

# Nova Scotia College of Dispensing Opticians

## Standards of Practice

### **Introduction**

The College of Dispensing Opticians of Nova Scotia is responsible for regulating the practice of optical dispensing, in the interest of the public. Through legislation, the optical dispensing profession is granted the authority to set standards for its practice, all of which must be done in the interest of the public.

The Standards of Practice that are set out in this document describes the desirable and achievable level of performance expected of Dispensing Opticians in their practice, against which actual performance can be measured. The Standards established by the College are the benchmark of assessing the professional conduct of all Dispensing Opticians in Nova Scotia, regardless of the practice setting in which the Dispensing Opticians may be engaged.

In applying the Standards of Practice set out in this document, it must be recognized that there are unique factors in each practice environment, which may impact on a Dispensing Optician's capacity to meet the stated standard. These circumstances must always be borne in mind, but do not detract from the standard as setting the expected level of performance.

These Standards of Practice should be read in conjunction with the College of Dispensing Opticians' Code of Ethics, which elaborates on the profession's ethical principles in order to assist in gaining the public's trust in the profession.

The College of Dispensing Opticians will review these Standards of Practice periodically in order to ensure that the standards reflect current expectations.

### **STANDARD 1**

#### **Accountability and Responsibility**

Dispensing Opticians are accountable and responsible to the public for competent, safe and ethical dispensing practice.

Each Dispensing Optician:

- 1.1 practices in accordance with the Dispensing Opticians Act, Regulations and By-Laws;

- 1.2 practices in accordance with these Standards of Practice and the Code of Ethics adopted by the College of Dispensing Opticians;
- 1.3 practices in accordance with other relevant Acts and Legislation;
- 1.4 practices within the competence and scope of practice of the individual Dispensing Optician.

## **Standard 2**

### **Continuing Competence**

A Dispensing Optician possesses and continually acquires competencies relevant to their own area of practice.

Each Dispensing Optician must:

- 2.1 have appropriate theoretical knowledge and skills as needed in their practice area;
- 2.2 assess their own competence and assume personal responsibility in meeting their own professional learning needs and seek out and apply knowledge and skills to improve practice;
- 2.3 have knowledge of changing trends in optical dispensing and society that impact on his or her practice.

## **Standard 3**

### **Maintenance of Comprehensive and Accurate Records**

- 3.1 prepare and maintain a consistent and comprehensive system for recording and filling relevant client information
  - a) The client's name, address and phone number
  - b) Full details of the prescription, including the date and name of prescriber;
  - c) All pertinent measurements;
  - d) Frames specifications;
  - e) lens design and materials;
  - f) the date of dispensing;
  - g) confirmation of when a client has been advised that a lens does not or cannot meet impact resistant standards;
  - h) confirmation, if the prescription is a duplication of an existing pair of glasses without a written prescription or is a prescription older than two years, that the client has been advised to return for a full eye examination;

- i) if fitting contact lenses, information respecting the pre-fitting evaluation including;
  - 1. Medical history
  - 2. Medication
  - 3. Keratometry reading
  - 4. slit lamp examination
  - 5. specifications of final lenses
  - 6. the care system provided or recommended
  - 7. the recommended follow-up care and a record of follow-up care
  - 8. details of all communications between the optician and the client's prescribing medical doctor or optometrist
  - 9. available history of any past contact lens wear
  
- 3.2 retain the original and updated client file for a minimum of seven (7) years from the last date of entry for dispensing and for contact lens fitting;
  
- 3.3 ensure the security of client records within the business premises by taking appropriate precautions against loss, theft or destruction;
  
- 3.4 if he or she intends to cease practice, make arrangements for the transfer to all client files to another Dispensing Optician who has agreed to maintain the records for the time period required by these Standards, or if no replacement Optician can be found, the Dispensing Optician who intends to cease practice shall advise the Registrar and make arrangements with the Registrar to transfer copies of the records to the Registrar, to be maintained for the period of time required by these Standards.

## **Standard 4**

### **Confidentially**

Opticians shall respect the privacy of their clients and hold in confidence information disclosed to them.

Each Dispensing Optician shall:

- 4.1 demonstrate regard for the privacy of their client;
- 4.2 abide by all relevant privacy laws;
- 4.3 respect the privacy of all confidential information acquired in their professional relationship with a client and shall not use or disclose such information to others without the client's consent, or as otherwise required by law.

## **Standard 5**

### **Maintenance of Professional and Hygienic Premises**

Dispensing Opticians shall engage in dispensing activities from premises which are professional in appearance and maintained in a sanitary and hygienic condition.

## **Standard 6**

### **Use of Current, Accurate and Hygienic Equipment**

Opticians must maintain and utilize current, accurate and hygienic equipment.

Each Dispensing Optician shall have:

- a) adjustment and bench tools
- b) lensometer
- c) lens gauge
- d) frame heater