



BACKGROUND - COLLEGE OF OPTICIANS OF ONTARIO STANDARD OF PRACTICE: REFRACTION

The College of Opticians has prepared this Background in order to put the Standard of Practice: Refraction in context.

On February 7, 2001 the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (who at that time was Mrs. Elizabeth Witmer) directed the College of Opticians to require its members to stop performing refractions. The Minister requested that the College maintain this ban until a Standard of Practice on refraction was developed collaboratively with the College of Optometrists and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

The College of Opticians firmly believes that it is in the best interest of the public that Opticians who have been formally trained in the theory and methods of refraction should be permitted to offer such a service to the residents of Ontario. Optician-performed refraction will not only increase the public's access to an important health care service, but it will also allow for greater patient choice among alternate regulated providers. Accordingly, the College of Opticians has worked diligently and in good faith to develop a workable Standard of Practice that clearly separates the performance of the public domain act of refraction from the controlled act of prescribing. This Standard of Practice allows Opticians who are certified to do the former, while restricting their performance of the latter to situations that conform in all respects with the controlled act provisions of the *Regulated Health Professions Act*.

In its report "New Directions" published in April 2006, HPRAC recommended that the ban on refraction be lifted and that the College of Opticians develop a Standard of Practice

"..... that (limits) the authority of (Opticians) who perform refractometry to those circumstances where such refracting is undertaken in collaboration with an optometrist or a physician for the purpose of informing a comprehensive ocular assessment."

The Standard of Practice: Refraction has been developed by the College of Opticians to achieve those objectives.

Members who wish to refract must review the Standard of Practice in detail and understand that compliance with what is stipulated in the document is required. Members are reminded that there is a stringent process in place that outlines the criteria that Opticians must adhere to in order to perform refractions in Ontario. It is important to understand that ***Opticians may not begin to refract until an application has been approved by the College.***

The Refraction Patient Consent Form referred to in the Standard of Practice **MUST** be completed for each patient. All Refraction Patient Consent Forms (one copy per patient) must be provided to the College on March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31 of each year. Compliance with the Standard of Practice requires completion and submission of all consent forms. The information contained therein will be aggregated and analyzed in order to better understand and track any changes in the environment in which Opticians refract.