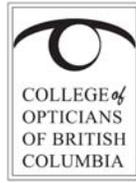


FACT SHEET



College of Opticians of British Columbia

Accreditation of Automated Sight-Testing Program for Opticians

- The purpose of the College of Opticians of BC (COBC) is to protect the health and safety of British Columbians as it relates to the practice of Opticianry.
- The COBC is responsible for approving programs of study in Opticianry for BC opticians.
- Under current regulations, opticians may provide sight testing services using automated technology with physician or optometrist supervision.
- In September 2003, the COBC decided that it was in the public interest to establish a mandatory program and certification for automated sight testing by opticians.¹
- The process to establish competencies, curriculum and accreditation for a new program of study in Opticianry is well established. It is extensive, rigorous and includes input from stakeholders.
- The COBC Board of Directors instructed its Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) to prepare sight testing competencies.
- The COBC had the QAC's sight testing competencies reviewed by the National Accreditation Committee of Opticians (NACO).
- The QAC reviewed the NACO findings and made final recommendations to the Board of the COBC for sight testing competencies.
- Throughout this process, the COBC consulted with stakeholders, including registrants, on such matters as Standards of Practice and a Schedule of Limitations.
- Learning outcomes and core competencies were established with input from educators of opticians at a number of institutes, including the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) and Douglas College.
- The QAC reviewed the institutions' learning outcomes and suggested changes where appropriate. From this, the institutions developed curriculum.
- In 2005, NAIT completed the program preparation and ran a test program with the co-operation of 35 B.C. Opticians.
- The QAC reviewed the examination results and student feedback then recommended minor changes to the NAIT program, which NAIT adopted.
- The Board of the COBC approved the NAIT program recommended by the QAC.
- Douglas College has completed program preparation but will not offer a sight testing program until the proposed government regulatory changes permit sight testing by opticians without physician or optometrist supervision.
- The Board of the COBC continues to work on a certification process for sight-testing by opticians.

¹ See COBC Fact Sheet: Policy on Mandatory Program and Certification of Sight-Testing by Opticians

