

Continuing Competence Standards

An optician is responsible for completing the continuing **competence**¹ program (CCP) according to the College of Opticians of Alberta (COA) requirements.

Patient Expectations

The patient can expect that the optician maintains their competence and enhances the provision of **opticianry services**.

Background

These standards² apply to **regulated members**³ of COA on the general register, including those holding a non-practicing status. If a regulated member does not meet these expectations, they may have conditions imposed on their practice permit as per s 40.1(1) of the HPA.

Regulated Member Requirements

1. An optician registered on the general register evaluates and updates their knowledge and competency through mandatory participation of self-directed learning in the COA CCP.

An optician must:

- 1.1. complete the CCP requirements as outlined by the College as per the Bylaws;
- 1.2. complete a self-assessment of their practice to identify their learning needs;
- 1.3. develop, document, and complete a learning plan as per CCP cycle requirements that addresses their learning needs and reflects their continuing competence activities and learning outcomes; and
- 1.4. keep and provide, upon request of the Registrar, supporting documentation for their CCP for five years following the end of the CCP cycle to which the documents relate.

2. An optician must participate in a COA CCP audit if selected.

An optician must:

- 2.1. participate in periodic audits carried out by the College to verify compliance with the CCP requirements;
- 2.2. submit to the Registrar any supporting information or documentation requested as part of the audit process; and
 - 2.2.1. any optician who provides false or misleading information can be referred to the Complaints Director
- 2.3. correct any errors or omissions identified in the audit.

¹ Words in bold font are listed in the glossary.

² According to section 3(1)(c) of the *Health Professions Act* (2000) (HPA), regulatory colleges must establish, maintain, and enforce standards for continuing competence. The COA must administer a CCP that allows regulated members to maintain their competence and enhance their opticianry practice.

³ The term “regulated member” and “registrant” may be used interchangeably

3. An optician who has failed to complete the requirements set out in Standard 1 may have conditions imposed on their practice permit.

An optician must:

- 3.1. Adhere to any conditions imposed by the Registrar for failure to complete the requirements, as laid out in s 40.1(1) of the HPA that include, but are not limited to:
 - a) practice under supervision,
 - b) limited to specified opticianry services or to specific areas of practice,
 - c) refrain from performing specified restricted activities,
 - d) refrain from engaging in sole practice,
 - e) submit to additional practice visits or other assessments,
 - f) report to the registrar on specified matters on specific dates,
 - g) their practice permit is valid only for a specified purpose and time,
 - h) being prohibited from supervising students, other members, or other health professionals, and
 - i) complete the continuing competence requirements within a specified time.

4. An optician must participate in a competence assessment if selected to do so.

An optician must:

- 4.1. participate in any requirements assigned by the Registrar. These may include one or more of the following:
 - a) participation in a practice visit where they may be asked to provide supporting documentation or information, access to the dispensary in which they practice;
 - b) examinations; and
 - c) other appropriate methods of assessing competence as outlined by the Registrar.

Glossary Terms:

Competence: the combined knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment required to provide professional services (HPA, 2000)

Patient: a person, or caregiver of a person, receiving professional services from a regulated member of the College

Opticianry services: a service that comes within the practice of the regulated opticianry profession. In their practice, opticians do one or more of the following:

- Based on an optical prescription, design, supply, prepare, adjust, and dispense optical appliances and prostheses, including corrective lenses;
- Promote eye health and the correct use of optical appliances and prostheses through education of consumers and regulated members;
- Perform refractions and identify the need for corrective lenses;
- Conduct or collaborate in optical related research;
- When providing professional services referred to in this section, conduct assessments and make referrals where appropriate;
- Provide restricted activities authorized by the regulations.

(HPA, 2000, Optician Professions Regulation, 2011)

Regulated Member: an optician registered as a member of the College of Opticians of Alberta under section 33(1)(a) of the HPA (2000).

Related Documents:

College of Opticians of Alberta *Professionalism Standards*

Health Professions Act, RSA 2000, c H-7

Opticians Profession Regulation, 2011

References:

Health Professions Act, RSA 2000, c H-7

Opticians Profession Regulation, 2011

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