



College of Opticians of BC

Health
Regulatory Body
for Opticians



ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2013-2014

College of Opticians of BC
403-1505 West 2nd Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6H 3Y4

www.cobc.ca

1.888.771.6755

Fax# 604.278.7594

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About the College

The College of Opticians of British Columbia (College) is the regulatory body established to govern the practice of opticianry in British Columbia (BC). In 1994, Cabinet approved the *Opticians Regulation* which designates opticianry as a regulated profession under the *Health Professions Act*. The College is responsible for the administration of the *Act* and accompanying regulations. The College is also accountable to the public through its Board.

The College of Opticians of British Columbia serves and protects the public by regulating Licensed Opticians in the province. We ensure they are highly qualified professionals who practice their code of ethics, standards and duty of care, and engage in continual professional development.

The College is responsible for:

- Assessment, registration and licensing of all opticians, contact lens fitters, and automated refracting opticians in B.C.
- Interpretation of the *Health Professions Act*, the *Opticians Regulation*, and the College Bylaws
- Public and registrant complaints and enquiries
- Establishment of standards of practice and guidelines

OUR VISION

Leaders of accessible, quality, safe vision care for all.

OUR MISSION

The College of Opticians of British Columbia serves and protects the public by regulating Licensed Opticians in BC.

We ensure they are highly qualified and competent professionals who practise their code of ethics, their standards and duty of care.

OUR CORE VALUES

- 1. Ethical:** We ensure our registrants live our *Code of Ethics*.
- 2. Innovative:** We are constantly improving opticianry competencies while increasing public awareness of technological advancements and services.
- 3. Safety:** We ensure that our registrants deliver quality safe vision care.
- 4. Trustworthy:** We are honest, credible, and practise integrity.
- 5. Dedicated:** We are passionate and committed to the regulation of vision care.



Governance

As a self-regulating profession, the College is governed by a Board of Directors composed of elected and appointed members. Of the nine Board members, six are elected from the profession and three are appointed by government. Each Board member serves a three-year term starting at the beginning of the calendar year. The Board operates using a policy governance model framework. A policy governance Board is only involved in governing the College through policy, while the administration is responsible for operations.

Before taking office, a person elected or appointed as a member of a Board for a college must take and sign, by oath or solemn affirmation, an Oath of Office:

I solemnly affirm that:

- I will abide by the *Health Professions Act* and I will faithfully discharge the duties of the position, according to the best of my ability;
- I will act in accordance with the law and the public trust placed in me;
- I will act in the interests of the College as a whole;
- I will uphold the objects of the College and ensure that I am guided by the public interest in the performance of my duties;
- I have a duty to act honestly;
- I will declare any private interests relating to my public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest; and
- I will ensure that other memberships, directorships, voluntary or paid positions or affiliations remain distinct from work undertaken in the course of performing my duty as a Board member.

The primary duty of the Board of the College is ensuring that the vision needs of the public of British Columbia are met by BC opticians safely and effectively. In the course of performing its duties and exercising its powers under the *Health Professions Act* and other enactments, the Board defines the strategic goals and objectives of the College based on current and emerging vision care needs of the public.

About this Report

The 2013/2014 annual report covers highlights of the College's initiatives for the fiscal year April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014. This report contains the accomplishments of the College Board and its statutory committees. In addition, select initiatives of the College are reported. These accomplishments are the product of collaborative work among Board members, committee members, staff and volunteers who dedicated their time and expertise to fulfill the mandate of the College to protect the public.



Chair's Message

Moving Ahead with an Innovative and Self-Reflective Regulatory Culture

This year is my last year as a Board of Director for the College of Opticians of BC (College). I have been Chair of the College Board since 2011. As I look back, I am pleased that we have accomplished a lot in ensuring that we continue to deliver on our mandate – protecting the public in an ever-changing environment. I am fortunate to have worked with high-calibre individuals, from staff to volunteers, who are passionate about providing accessible, quality, and safe vision care for all health care consumers.

Together, we have established the fundamentals that put the College in a viable position to thrive in delivering its mandate. I am most proud of the following accomplishments.

- **a strategic plan for 2013-2017 with measurable targets**
- **dynamic governance structure**
- **increased awareness about Licensed Opticians**
- **culture of innovation**

First, we have developed a strategic plan that will guide the College through 2017. In drafting the strategic plan, the Board and staff re-assessed the big-picture and considered the environmental changes and trends that would likely impact the regulation of opticianry. We have started to rigorously evaluate our Board agenda against the strategic plan to ensure that discussions and decisions at the Board level reflected the goals outlined in the plan.

Second, the Board reviewed the governance structure of the College. One of the outcomes of this review was the creation of the Opticians Forum, a venue to discuss public safety issues to increase communication and improve relationship with stakeholders. Thus far, we have discussed two important public safety issues with registrants and stakeholders: “the aging demographic” and “utilizing technology and standards of care”. The report from the first Forum is available from the College’s website. The key themes that emerged from the second Forum, included: reviewing the Standards of Practice to help stakeholders brainstorm hybrid of online and bricks-and-mortar models to enhance safe vision care; ensuring accountability of opticians with increased use of technology; and utilizing technology to increase collaboration among eye care providers. A report will be posted on the College’s website.

Third, there is increased awareness about Licensed Opticians being regulated health professionals and the standard of vision care that they provide. The College has received a number of enquiries about the services provided by Licensed Opticians. There is also increased usage of the College’s online public registry, where health care consumers can search for any BC Licensed Optician and their registration details, including other important information like language proficiency. This demonstrates that as more health care consumers become aware of the standard of vision care they can receive from Licensed Opticians, the more they will be seeking services from these regulated health professionals. Aside from the public, there is a growing understanding of the role of Licensed Opticians within the eye care community. The College welcomes this



trend as we push for public education and a deepening collaboration with other eye care stakeholders to benefit health care consumers.

Last but not the least, the College has embraced a culture of innovation. I say culture because it goes beyond integrating innovation within our policies and programs, but a mindset that we aim to embody every day from staff to volunteers. Eventually, we aim for this mindset to be embraced by all Licensed Opticians and stakeholders. Innovation is especially relevant for a small health regulatory body like the College with limited resources. Innovation is a cultural mind shift that inspires us to review best practices, adapt what works within our context, learn from our failures, discard what does not work, and learn from this experience. It emboldens us to set lofty goals since we will not be limited by the tried and tested of the past, but we can creatively explore, collaborate, and adapt other options. It encourages us to be self-reflective, to learn and to always ask ourselves the question: what else could we improve?

For the past years that I have been Chair, we have leveraged our relationship with like-minded stakeholders to achieve common goals. The College actively participates in national initiatives to support labour mobility and to add value to professional regulation in Canada. This fiscal year alone, the College along with other opticianry regulators from other provinces further harmonized our registration policies relating to assessment of internationally-trained applicants. We have continued collaborating with other stakeholders in increasing national awareness about Licensed Opticians. The College is also a member of the Health Profession Regulators of BC, a group of health regulators that aim to increase public awareness about regulated health professionals in the province.

It is not a small feat to have achieved what the College has achieved thus far. There is always more that needs to be done. Again, I would like to personally thank all the staff, volunteers, and collaborators for their commitment and support. I leave my post as Chair with the knowledge that the College has the people, the tools and the attitude to deliver on its mission, and eventually realizing its vision of becoming leaders of accessible, quality, safe vision care for all.

Thank You,

Raheem Savja

Board of Directors as of end of Fiscal Year April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014

Raheem Savja, Chair	Elected	District 1 (Lower Mainland)
Aly Jamal	Elected	District 1 (Lower Mainland)
Payam Moshrefzadeh	Appointed (Registrant)	District 2 (Vancouver Island)
Gary Corner	Elected	District 3 (Okanagan and the Kootenays)
Megan Wingham	Elected	District 4 (Cariboo)
David McGowan	Elected	District 5 (Contact Lens Registrant)
Lesley Wood Bernbaum	Appointed	Government Appointee
Dalminder Virk	Appointed	Government Appointee



Registrar's Message

Utilizing Technology within a Standard of Care

The role of the College of Opticians of British Columbia (College) as a health profession regulatory body is to maintain confidence in regulation and maintain an environment to make it easy to do what is right. Quality assurance regulation is about maintaining standards to ensure public protection no matter how much the world has changed or is changing - regulation will be adaptive with these changes. The College's goal is to support the regulation of opticians by building capacity for changes, not dependency on the norm.

2014 was the year of utilizing technology with a standard of care. While many forces are changing the face of healthcare, one could argue that nothing will change the way opticianry is practiced more than current advances in technology. The benefits of new technologies are significant: improving access to care, improving the quality of care, improving the health care consumer experience, and providing a safer environment for protecting privacy and security of health care consumers. Complex regulatory concerns and health care consumer priorities affect the speed with which technology can be adopted and implemented in the healthcare industry. For example, technological opportunities that could improve the regulation of health professions include resource tracking, telehealth, health care consumer tracking, and language interpretation. The introduction of practical new technology tools—powered by the cloud and enabled by the ubiquity of smart mobile devices and online storage—is upping the ante and accelerating the pace.

The College's goal is to develop a culture where change and experimentation is embraced and fear of failure does not limit success. This means improving communications to understand what is happening at all levels and also for stakeholders to understand what is happening in terms of high-level development with the College Board. A community of support will be built so that we can all work together to enhance care and ensure safety for all health care consumers. One of the major 2014 projects that focused on utilizing technology with a standard of care was the development of the College's new continuing competency program.

Continuing competency is the ongoing ability to meet complex demands by demonstrating the required knowledge, skill, judgement, and attitude to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and setting. It is no longer acceptable for professionals to renew their license on an annual basis based on entry-level competencies and research has demonstrated that the length of time a professional has been practicing is not a good indicator of competence. The College will be supporting opticians through developing a continuing competency program that will allow them to practice safely in an ever changing world. Developing a new continuing competency program requires resources but also partnerships with many stakeholders to be successful. The opticians association and educational institutions are just some of the few stakeholders that are continuing education/professional development providers that are working with the College to shape the new continuing competency program. In addition, the College has been working with optician regulators across Canada to standardize the new continuing competency program to continue ensuring fewer barriers for labor mobility.



Changes will continue to occur throughout any individual's professional practice. With a supportive change culture and a roadmap for continuous improvement, opticians can continue to adapt and have the tools to apply new technologies with a standard of care for health care consumers. I would like to thank all the College volunteers, stakeholders and administration for their help in making all these changes happen.

Sincerely,

Connie Chong
Registrar

Special Committees/Task Forces as of end of Fiscal Year April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014

Special Committees	Board Members	Other Members
Policy Governance	Gary Corner (Chair) Lesley Wood Bernbaum David McGowan Amrik Prihar	
Plano Cosmetic Contact Lens Public Safety Committee	Megan Wingham (Chair) Aly Jamal	Pamela Zieffle
Registrar Evaluation Committee	Raheem Savja (Chair) Gary Corner Lesley Wood Bernbaum	
Standards of Practice Working Group		Wayne Mullen (Chair) Giselle Klein Maureen Reiter
Quality Assurance Continuing Competency Program Ambassadors		Rafia Tariq, Mahmood Savji

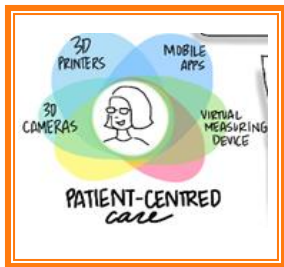


At a Glance – Highlight of Activities



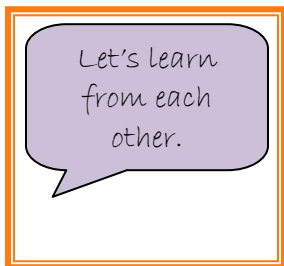
Increased Online Registration Renewals (March 2014)

This year, the College sent out all the renewal notices by electronic mail, which included links to the registration portal and other registration resources. Registrants were able to easily access and retrieve registration renewal information from one email source. In previous years, registrants had to look for a printed renewal package to get their log-in information for the online registration renewal. If they could not find it, they will then have to contact the College office. With the electronic renewal notices, phone calls to the College enquiring about log-in information decreased. This resulted in a much faster registration renewal. Some registrants renewed in less than 3 minutes.



Opticians Forum “Utilizing Technology and Standards of Care” (Nov 2013; March 2014)

The Forum was co-presented by the College and the Opticians Association of Canada– BC Chapter (OAC-BC) to start the discussion around technology and standards of care. Both the regulatory body and the association acknowledged that opticians would benefit from an exploration of this topic within a safe discussion forum. Optician Forums were held on November 16-17, 2013 during the Vision Canada event in Vancouver. Subsequent forums were organized the following year in Victoria (March 16) and Kelowna (March 23) to coincide with OAC – BC’s education days. A report documenting the discussion from the Forum is forthcoming. Some of the themes that emerged from the brainstorming sessions included: preference for a hybrid of online and bricks-and-mortar model; optician’s understanding that their accountability towards health care consumers remain even with the increased use of technology; and collaboration among eye care providers may be accelerated due to use of technology.



Interactive Format at the COBC Annual General Meeting (November 2013)

The College piloted an interactive solutions-oriented session with registrants at the meeting. The meeting started with the usual reports from the Board and the Registrar, followed by an interactive exchange of ideas with registrants on use of technology with a standard of care. Participants identified and rated the following as their top recommendations:

- Have continuing education and meetings fully accessible for those unable to attend. Let them skype for real time interactions.
- Build an app for eyeglass/contact lens consumers to help them on what to look for specifically in a store to make sure they are seeing a licensed optician.
- Have a licensed optician app so a person can click on it and find an optician in their area that is licensed
- COBC Facebook page



BC Registrants Participate in Developing National Competencies for Opticians (April 2013)

BC opticians participated in the National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators' (NACOR) update of the *National Competencies for Canadian Opticians (3rd edition)*. Opticians who participated in focus groups identified competencies from the 2007 edition that were no longer relevant and recommended new ones to be included. Those who participated in the online surveys validated the national competencies. The research and validation spanned months prior to its official release in April 2013. Updating the national competencies will result in updating other regulatory tools to align with the new competencies such as program accreditation and competency assessment tools.

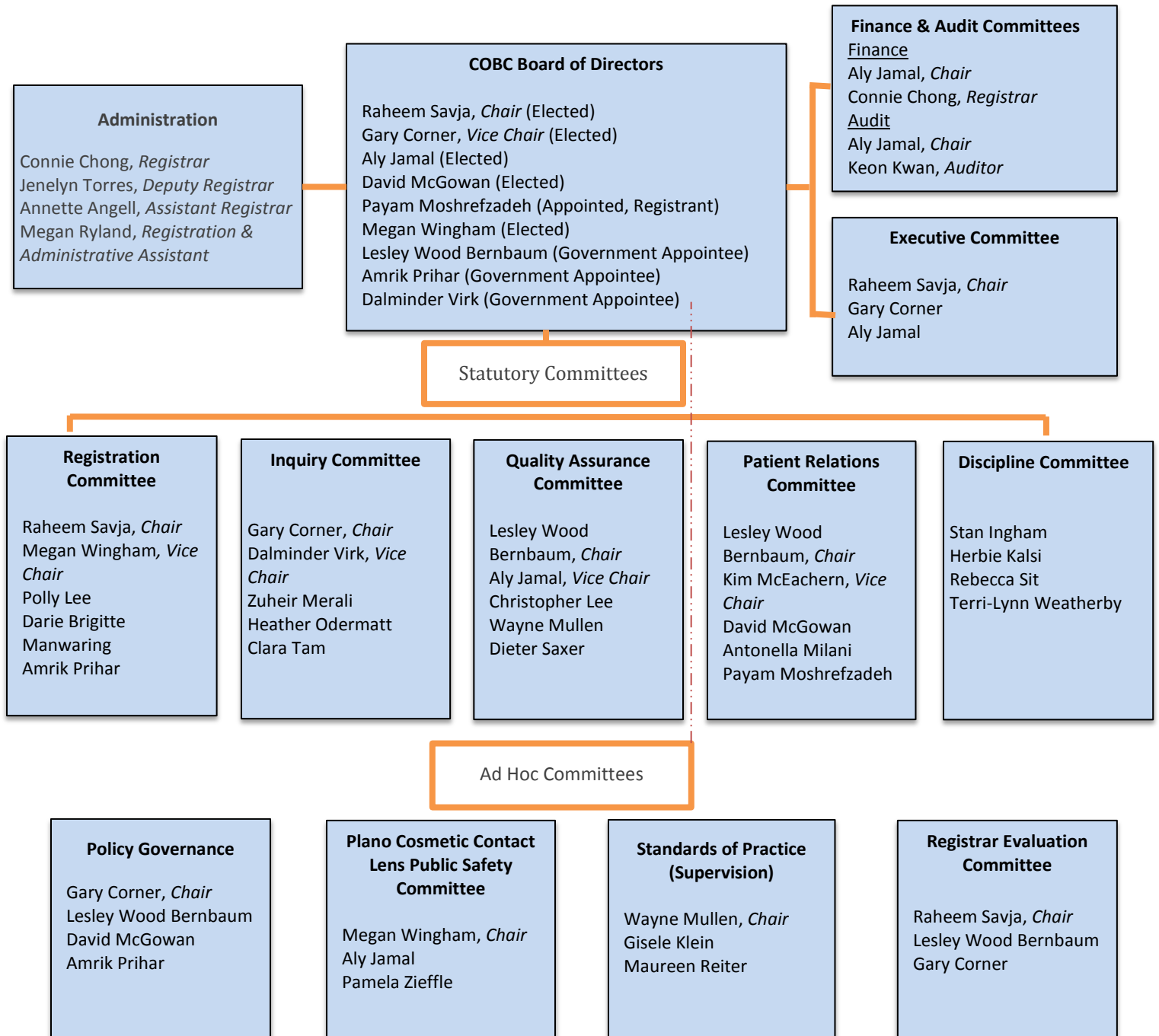


Year-round Inspections against Unauthorized Practice and Use of Titles (April 1, 2013-March 31, 2014)

Inspections were conducted year-round all over the province to ensure that persons who were not registered with the College were not using reserved titles, such as "Licensed Opticians" and "Contact Lens Fitters". Inspectors also reported on any unauthorized practice of opticianry pertaining to the restricted activities of contact lens fitting and automated refracting. The College investigated those found to be using reserved titles and engaging in unauthorized practice.



Organizational Structure





Registration Committee Report

The Registration Committee (Committee) serves the public through upholding registration standards that support quality care, competence, and professionalism. The Committee assesses an applicant's qualifications to practice opticianry in the province to ensure that all opticians in British Columbia have met the entry to practice standards and regulatory requirements. The Committee reviews applications for registration, reinstatement of suspended registration, and changes of status between practicing and non-practicing.

The Committee reviews applications for registration from graduates of accredited institutions and non-accredited education sources. Applicants who have not graduated from an accredited institution must complete the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition process (PLAR). The PLAR process allows the Committee to assess whether the applicant's knowledge, skills and abilities are substantially equivalent to the standards of academic and technical achievement of those who graduated from accredited institutions. Applicants may seek review of the Registration Committee's decision by application to the Health Professions Review Board (HPRB), an administrative tribunal created under the *Health Professions Act*. In 2013/2014, one decision of the Registration Committee was appealed to the HPRB but it was withdrawn. For further information, please visit www.hprb.gov.bc.ca

Registration applications are also received from opticians from other Canadian provinces who seek to move to British Columbia. The *Mutual Recognition Agreement*, signed by the College and other provinces, allows labour mobility for licensed and practicing registrants in other Canadian provinces to be accepted in British Columbia without additional examination or training, and vice versa. For FY 2013/2014, 20 registrants took advantage of labour mobility, with 10 transferring into the province and 10 leaving to practice in other jurisdictions. While Alberta remains the top destination province, British Columbia received roughly equal transfer applicants from Ontario and Alberta.

The Committee also reviews policies and procedures that facilitate the fair, consistent, and efficient assessment of applications for registration. For FY 2013/2014, the Committee's priority was to further align policies with national policy standards resulting in updates to the examination policies. By aligning policies on shared issues, labour mobility, consistency, and fairness are supported nationally.

Registration Requirements

NACOR adopted English language benchmarks in 2014. The Committee recommended the College adopt the English language proficiency standard of Speaking – Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) Level 7; Listening - CLB Level 8; Reading - CLB Level 6; Writing - CLB Level 7 as requirements for registration and referred the issue to the Board for bylaw amendment. The recommendation was based on a report evaluating the English-language needs of the opticianry field. Although not currently in effect, other provincial opticianry regulators have started work to establish this standard nationally.

Certificate Policy Updates

The Committee has made important changes to certificate policies in order to protect public interest, ensure proper use of title, and clarify the purpose of certificates. During the 2012 inspections of suspended registrants, many registrants found using reserved titles (such as optician, contact lens fitter or refracting optician) also continued to display certificates of registration, which misrepresents them to health care



consumers. The Committee will now require registrants to return certificates to the College when they are suspended, change to non-practicing status, or retire. Registrants are notified when they must return certificates of registration. Certificates are kept on file for three years and re-issued upon a registrant's return to practice. Furthermore, inspectors may take certificates from former registrants at the time of inspection.

Evaluating Non-Routine Applicants

The Committee determined that when evaluating the applications for non-routine reinstatement and change of status applicants who have not been practicing for over 3 years, a competency assessment is critical information. Therefore, such applicants must complete a Competency Gap Analysis assessment as part of the application process. Supplemental documents may also be submitted for evaluation by the Committee, such as resumes, work experience histories, transcripts, continuing education credits or reference letters.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

The Committee continued to improve and standardize the PLAR process across Canadian jurisdictions in 2013/2014. The Committee clarified PLAR policy to state that candidates who complete the PLAR process in only one license area must complete the process again for any additional license area. The PLAR process improvements will continue into the next fiscal year.

Examination Policy

The National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators (NACOR) administers the national examinations across Canada. Passing the national optical sciences examinations is required for registration with the College as a dispensing optician and/or contact lens fitter. An applicant's entry-to-practice competencies are examined through the Optical Sciences 1 - Eyeglass examination and/or Optical Science 2 – Advanced Practice Contact Lens examinations. Nine provincial opticianry regulatory bodies use these examinations as their entry-to-practice examinations, creating a shared standard across these Canadian jurisdictions.

The Committee has made significant policy changes in order to align with NACOR policy and national consensus. As part of these changes,

- Examination candidates who do not successfully complete the NACOR examinations within 3 attempts must complete an upgrading proposal and program prior to any further attempts.
- Examination candidates no longer have attempt limits, although they are subject to upgrading proposal approval and completion after 3 attempts.
- Examination candidates who do not attempt the NACOR examination within 3 years of becoming eligible are subject to the review of the Committee when they apply to complete the examination. When reviewing such a candidate, the Registration Committee will require a Competency Gap Assessment (CGA) be completed before being considered for eligibility to take the eyeglasses and/or contact lens examinations.

For a complete list of policies, please see the *Registration Committee Policy Handbook* available at www.cobc.ca or review further national examination policy details at the NACOR website, www.nacor.ca.



The College is assisted by a dedicated examination team to coordinate the NACOR examinations administered in British Columbia twice a year, one in September and the other in May. A NACOR examination moderator ensured that exam procedures are applied consistently. The College contracted Debra Szteina this year, a veteran Chief Examiner for the College.

Examinations Statistics

EXAM CANDIDATES	Eyeglasses Exam	Contact Lens Exam
Passed	18	22
Failed	3	13
TOTAL	21	35

Registration Committee Members as of end of Fiscal Year April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014

Raheem Savja (Chair)	Elected
Megan Wingham (Vice Chair)	Elected
Polly Lee	Appointed (Registrant)
Dee Manwaring	Appointed (Registrant)
Dalminder Virk	Appointed (Government Appointee)



Registration Statistics

Registration Renewals

REGISTRATION RENEWALS	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Automated Refracting Opticians	86	80	74
Contact Lens Fitters/Automated Refracting Opticians	229	225	211
Dispensing Opticians	330*	341	339
Contact Lens Fitters	392	415	397
Non-Practicing Registrants	72**	59	76
Student Contact Lens Fitters	24***	-	-
TOTAL	1037	1061	1097

Notes: * 2 are also registered as student contact lens fitters

** Non-practicing members are counted in their respective license categories and are not reflected in the total

*** Registered *only* as student contact lens fitters and not included in the total. Not tracked previously.

Suspensions

SUSPENSIONS	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Automated Refracting Opticians	0	5	8
Contact Lens Fitters/Automated Refracting Opticians	9	17	8
Dispensing Opticians	40	31	73
Contact Lens Fitters	42	36	75
Student Contact Lens Fitter	2	-	-
TOTAL	93	89	164

New Registrations

NEW REGISTRATIONS	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Automated Refracting Certificates	17	2	0
Dispensing Optician Certificates	21*	21	49
Contact Lens Fitter Certificates	15*	6	14
Student Contact Lens Fitters	26	26	12
Non-practicing Registrants	2**	2	2
TOTAL CERTIFICATES ISSUED	81***	57	77

Notes: * 8 new dual licensed registrations

**Dispensing opticians

*** Completed registration applications only

The processing time for registration applications varies and depends on the type of application and the completeness of documents submitted to the College. A complete routine registration application can be processed within days of receipt by the College.



Quality Assurance Committee Report

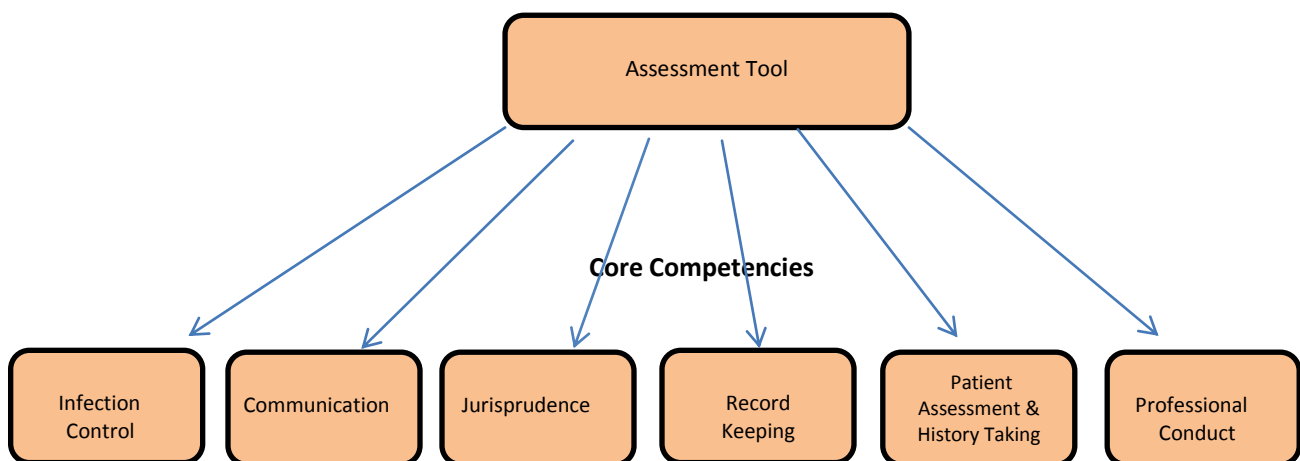
The Quality Assurance Committee (Committee) develops and evaluates the quality assurance program of the College. The committee reviews and recommends to the Board policy updates to maintain the safe and competent practice of registrants. In 2013/2014 the Committee continued working on developing the new continuing competency program. The other major priority revolved around drafting guidelines for supervision over contact lens fitting tasks.

Continuing Competency Program - The Committee built on its work from the previous year developing the continuing competency framework. This year, with the framework developed, the Committee directed staff to flesh out the program into actionable items. The resulting work plan included development of key tools and policies:

- Assessment tools for continuing competency and advanced areas of practice
- Bridging courses and activities
- Final assessment of competency
- Updated accreditation policy
- Communication and feedback from registrants

The development of the continuing competency assessment blueprint was a major undertaking for the fiscal year. Although this was contracted out, the Committee provided input as to which competencies could be included in the blueprint, and eventually to the assessment tool, based on the *National Competencies for Canadian Opticians (3rd Edition)*.

The purpose of the assessment tool is to ensure practising opticians have maintained the required knowledge, skill and judgment to practice competently, safely and ethically, in the interest of the public. The assessment tool will identify areas of strengths, as well as areas that require development and serve as a guide for life. Opticians' professional development will be focused on those areas that require work. The shift to a competency-based program was partly a result of opticians' feedback to focus on quality courses and directed learning.



The College continued discussion with NACOR and other provincial optician regulators towards the goal of standardization of the required continuing competencies for opticians across Canada. Other optician



regulators were advised of developments relating to the continuing competency program, and was circulated a copy of the work plan.

The Committee used every forum to inform and receive feedback from registrants at different stages of program development. For example, the College registrar presented updates on the continuing competency program at the national Vision Canada conference. This event was attended by Committee members who directly communicated and interacted with registrants from all over the province. In general, the feedback was positive – the shift towards focused and directed learning that maintains continuing competency was welcomed by registrants. There were questions relating to program implementation, which will be addressed once more action items were accomplished in the work plan.

Standards for Supervision - The College Board directed the Committee to develop standards and guidelines for supervision of contact lens fitting tasks by contact lens fitters. In turn, the Committee created a Working Group dedicated to drafting these standards. Chaired by a member of the Committee, this group was formed in January of 2014. Members of the Working Group were selected based on their experience in overseeing practicum students, new opticians, and non-registrants.

The Working Group reviewed the standards of practice and identified areas where new standards and/or guidelines could be developed. They reviewed the updated *National Competencies for Canadian Opticians (3rd Edition)* for competencies relating to supervision. In addition, Working Group members assessed different practice models and reviewed how safe supervision was performed in various contexts. Drawing upon their years of experience in dispensaries, they started identifying areas where the standards could be more robust and specific guidelines could be developed. They outlined current safe supervision practices and brainstormed whether these safe practices could be applicable in different settings. The Working Group provided regular updates to the Committee and expects to complete its work in the next fiscal year.

Quality Assurance Committee Members as of end of Fiscal Year April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014

Lesley Wood Bernbaum (Chair)	Appointed (Government Appointee)
Aly Jamal (Vice Chair)	Elected
Christopher Lee	Appointed (Registrant)
Wayne Mullen	Appointed (Registrant)
Dieter Saxer	Appointed (Registrant)



Inquiry Committee Report

The Inquiry Committee of the College (Committee) reviews complaints against registrants of the College, which includes dispensing opticians, contact lens fitters, certified automated refracting opticians, and student contact lens fitters. The priority of any complaint resolution is public protection. All complaints are reviewed by the Committee to determine how best to protect the public and assist the registrant in providing a better standard of care for future health care consumers. For example, the College ensures that any gap in a registrant's understanding of the standard of practice is addressed through continuing competency training and that there is a monitoring mechanism from the College.

Complaints received by the College are investigated in a consistent, thorough, and timely manner. Upon receipt of a written complaint, College staff will contact the complainant to discuss the complaints process. All complaints must be received in writing prior to investigation. The written complaint is sent to the registrant to provide them with an opportunity to respond to the allegations. The Committee considers all available information including the original complaint, the registrant's response and any other relevant information, such as, health records, eyeglasses evaluation, inspection reports, undercover investigations, and/or statements from witnesses. The Committee can dispose of a complaint in several ways, including the following:

- Taking no further action;
- Issuing a reprimand or remedial action by consent;
- Taking an action it considers appropriate within the Committee's jurisdiction or;
- Referring the file to the Discipline Committee

For fiscal year 2013/2014, the Committee held 4 meetings and disposed of two complaints.

Complaints Statistics

Resolution

TYPES OF RESOLUTION	2013-2014**	2012-2013*
Resolved by signed undertaking	0	1
Resolved by letter to remind registrant of the Standards of Practice	0	4
Resolved by mediated result	2	0
Resolved by remaking eyewear	0	0
Resolved by registrant-initiated resolution	0	1
Dismissed after inquiry committee investigation	0	7
Dismissed due to frivolous nature or complaint does not contain allegations that are subject to investigation	0	1
Complaint withdrawn	1***	2
Total	3	16

*As of March 31, 2013, 3 files remain open

**As of March 31, 2014, 5 files remain open. These files will be reported in the next fiscal year once they have been disposed of by the Committee. These complaints were complex and required extensive investigations.

*** Complainant did not pursue the complaint.



Types of Complaints

TYPES OF COMPLAINTS	2013-2014	2012-2013
Allegations of Unauthorized Practice	5	2
Allegations of breach of professional conduct	0	5
Allegations of breach of Standards of Practice	3	1
Allegations of breach of the Health Professions Act	0	1
Allegations of breach of professional ethics and/or business practice	0	5
Allegations of false and misleading advertising		5
Total	8	19

Inquiry Committee Members as of end of Fiscal Year April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014

Gary Corner (Chair)	Elected
Dalminder Virk (Vice Chair)	Appointed (Government Appointee)
Zuheir Merali	Appointed (Registrant)
Heather Odermatt	Appointed (Registrant)
Clara Tam	Appointed (Registrant)



Patient Relations Committee Report

In 2013/2014, the Patient Relations Committee (Committee) continued developing a comprehensive patient relations program. The patient relations program aims to improve relations between registrants and health care consumers by providing tools, guidelines and support on topics such as preventing sexual harassment, establishing professional boundaries and supporting effective communication.

In order to meet the patient relations program goal of improving the relationship between opticians and their patients, the Committee has generated the following program deliverables:

Patient Deliverables

Patients should know...

- What is an optician?
- What should they expect from opticians and contact lens fitters?
- How do you make and resolve a complaint?
- Where do they find an optician?
- What is the difference between a regulated and unregulated eyewear provider?

Deliverables have been chosen based on the desired outcomes of the patient relations program. In order to work towards these goals, the Committee has developed a work plan.

Registrant Deliverables

Registrants should know...

- What and how do they communicate to patients?
- How can they be distinguished as a professional?
- How do they improve the quality of care they provide?
- How are complaints resolved?
- How can they collaborate with other professions?
- How can they prevent professional boundary crossing and/or sexual

Phase 1 – Planning

- Develop internal and external messaging
- Generate clear deliverables

Phase 2 – Program Development

- Develop Patient Relations Tool Kit
- Develop continuing education activities
- Recruit and train volunteers
- Communicate to registrants and public

Phase 3 - Execution

- Execute education series
- Implement Ambassador program
- Distribute tool kit to registrants
- Communicate to the public

Phase 4 – Monitoring

- Monitor - ongoing
- Develop questionnaire
- Collect data and review

Patient Relations Program



The Committee finished the 2013/2014 year by getting ready to enter Phase 2. In the past year, they have begun to develop the Patient Relations Tool Kit, including partnering with the College of Opticians of Alberta to generate a Patient Relations Communication Tool Kit for registrants. Registrants can already access this document on the College of Opticians of BC's website. The Committee also began to outline the Ambassador program, which will be a key part of the implementation of the patient relations program. As the year came to a close, additional professional boundary tools and guidelines were in development for future release to registrants. The Committee remains committed to developing a patient relations program that will improve vision care experiences of health care consumers and continue to address the resource needs of registrants.

Patient Relations Committee Members as of end of Fiscal Year April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014

Lesley Wood Bernbaum (Chair)	Appointed (Government Appointee)
Kim McEachern (Vice Chair)	Appointed (Registrant)
David McGowan	Elected (Registrant)
Antonella Milani	Appointed (Registrant)
Payam Moshrefzadeh	Elected (Registrant)



Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee of the College (Committee) ensures that Administration implements adequate control structures and procedures to manage its finances to ensure long-term financial sustainability. The Committee ensures appropriate financial disclosures to the Board. The Committee Chair also reviews and approves operational expenses of the College. The Chair presents quarterly financial statements to the Board and notes any trends or anomaly from the budget.

The Finance Committee Chair, who also serves as the Audit Committee Chair, periodically meets with the College's external auditor to review the College's finances. It has been the College's practice for the auditor and the Audit Chair to meet independent of the Administration to review the unaudited financial statements before they are submitted for the Board's review and approval. This encourages transparency and an unbiased review of the College's finances.

For fiscal year 2013/2014, the focus continued to be fiscal sustainability: contributing to the College's reserves, while ensuring that strategic priorities have adequate budget for implementation. Prudent spending has been one way to meet fiscal sustainability. Expenses were decreased for the following items:

- Board and Committee meetings
- Examinations
- Legal Costs
- Printing
- Professional Development – Staff

Expenses related to strategic plan priorities increased, e.g. contractors, public awareness campaigns. The College contracted out work related to updates of assessment tools to align with the updated *National Competencies for Canadian Opticians (3rd Edition)*. Public awareness campaigns included national and provincial campaigns with opticianry stakeholders and provincial campaigns with other regulated health professions in BC.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of the College of Opticians of British Columbia

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of College of Opticians of British Columbia, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2014, and the statement of operations and changes in net assets and statement of 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 accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, 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

My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I 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.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of College of Opticians of British Columbia as at March 31, 2014, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Burnaby, BC
July 20, 2014

Keon Kwan & Company

Certified General Accountant



COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT MARCH 31, 2014

	2014	2013
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$295,840	\$336,006
Prepaid expenses	7,430	1,886
	303,270	337,892
INVESTMENTS (Note 3)	295,904	252,438
TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 4)	1,779	5,229
SECURITY DEPOSIT	4,129	4,129
	\$605,082	\$599,688
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 5)	\$41,013	\$69,988
Deferred registration fees	370,491	331,150
	\$411,504	\$401,138
NET ASSETS		
Invested in capital assets	1,779	5,229
Unrestricted	191,799	193,321
	193,578	198,550
	\$605,082	\$599,688

Commitments (Note 6)

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

Raheem Savja, Chair, Board of Directors

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements



COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2014

	2014	2013
		(note 11)
REVENUES		
Registration fees	\$471,767	\$489,071
Administrative fees and other income	26,436	12,425
Examination fees	23,800	29,750
Interest income	4,141	4,504
Amortization of deferred contribution	-	25,938
	\$526,144	\$561,688
EXPENSES		
Accounting and audit	6,763	6,500
Amortization of tangible capital assets	3,449	7,604
Amortization of database	-	19,534
Bad debt	-	8,400
Bank and credit card charges	15,658	13,822
Board and committee meetings	33,878	34,684
Contractors	23,176	11,214
Database maintenance	-	10,125
Dues, licenses and insurance	17,536	16,832
Examinations	13,611	17,841
Legal	35,432	57,037
Office supplies and services	26,333	26,683
Postage	6,333	3,020
Printing	5,020	11,423
Professional development - Staff	6,356	9,387
Public awareness and promotion	54,227	23,365
Rent	45,177	42,314
Salaries and benefits	229,668	201,527
Travel	30,489	26,802
Expense recoveries - public awareness and promotion	(21,000)	-
Expense recoveries - rent	(990)	-
	\$531,116	\$548,114
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	(4,972)	13,574
NET ASSETS, beginning of year	198,550	184,976
NET ASSETS, end of year	\$193,578	\$198,550

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements



**COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2014**

	2014	2013
Operating Activities		
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	\$(4,972)	\$13,574
Adjust for non-cash items:		
Amortization of deferred contribution	-	(25,938)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	3,449	7,604
Amortization of database	-	19,534
	\$(1,523)	\$14,774
Changes in non-cash working capital items:		
Accounts receivable	-	11,188
Prepaid expenses	(5,544)	2,568
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(28,974)	15,502
Deferred registration fees	39,341	81,584
Cash provided by (used for) operating activities	\$3,300	\$125,616
Financing Activities		
Cash provided by (used for) financing activities	-	-
Investing Activities		
Proceeds from investments	252,438	218,401
Purchase of investments	(295,904)	(252,438)
Cash provided by (used for) investing activities	(43,466)	(34,037)
Increase (decrease) in cash	(40,166)	91,579
Cash, beginning of year	336,006	244,427
Cash, end of year	\$295,840	\$336,006

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements



**COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2014**

1 GENERAL

The College of Opticians of British Columbia (the "College") was established under the Health Professions Act of B.C. in December 1994. Operations commenced in April 1995.

The mandate of the College is to serve and protect the public by regulating the practice of opticianry in British Columbia in Accordance with the *Health Professions Act*, *Opticians Regulation* and *Bylaws*.

2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of accounting

The College prepares its financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO).

Revenue Recognition

The College follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. More specifically, revenue from courses, examination fees, and for other programs where revenue is identified with delivery of services, is recognized when the courses, examinations and other services are provided. Amounts charged for all other fees are recognized as revenue in the year received.

Investments

Investments are initially recorded at fair value at the date of acquisition. Subsequently, investments in debt securities, such as treasury bills and government bonds, are recorded at amortized cost. Investments in publicly traded equity securities are recorded at fair value based on quoted market prices. Unrealized gains or losses are recognized in the statement of operations. Transaction costs, such as commissions, arising from investments in publicly traded equity securities are expensed when incurred.

Tangible Capital Assets and Amortization

Purchased tangible capital assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortization. The College provides for amortization of these assets on a three year straight-line basis.

Income Taxes

Income taxes are not reflected in these financial statements as the College is a regulatory body established for the health profession of opticianry.



COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2014

2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Use of Estimates

When preparing financial statements according to ASNPO, the College makes estimates and assumptions relating to:

- Reported amounts of revenue and expenses
- Reported amounts of assets and liabilities; and
- Disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities.

Management's assumptions are based on a number of factors, including historical experience, current events and actions that the organization may undertake in the future, and other assumptions that we believe are reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results could differ from those estimates under different conditions and assumptions. Estimates were used when accounting for certain items, such as the useful lives of capital assets and impairment of long-lived assets.

3 INVESTMENTS

	2014	2013
Guaranteed Investment Certificate	\$293,250	\$250,000
Accrued interest	2,654	2,438
	<u>\$295,904</u>	<u>\$252,438</u>

4 TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	2014			2013
	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Accumulated Amortization</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>Net</u>
Computer equipment	\$37,424	\$37,394	\$30	\$482
Office furniture and equipment	58,188	56,439	1,749	4,747
	<u>\$95,612</u>	<u>\$93,833</u>	<u>\$1,779</u>	<u>\$5,229</u>

5 ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES

	2014	2013
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$15,830	\$20,695
Sales tax payable	17,548	40,963
Vacation payable	7,635	8,330
	<u>\$41,013</u>	<u>\$69,988</u>



COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2014

6 COMMITMENTS

(a) The College's premises are leased under an arrangement expiring on September 30, 2016. The total rent to that date is \$69,084 plus applicable taxes and its proportionate share of operating costs. Included in the lease arrangement is an option to renew the lease for an additional five years. The minimum lease payments due for the next three fiscal years is as follows:

	rent	estimated operating costs	Total
2015	\$27,270	\$16,917	\$44,187
2016	27,876	16,917	44,793
2017	13,938	8,459	22,397
	<u>\$69,084</u>	<u>\$42,293</u>	<u>\$111,377</u>

(b) The College has a photocopier lease expiring on December 31, 2014. The minimum lease payments due for the next fiscal year is as follows:

2015	<u>\$1,260</u>
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7 LINE OF CREDIT

The College has a loan facility with its bank consisting of:

Operating Line of Credit	\$50,000
Corporate Visa	<u>10,000</u>
	<u>\$60,000</u>

The operating line of credit carries an interest rate of prime plus 1%. As at March 31, 2014 there was no amount outstanding on the operating line of credit.

8 CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

The College has been named as a defendant in the following lawsuit:

- an interference with business statement of claim from the B.C. College of Optics

Legal counsel to the College is unable to assess its potential liability, if any, resulting from the lawsuit. No provision for possible loss has been included in these financial statements.



COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
MARCH 31, 2014

9 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The College's financial instruments are cash, investments, and accounts payable and accrued liabilities. Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the College is not exposed to significant interest, currency, or credit risks arising from these financial instruments. The fair value of the instruments approximates their carrying values, unless otherwise noted.

Interest rate risk

The College is exposed to interest rate risk with respect to its interest-bearing investments that bear interest at fixed rates due to fluctuations in the market interest rates. The College does not use financial instruments to reduce its interest rate risk exposure.

Currency risk

The College is not exposed to currency risk.

Credit risk

The College is exposed to credit risk with respect to its financial assets as reported on the Statement of Financial Position. Credit risk is reduced by the fact that its cash is held in deposit with Canadian financial institutions in insured accounts.

10 MANAGEMENT OF CAPITAL

The College receives its principal source of capital through fees received from members. The College defines capital to be net assets.

The College's objectives when managing capital are to fund its operational requirements and capital assets additions. The College makes adjustments based on available funding and economic conditions. Currently, the College's strategy is to monitor expenditures to preserve capital in accordance with available and budgeted funding.

The College is not subject to debt covenants or any other capital requirements with respect to operating funding. Funding received for designated purposes must be used for the purpose outlined in the bylaws and budget.

11 COMPARATIVE FIGURES

The comparative figures have been reclassified to conform with the current year's financial statement presentation.