a team for the St. Valentine's Day Hair Massacure. Many thanks, to all the members of Team Optician for the Hair Massacure. We were a team of 16 members with all pinking with 10 of those shaving too.

We raised in excess of \$10,000.00 for the three charities involved. Besides this we have sent representatives to the HSBAA event in Calgary and have been working with the CNIB to promote healthy vision. Do you have ideas of how we can participate in local or provincial events to promote vision and health? The College of Opticians and the Licensed Optician campaign wants to participate in more community outreach. Let us know how we can help.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Hussey, RO, RCLP Executive Director/Registrar



Dr. Sibylla Lane



Pam Crosby



Judy Hierlihy

Public Members

It is with sincere respect for the significant accomplishments of the College of Opticians of Alberta (COA) over the past year that we, the public members to the Council, submit the following report on our activities as Public Members. We have felt privileged and honoured to work with such a dynamic group of professionals who are truly committed to creating a standard of excellence for optician services within the province of Alberta.

By way of introduction, we were appointed by the Government of Alberta to the College of Opticians of Alberta as Public Members. Judy Hierlihy was appointed based on past work as a healthcare professional, a volunteer and a board member.

Dr Sibylla lane was appointed based on her record of volunteer work, her qualifications as an accountant, senior manager, and academic qualifications in Strategy and Management Information Systems.

Pam Crosby is a new addition to the Board as a public member. Pam has been appointed based on her experience in Board Governance and strategic planning. A third public member is required by the government as your association of Opticians have now reached the position of being a College and is under the Health Act in Alberta. Our contributions to the College have also been based on strong backgrounds and experience in governance and operations within a variety of not-for-profit organizations.

In our volunteer capacity as Public Members, our focus on Council has been to actively support the COA within three key areas. Specifically, these were related to the development and attainment of its strategic directions as a health profession; to ensure the interests of the COA membership were balanced with those of the public; and to actively participate in the governance of the COA through contributions to decisions and discussions surrounding COA accountabilities and professional responsibilities.

We have had the opportunity to contribute to the development and attainment of the COA's strategic directions as a health profession by:

- Regularly attending meetings and any planned retreats and actively participating in a variety of discussions that included seeking clarification on issues being faced by the COA and contributing to strategies to raise the profile of the College and public awareness,
- Acquiring an improved understanding of the Optician profession and workings of the COA Council,
- Challenging the College regarding its practices based on current trends and innovative health initiatives within the field, and
- Contributing to evaluations of the workings of staff and the Board.

With respect to balancing the values and interests of the COA membership with those of the public, we have leveraged our diverse background and experience to:

 Enhance the COA's ability to balance member and public interests by helping the College to act fairly, to adhere to statutory or legal requirements, and to develop and foster appropriate professional standards to minimize any risk to the public.

We have also actively participated in the governance of the COA through contributions to decisions and discussions surrounding Council accountabilities and professional responsibilities by:

- Providing direction to and contributing to the development of professional practice regulations including standards for member registration and by-laws,
- Supporting the establishment of standards of practice,



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Public Members continued

- Ongoing involvement in the development of continuing competency,
- Contributing to the development of the College's code of ethics, and
- Actively participating in various working groups and advisory committees including the Executive Committee, the Finance and Audit Committee, and the Government Liaison Committee.

This year has been particularly exciting as the Association became a College with all the responsibilities that accompany such a change in status. This change is huge for your association as you are self-governing but within the Health Act. Now there is an increased responsibility on the College members to maintain the level of professionalism and self-regulation expected of a College. Also there are specific regulations governing a College under the Health Act that you, the Board, and the staff must observe, implement, and regulate.

You can look to the Government now to protect your profession and status. Also with this change in status you become an acknowledged professional within the Health System in Alberta.

In the year ahead, we look forward to providing continued support to the College of Opticians of Alberta in its efforts to effectively regulate its members and comply with its mandate to protect the public and as a full professional service under the Alberta Health Professions Act.

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Hierlihy Dr. Sibylla Lane PhD, FCGA Pam Crosby

Governance

Committees

The COA's committees encompass areas that reflect the Health Professions Act's mandate. These consist of both regulatory and governance committees and are comprised of Public Members and Members of the College of Opticians of Alberta.

REGULATORY

Hearings & Complaint Review Membership List

Udo Hanebaum, RO, RCLP - Chair Lisa Bannerman, RO, RCLP Fred Miller, RO Al Hardstaff, RO Dan Losey, RO, RCLP Nadine Aden, RO, RCLP Judy Muscroft, RO Bud Busenius, RO, RCLP Deborah Newby, RO, RCLP Public Member, Appointed

Registration

Scott Smith, RO, RCLP Anthony Chan, RO, RCLP Lyle Olsen, RO Maureen Hussey, RO, RCLP (Registrar) Judy Hierlihy, Public Member

Accreditation

Lyle Olsen, RO

Practice Review

Lyle Olsen, RO Charlotte Kessler, RO, RCLP Mary-Lynne Wagener, RO, RCLP Pam Crosby, Public Member

Examination

- Karla Charland, RO, RCLP Chair
- Chief Examiner Contact Lens
- Chief Examiner Eyeglass
- Examiners as required and chosen from membership

MEMBER SERVICES

Member Services

Nola Hornung, RO, RCLP - Chair Charlotte Kessler, RO, RCLP

Communications

Charlotte Kessler, RO, RCLP - Chair Mary-Lynne Wagener, RO, RCLP

Finance & Audit

Dr. Sibylla Lane, Chair (Public Member) Mel Findell, RO, RCLP Scott Smith, RO, RCLP

Rick Miller, RO, RCLP

Negotiations

Is an arms length committee designed to negotiate fees on behalf of Opticians

Elaine Mills, RO, RCLP - Chair Tara Petrisor, RO, RCLP Carolynn Ripley, RO

Government Liaison

Scott Smith, RO, RCLP Judy Hierlihy, Public Member

Education

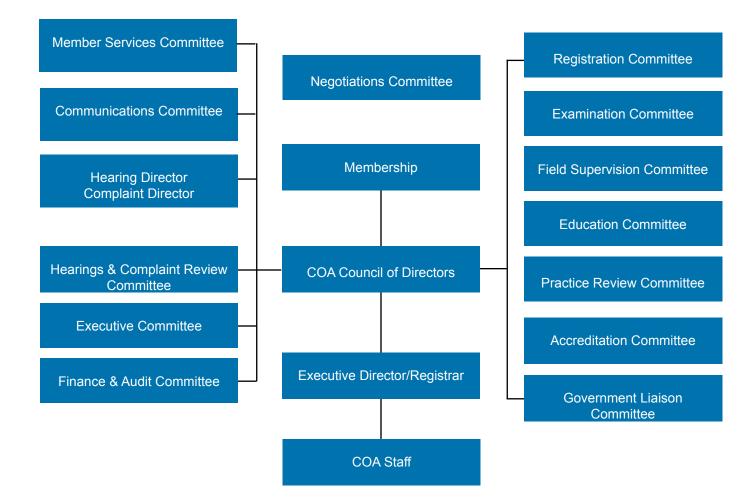
Rick Miller, RO, RCLP - Chair Anthony Chan, RO, RCLP

Field Supervision

 Karla Charland, RO RCLP - Chair
 Field supervisors as required and chosen from membership



Organizational Chart



Council of Directors

- Rick Miller, RO, RCLP President Anthony Chan, RO, RCLP - Vice President Nola Hornung, RO, RCLP - Director Scott Smith, RO, RCLP - Director David McGowan, RO, RCLP - Director Mel Findell, RO, RCLP - Director
- Lyle Olsen, RO Director
- Charlotte Kessler, RO, RCLP Director
- Mary Lynne Wagener, RO, RCLP Director
- Dr. Sibylla Lane Public Member/Director
- Judy Hierlihy Public Member/Director
- Pam Crosby Public Member/Director

Bylaws

The Bylaws of the College were altered in 2011 to reflect the changes instituted through the Health Professions Act. Changes covered areas of length of council terms and different requirements for percentage of public members but the bylaws remain substantially similar to the ones under the Opticians Act. Any changes have been reviewed and ratified by the membership of the College.

The Use of Reserved Titles

The right to use certain names and titles is serious business, especially in the health profession. Many Alberta professional regulations have a whole section devoted to clarifying what a professional can call themselves. This is called a reserved title.

The Health Professions Act and Opticians Regulation reserves the titles so that only registered persons with the COA have the right to use these titles.

Optician

 Ophthalmic Dispenser
 Optical Dispenser
 RO
 Contact Lens Practitioner
 Contact Lens Fitter
 Contact Lens Dispenser
 RCLP

The Title as an Optician is Reserved and Protected

 Registered Optician, RO Registered Contact Lens Practitioner, RCLP

Correctly using reserved titles also allows clients to know they are dealing with a registered professional who has undergone the required training and is held to a high standard of practice. The COA protects the use of the titles under the Act. Only active registrants of the COA can use the title "Optician" and other associated terms. No other person can claim to be an "Optician" or suggest that s/he is recognized by the COA.

When a business wishes to use the title "Optician" in their advertising, marketing or company name, they are only entitled to do so if there are persons working within the business who are registered Opticians with COA. Businesses cannot use the reserved titles for Opticianry if they do not have registered Opticians on staff.

Regulations

The College of Opticians of Alberta were approved on March 23, 2011. These can be found at http://opticians.ab.ca/my_folders/Downloads/Regulations_from_queens_printer.pdf

O.C. 119/2011 A.R. 45/2011 March 23, 2011

The Lieutenant Governor in Council approves the Opticians Profession Regulation set out in the attached Appendix.

For Information only Recommended by: Authority:

Minister of Health and Wellness Health Professions Act (section 131)



Regulatory Services

Membership Registration

REGISTRATION OF COLLEGE MEMBERS 2011	Total
Practice Permits Renewed	836
Practice permits NOT Renewed	64
General Registry	900
Provisional Registry (Temporary License):	
Eyeglass	45
Contact Lens	19
Student Registry (Associates)	115
Courtesy Registry	0
NEW REGISTRANTS	
New Applications Received	26
New Registrations	16
New Graduates	53
Licensed Opticians from Out of Province	9
Licensed Opticians from Out of Country	5
Licensed Opticians Returning to Practice:	
Previously Inactive/ Cancelled & Reinstated	14
Registered from Out of Province only	2
TYPES OF REGULATED MEMBERS	
Active – Practicing	836
Suspended – Non Practicing	80
Suspended – Left the Province	6
Suspended – Non-Payment of Fees	47
Suspended – Retired	11

The practice of Opticianry in Alberta is governed under the Health Professions Act and the Opticians Regulations. Every individual practicing in Alberta as a Registered Optician, Registered Contact Lens Practitioner or a Provisional Optician must be registered with the College of Opticians of Alberta (COA). Failure to register is a significant offence and can result in disciplinary action and/or fines.

There are three pathways to the profession:

- The first is through education and examination approved by the Council which currently is through the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and the examination administered by the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators.
- The second pathway is through mutual recognition with a letter of good standing from another Canadian jurisdiction.
- The third pathway is for Canadian and international applicants who have not graduated from an accredited and approved program and are not registered in good standing with another Canadian optician regulator. These candidates may be accepted for admission where they have a combination of knowledge, skills, experience and abilities which are, in the opinion of the registration committee, substantially equivalent to the requirements set out in the Regulations for new applicants.

Membership Fees

Registrations fees in 2011 increased by 3% to reflect the standard for the cost of living. This 3% increase was also reflected from the 2010 renewal year.

Online Registration

In 2011 we seen an increase of almost double for online registrations up form 2010. In upcoming registration years we plan to make online registration mandatory.

Continuing Competence Program

One of the principal obligations of the licensing body is to ensure that opticians are qualified at the time of registration and that they remain competent throughout their careers. The College of Opticians of Alberta is responsible for monitoring Opticians performance and assuring the public that it meets required standards.

The College of Opticians of Alberta have committed to ensuring quality improvement for Opticians. The development of a comprehensive plan has been underway for many years. One aspect of this is the competency review that was undertaken in Alberta in partnership with the Government of Alberta. This produced the optician familiar document entitled "The Competency Profile".

This profile establishes the basis for self-assessment which is another aspect of continuing competency. The self-assessment is done annually to allow an optician to assess opportunities for improvement. In conjunction with the self-assessment the optician designs a plan for the continuing competency activities which may be undertaken over the coming year and allows the optician to monitor those activities and successes for the next year's reporting.

Mandatory requirements for continuing education credits are still a part of competency measurement and have been used to direct opticians into pathways that will assist in understanding responsibility and preparing for the future.

The Health Professions Act (HPA) mandates that all Members of the College of Opticians of Alberta, both Practicing and Non -Practicing, are required to participate in the Continuing Competency Program(CPP) which runs within a 36 month period.

This program is to ensure the quality of the profession and to promote continuing competence among the members

Practice Requirements

To help Opticians complete the Continuing Education and competency mandate the College has initiated a three part program

- Continuing Education Credits
- Self-Assessment
- Practice Review

Each Optician is required to complete a number of continuing education credits in order to be eligible to renew their license at the end of the 3 year Cycle. This cycle currently runs from July 1st, 2011 until June 30th, 2014.

The CE courses and activities are categorized into 5 distinct areas of Opticianry. The Members are required to complete a minimum number of credits in select categories, depending on their registration category. After meeting this requirement, registrants complete the remainder of the credits with CE courses in recognized categories of their choosing.

Continuing Competence Program

There are several ways for members to obtain their credits.

- Online or distance Learning courses
- In Person Seminars, conventions, and presentations
- University/College educational studies
- Participation within the College organization
- Opticianry Education development, supervision, and publishing.
- Volunteer work

In further encouraging our members in doing courses and renewal online, a letter is sent out to all Opticians providing them with log in information enabling them to view their credit reports on line. This allows them to keep track of where they are in the three-year cycle.

An additional portion of the CPP developed by the COA takes the form of a self-assessment of individual skills and the equipment and resources an optician has in place to enhance the delivery of services utilizing those skills. The self-assessment is broken down into 4 steps to be complete over the three-year Con-Ed Cycle. The ongoing program allows the members to constantly update their skills and areas of learning and gives the College an idea of what areas members are most interested in advancing their skills.

# of Members Complete Module 1 by June 30, 2011 CE Deadline	637
# of Members Complete Module 1 by December 31, 2011 Licence renewal deadline	847
# of Members Suspended as of December 31, 2011 for in-complete Module & Credits	43

Standards of Practice

The Profession has developed Standards of Practice which can be used as a base line and the Council has introduced a comprehensive course of study called the "Code of Conduct Course" which allows the Optician to understand the entire sphere of expectations placed upon them as a provincially regulated health care professional.





Practice Review

The COA is developing and preparing to conduct Practice Reviews in the near future. On a random rotation, COA auditors will visit the practices of Opticians. The review of the business is informal and usually consists of a review of client files, the equipment in the office and the hygienic controls in client examination areas. The purpose of the review is remedial and it is designed to reinforce with opticians their obligations to the public.

Practice reviews are just one more aspect of the Continuing Competency Program initiated by the College. The intention of the "Practice Review Program" is to promote quality improvement for the Optician's Practice and to foster a culture of continuous quality improvement for the optical care received by the public in Alberta.

Goals of the Practice Review Program

- develop indicators for good optical care
- provide feedback to opticians in their practice
- assist opticians in identifying areas of strength and weakness in practice
- assist opticians in planning for improvement
- inform opticians of the value of quality improvement
- provide a supportive and confidential environment for learning and change
- identify and eliminate barriers for quality improvement
- report findings to the profession
- develop Best Practice Guidelines for the profession

Complaints and Hearings

As a College we are mandated to protect the public. We do so by offering a transparent and user friendly process whereby a member of the public can file a complaint and expect caring and timely responses.

The College of Opticians of Alberta Complaints Director received 36 complaints in 2011. This is down from the 42 received in the previous year of 2010. The College of Opticians of Alberta went under the Health Professions Act March 23, 2011. We have included the numbers of complaints received both under the Opticians Act and the Health Professions Act for ease of comparison.

The complaints in 2011 were mainly consumer complaints for things like dissatisfaction with product and or services received. These we mainly deal with through informal mediation. We also saw the usual number of complaints regarding the sale of unregulated cosmetic contact lenses.

We had many inquiries in regards to the Health Information Act which were handled or were referred to the Privacy Commissioners Office. Opticians are new custodians under the HIA and our membership is still getting used to the new rules.

We hold a similar scope of services and share some restricted activities with other health care providers. It is quite common for the public to confuse Opticians with Optometrists. When receiving consumer inquires or complaints for a similar profession we ensure that the consumer is directed to the appropriate College.

In the past year we have hired a new Complaints Director, and have established a Complaint Advisory Committee to review and advise the new Complaints Director.

The "Complaint Advisory Committee" consists of the following regulated members and one public member as listed below:

- Judy Hierlihy Public Member 3 year term.
- Judy Muscroft Regulated Member Active RO, #485
- Deborah Newby Regulated Member Active RO, RCLP, #947.

We did not have any regulated members to deal with under section 118 of the Health Professions Act, which pertains to incapacity assessments.

We are still in the process of a complaint that has gone to the hearing tribunal under the Opticians Act as it was originally received in 2010.

Hearings

The College of Opticians of Alberta Hearing Tribunal conducted one hearing in 2011. This hearing was held under the Opticians' Act. The processes we now follow are under the Heath Professions Act as we were proclaimed under the HPA in March 23, 2011.

Once a complaint is received the Complaints Director may, upon review of an investigation report or refer a complaint to the Hearing Director to set up a Hearing with a panel.

Appeals

No appeals were submitted to the COA.



Year	Members	Practicing	Non Practicing	Provisional	%
2010	892	778	83	31	5
2011	980	836	80	64	4

Complai	nts Summary 2010
42	Complaints
18	Mediated and Resolved
5	Dismissed based on business policies, not professional conduct issues
3	Pending awaiting information
16	Non – Regulated distribution locations of cosmetic contact lenses

Complai	nts Summary 2011
36	Complaints
11	Informal Resolution
7	Dismissed based on being outside of our jurisdiction
1	Dismissed based on no evidence to support complaint
0	Pending awaiting information
11	Non – Regulated distribution locations of cosmetic contact lenses
1	Practicing out of Scope of Practice went to Hearing Tribunal still in process
0	Referral Alternative Complaint Resolution (ACR)
0	Appeals to the Council regarding the decision to dismiss a complaint
0	Appeals to the Council by the Investigated person or the Registrar
0	Appeals to the Court by the Investigated person
0	Incapacity Assessments Section 118 of the Health Professions Act

Year	File	Finding	Sanctions
2011	1429-1002-2011-97	Professional Misconduct	Pending

Member Services

Education

The College of Opticians of Alberta is proud of our Student Award Program. The success of this program could not be possible without the generous sponsorship from our sponsors. Past sponsors of this program include: *Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Essilor Canada, Walmart Vision Centres, Alcon Canada and Bausch & Lomb Canada.*

The 2011 Student Award recipients:

Cecil Oxenbury Award Highest Achievement Practical Licensing Exam Contact Lens PARVEEN KAUR

Justin Holmes Memorial Scholarship Highest Achievement on Practical Licensing Exam Ophthalmic Dispensing LINDSEY REID

Stan Souch Award Highest Achievement 1st Year Eyeglass LAURA DRAYCOTT

Highest Achievement in 1st Year Advanced Practice ROBIN FRY

Highest Achievement in 2nd Year Optical Sciences BEVERLEY REMPEL

Highest Achievement in the 2nd Year Contact Lens ALIDA VAN ESSEN

Public Awareness & Communications

Members in Motion

In December 2011 staff of the College delivered Christmas hampers to families in need. All donations were made by Belinda Swann and the College for three needy families.

In October 2011 several Opticians in both Calgary and Edmonton donated their time and expertise to the Homeless Connect Events. This event helps homeless individuals and families access resources in the areas of employment, health, education. Opticians assisted with the fitting of several hundred pairs of glasses at these events.

Help Stop Blindness and Hunger in Africa and Asia is another event that the College and our member Karim Asaria, RO, RCLP have been part of for the past three years. This event raises money to raise awareness and prevent blindness in some of the poorest countries in the world.

In March 2012, The Opticians Association of Canada (OAC) helped fund Alberta Optician Christine Zacharko assist the Jeff Cherubin Domond Foundation in providing essential medical services to Port-au-Prince and the southern villages of Marbial and Jacmel in Haiti. The medical group, consisting of a dental team, a clinical team, and an optical team, provided essential services from assessment to treatment stages of the specialized areas of optical, prenatal, pediatric and dermatological conditions.





The College believes it is our duty to promote and enhance...collaborative relations with other colleges regional health boards and other entities in the Provincial health system, post-secondary education institutions and the government.

The College of Opticians of Alberta supports a public awareness campaign initiative with the best interest of serving and protecting the public in mind as it relates to AB Opticians. The College has supported this project from the beginning stages with the intent to educate. The college in conjunction with National Opticianry Groups will use our website, newsletter and events to promote ongoing updates and progress.

For more information about the public awareness campaign, click on the banner above or visit: <u>www.licensedoptician.ca</u>

Hair Massacure

On February 3, 2012, there were several groups that went to West Edmonton Mall's Ice Palace to get their head shaved. These groups consisted of Opticians, Essilor, and COA Office Staff. These people generously donated their time and effort to the Hair Massacure. The Hair Massacure was raising money for the Stollery and Make-A-Wish Foundation in Northern Alberta.







Optician Videos

In 2011 the National Licensed Optician campaign launched its Optician Videos. These videos were made to create awareness and bring the work of Opticians to the forefront of the health care industry and to the public at large. Eight Opticians from across Canada were selected, three of which consist of Alberta Opticians, something that we are very proud of.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2011

The College of Opticians of Alberta

COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF ALBERTA (Formerly Alberta Opticians Association) Financial Statements Year Ended December 31, 2011



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of the

College of Opticians of Alberta (Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the College of Opticians of Alberta, which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2011, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

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 comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College of Opticians of Alberta, formerly Alberta Opticians Association, as at December 31, 2011 and the result of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Other Matters

The financial statements of the College of Opticians of Alberta for the year ended December 31, 2010, were audited by another auditor who expressed an unmodified opinion on those statements on March 21, 2011.

Edmonton, Alberta March 16, 2012 Kouri Berezan Heinrichs Chartered Accountants

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2011

		2011		2010
ASSETS				
CURRENT				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$	300,663	\$	538,926
Accounts receivable		17,766		25,096
Inventory		-		1,680
Prepaid expenses		6,483		4,917
		324,912		570,619
CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 4)		494,757		505,136
TRADEMARK (Note 5)		2,045		2,211
	\$	821,714	\$	1,077,966
LIABILITIES				
CURRENT				
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$	55,996	\$	68,684
Deferred membership fee revenue	+	589,804	*	560,235
Current portion of long term debt		-		296,603
		645,800		925,522
NET ASSETS				
Unrestricted		(385,013)		(61,749)
Invested in capital assets		496,802		210,743
Discipline contingency fund		64,125		3,450
		175,914		152,444
	\$	821,714	\$	1,077,966

LEASE COMMITMENTS (Note 7)

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL

_____ Council member

_____ Council member

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Statement of Operations

Year Ended December 31, 2011

	2011		2010
REVENUES			
Advertising	\$ 9,699) \$	8,050
Application fees	22,480		26,754
Continuing education programs	16,830		15,240
Convention	44,575		73,909
Discipline courses (Note 10)	60,675		3,000
Examination and field supervision	54,611		74,647
Government grants (Note 8)	15,000		57,471
Interest income			776
Membership fees	614,929)	574,981
Sundry	233		695
	839,038	\$	835,523
EXPENSES			
Advertising	16,685	;	30,202
Amortization	30,564	ł	27,827
Council expenses	31,170	<u>,</u>	31,521
Education awards	2,100)	1,800
Equipment lease	9,879)	9,831
Examination expenses	22,199)	18,965
Foreign qualification and recognition program	-		63,629
Insurance	3,477	1	3,171
Interest and bank charges	21,917	1	16,819
Interest on long term debt	5,588	3	16,228
Meetings and convention	92,627	1	105,619
Membership fees	35,905	;	36,960
Occupational health and safety program	16,972	2	-
Office	83,627	1	85,372
Professional conduct matters	77,525	;	14,900
Professional fees	32,270)	20,626
Salaries and benefits	273,458	}	240,127
Sub-contracts	42,450		40,575
Telephone	7,297	/	7,998
Utilities and property taxes	9,852	2	7,559
	815,568	;	779,729
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	<u>\$</u> 23,470) \$	55,794

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended December 31, 2011

	U	nrestricted	nvested in pital assets	cc	Discipline ontingency fund Note 10)	2011	2010
NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES) - BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$	(61,749)	\$ 210,743	\$	3,450	\$ 152,444 \$	96,650
Excess of revenues over (under) expenses		(6,641)	(30,564)		60,675	23,470	55,794
Invested in capital assets		(316,623)	316,623		-	-	
NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES) - END OF YEAR	\$	(385,013)	\$ 496,802	\$	64,125	\$ 175,914 \$	152,444

COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF ALBERTA

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Statement of Cash Flows

Year Ended December 31, 2011

		2011	2010
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash receipts from grants	\$	15,000	\$ 16,975
Cash receipts membership fees and other revenue		744,972	712,995
Cash receipts from exam and training fees		115,967	92,887
Interest received		-	776
Cash paid to suppliers and employees		(791,990)	(703,825)
Interest paid		(5,588)	(16,228)
Cash flow from operating activities		78,361	103,580
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchase of equipment		(20,021)	(14,039)
Addition to trademark		-	(1,530)
Cash flow used by investing activities		(20,021)	(15,569)
FINANCING ACTIVITY			
Repayment of long term debt		(296,603)	(12,320)
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH FLOW		(238,263)	75,691
Cash and cash equivalents - beginning of year		538,926	463,235
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS - END OF YEAR	<u>\$</u>	300,663	\$ 538,926

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2011

1. PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

The College of Opticians of Alberta (the "College") is a self-governing professional organization established pursuant to the Opticians Act of Alberta. On March 23, 2011, the Opticians Act of Alberta was repealed and transitioned to the Health Professions Act of Alberta. As a result, the College is now governed under this Act which also resulted in a name change for the organization. The College is a not-for-profit organization, as described in Section 149(1)(1) of the Income Tax Act, and therefore is not subject to income taxes.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles using the following significant accounting policies:

Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period.

Accounts receivable are stated after evaluation as to their collectibility and an appropriate allowance for doubtful accounts is provided where considered necessary. Amortization is based on the estimated useful life of capital assets.

These estimates and assumptions are reviewed periodically and, as adjustments become necessary they are reported on the statement of operations in the periods in which they become known.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes balances with banks and short term investments that are cashable or with maturities of three months or less.

Inventory

Inventory is recorded at the lower of cost or replacement cost.

Capital assets

Capital assets are stated at cost less accumulated amortization. Capital assets are amortized over their estimated useful lives at the following rates and methods:

25 years	straight-line method
30%	declining balance method
30%	declining balance method
20%	declining balance method
20%	declining balance method
	30% 30% 20%

Trademark

Costs incurred to develop and secure the College's logo and slogan are capitalized and amortized using the straight-line method over 10 years.

(continues)

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2011

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Revenue recognition

The College follows the deferral method of accounting for membership fees and other unrestricted revenue. Restricted revenue is recognized in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Revenue is only recognized when received or receivable and collection is reasonably assured.

Deferred membership fee revenue consists of membership registration fees collected for the following year.

Contributed goods and services

The College records the fair market value of contributed goods and services only in the circumstances when the fair market value is determinable and when the goods and services would otherwise be purchased by the College.

(continues)

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2011

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Financial instruments

Held for trading:

The College has classified the following financial assets and liabilities as held for trading: cash and cash equivalents.

These instruments are initially recognized at their fair value. Any gain or loss arising as a result of the difference between the carrying amount and fair value is recognized in excess of revenues over expenses. Fair value is approximated by the instrument's initial cost in a transaction between unrelated parties. Transactions to purchase or sell these items are recorded on the trade date, and the transaction costs are immediately recognized in excess of revenues over expenses.

Held for trading financial instruments are subsequently measured at their fair value, without any deduction for transaction costs incurred on sale or other disposal. Gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are recognized immediately in excess of revenues over expenses.

Loans and receivables:

The College has classified the following financial assets as loans and receivables: accounts receivable. These assets are initially recognized at their fair value. Fair value is approximated by the instrument's initial cost in a transaction between unrelated parties.

Loans and receivables are subsequently measured at their amortized cost, using the effective interest method. Under this method, estimated future cash receipts are exactly discounted over the asset's expected life, or other appropriate period, to its net carrying value. Amortized cost is the amount at which the financial asset is measured at initial recognition less principal repayments, plus or minus the cumulative amortization using the effective interest method of any difference between that initial amount and the maturity amount, and less any reduction for impairment or uncollectibility. Gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are recognized in excess of revenues over expenses upon derecognition or impairment.

Other financial liabilities

The College has classified the following financial liabilities as other financial liabilities: accounts payable and accrued liabilities. These liabilities are initially recognized at their fair value. Fair value is approximated by the instrument's initial cost in a transaction between unrelated parties. Total interest expense, calculated using the effective interest rate method, is recognized in excess of revenues over expenses.

Other financial liabilities are subsequently measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method. Under this method, estimated future cash payments are exactly discounted over the liability's expected life, or other appropriate period, to its net carrying value. Amortized cost is the amount at which the financial liability is measured at initial recognition less principal repayments, plus or minus the cumulative amortization using the effective interest method of any difference between that initial amount and the maturity amount. Gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are recognized in excess of revenues over expenses upon derecognition or impairment.

Financial asset impairment:

The College assesses impairment of all its financial assets, except those classified as held for trading. Impairment is measured as the difference between the asset's carrying value and its fair value. Any impairment which is not considered temporary is included in excess of revenues over expenses.

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2011

3. RECENT ACCOUNTING PRONOUNCEMENTS

The Accounting Standards Board approved the accounting standards for private sector not-for-profit organizations (NPOs) to be included in Part III of the CICA Handbook. Effective for fiscal years beginning on or after January 1, 2012, private sector NPOs will have the option to adopt either Part III of the Handbook or International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The College expects to adopt Part III of the Handbook as its new financial reporting standards. The College does not expect the adoption of Part III of the Handbook to have a material impact on its financial statements.

4. CAPITAL ASSETS

5.

		Cost		Accumulated amortization		2011 Net book value		
Buildings Computer equipment Computer software Examination equipment Office equipment	\$	507,372 92,858 21,386 3,818 61,724	\$ 49,130 70,128 15,695 2,604 54,844		\$	458,242 22,730 5,691 1,214 6,880		
	\$	687,158	\$	192,401	\$	494,757		
	_	Cost		cumulated ortization]	2010 Net book value		
Buildings Computer equipment Computer software Examination equipment Office equipment	\$	507,372 78,562 20,191 3,818 57,194	\$	30,036 63,449 13,512 2,237 52,767	\$	477,336 15,113 6,679 1,581 4,427		
	\$	667,137	\$	162,001	\$	505,136		
TRADEMARK				2011		2010		
Trademark - cost Accumulated amortization			\$	2,485 (440)	\$	2,485 (274)		
			\$	2,045	\$	2,211		

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2011

6. BANK INDEBTEDNESS

The College has an approved operating line of credit to a maximum of \$50,000 which bears interest at prime plus 2.1%. This operating line is secured by the following:

- a general security agreement signed by the College constituting a first ranking security interest in all personal property of the College
- collateral mortgage signed by the College constituting a first mortgage on the property

- assignment of fire and other perils insurance.

As part of the agreement, the College is required to maintain a debt service coverage ratio of not less than 1.25:1. As of December 31, 2011, the College is in compliance with this covenant.

7. LEASE COMMITMENTS

The College leases photocopier equipment under a long term lease that expires on June 30, 2015. Future minimum lease payments as at year end are as follows:

2012 2013 2014 2015	\$ 9,522 9,522 9,522 3,968
	\$ 32,534

8. GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Grant revenue includes \$15,000 from a grant for an Occupational Health and Safety program (2010 - \$52,471 from a grant for a Foreign Qualification and Recognition program). As of December 31, 2011 \$nil (2010 - \$nil) of the amount received was unspent and deferred until the following year.

(Formerly Alberta Opticians Association)

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended December 31, 2011

9. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The College as part of its operations carries a number of financial instruments. It is management's opinion that the College is not exposed to significant interest, currency or credit risks arising from these financial instruments except as otherwise disclosed.

Risk management policy

The College, as part of its operations, has established avoidance of undue concentrations of risk and requirements for collateral to mitigate credit risk, as risk management objectives. In seeking to meet these objectives, the College follows a risk management policy approved by Council of Directors. Investment risk is managed by the Council of Directors on a periodic basis.

Fair value of financial instruments

The carrying amount of cash and cash equivalents, accounts receivable and accounts payable and accrued liabilities approximates their fair value due to their short-term maturities.

Interest Rate Risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of a financial instrument might be adversely affected by a change in the interest rates. Changes in market interest rates may have an effect on the cash flows associated with some financial assets and liabilities, known as cash flow risk, and on the fair value of other financial assets or liabilities, known as price risk.

The College's credit facility has an interest rate of prime plus 2.10 %.

Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the College will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The College enters into transactions to purchase goods and services on credit, borrow funds from financial institutions or other creditors, and leases office equipment from various creditors for which repayment is required at various maturity dates. Liquidity risk is measured by reviewing the College's future net cash flows for the possibility of a negative net cash flow. The College manages the liquidity risk resulting from the accounts payable and operating leases through the preparation and monitoring of budgets, and maintaining cash on hand.

10. CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

The College sets the amount of capital in proportion to risk and manages the capital structure and makes adjustments to it in light of changes to economic conditions and the risk characteristics of the underlying assets, as well as with consideration of externally imposed capital requirements as discussed in note 6.

The College's objectives when managing capital are to ensure the membership fees and other revenue are sufficient to cover all expenditures in the year. A discipline contingency fund has been established to fund unforeseen expenses associated with discipline activities. Council has approved the annual contribution to the discipline contingency fund be equivalent to the revenues received from discipline online courses.

11. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Some of the comparative figures have been reclassified to conform to the current year's presentation.

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College of Opticians of Alberta

