



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 17, 2012  
College of Opticians of British Columbia

### **Response to Amended Food and Drug Act Bill C-313**

Vancouver – On December 14, 2012, Bill C-313 (Non-Corrective Contact Lenses) received royal assent to amend the Food and Drug Act. The College of Opticians of British Columbia (the “College”) is pleased that the Food and Drug Act is now amended to classify cosmetic contact lenses as class II medical devices and is looking forward to working with the provincial government to integrate this amendment with the Opticians Regulation.

Cosmetic lenses are sold over-the-counter as costume accessories at some retail outlets and online. While cosmetic lenses are readily available, consumers are not properly fitted and critical information about how to use and care for these devices is not provided by unregulated providers or online sellers. Purchasing cosmetic lenses from unregulated providers carries many eye health risks. Improper lenses from unregulated providers can result in eye infections, allergic reactions, and swelling of the cornea.

The College is a regulatory organization that assures the public that a licensed Optician is competent, practices to a high standard of care, and behaves ethically. “Contact Lens Fitters are regulated health care professionals who provide health care consumers with assistance choosing the appropriate contact lenses for their lifestyle,” says Raheem Savja, Chair of the College. “Whether the lenses are non-corrective or corrective, visiting a licensed Contact Lens Fitter ensures that the public will receive properly fitted contact lens and critical information regarding contact lens use, follow-up care and hygiene.” Healthcare consumers who wish to visit a Contact Lens Fitter can search on the College’s online registry at [www.cobc.ca](http://www.cobc.ca).

The amended Food and Drug Act is an essential step towards protecting the public from improper contact lenses and lack of follow-up care. The College looks forward to collaborating with the Ministry of Health and other regulatory bodies in British Columbia to amend provincial eye care regulations and implement necessary policies to educate and protect the public.

The College was established in 1994 and has a duty to serve and protect the public, as well as to exercise its powers and fulfill its responsibilities in the public interest. You can find out more about the College and services and duties of Opticians at [www.cobc.ca](http://www.cobc.ca).

- 30 -

**Media Contact:**  
Connie Chong  
Acting Registrar  
(604)278-7510  
[cchong@cobc.ca](mailto:cchong@cobc.ca)