



Ontario  
Opticians  
ASSOCIATION

# FOCUS

## WINTER 2019

### WHATS INSIDE!?



2019 Professional Learning Recap



CBC Marketplace: Blue Light



Social Media and Healthcare



New CE Category



...and More!







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FRONTLINE OF VISION CARE

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Ontario Opticians Association Quarterly e-publication.

Watch for 2020 issues in February, May, August and December.

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy Holidays!!

As we are about to say farewell to 2019, I'd like to take this moment to share with OOA members some highlights of the year past with some expectations for 2020.

*OOA has a 20-20 plan for advancing opticianry.*



**BILL SNELGROVE**

First of all, we were busy!! I say "we" because no OOA event or activity is done without member participation from a very engaged and committed board of directors, all busy opticians, to each and every one of you who come out to the Association's premier events.

You make each professional development day in Ottawa and in the Greater Toronto Area special. The networking is great. Watching people reconnect and share experiences and best practices, offer each other suggestions and new supplier sources is fabulous. We know you have choices for your continuing education and it gives us all a sense of pride in the profession to witness you investing in yourselves through the OOA. While earning continuing education credits is mandatory for maintaining registration with the regulatory college, like most health care professionals, opticians seem committed to staying on top of vision care advances and seem to enjoy practices at the leading edge of optical care. This is captured in the 2019 Association tagline Opticians: On the Frontline of Vision Care.

One of the strategic pushes planned for 2020, is advocacy linked to reminding health care policy makers that opticians are at the frontline of vision care and are much more than eyewear retailers.

The OOA board of directors is meeting in January to develop a five-year strategic plan (2020-2025) focused on promoting the profession and advancing a role for opticians in ocular emergencies such as concussions, as well as gaining a role for opticians as "authorisers" with the Assistive Devices Program (ADP).

We are member-driven and given the terrific attendance at the Professional Learning (Ottawa) and the Specialty Symposium (Vaughan) events, are planning to provide an even better line-up of experts and valuable sessions for you in April and October of 2020. The GTA venue for the Specialty Symposium and "new" Specialty Hub events, as well as for the Student Night in March, will be at the Sheraton Parkway Hotel and Conference Centre for 2020.

I didn't want to build a message around "20-20" for fear it would be too hokey because of our profession, but seeing clearly and expanding the organization's vision beyond the year at hand, we do hope to have the profession well-positioned when the Ontario government moves forward with the new plans for regulatory clusters, decompressing the number of individual colleges.



As OOA President, I think it is important for members to be aware that you have a solid board of directors and leadership, thinking and seeing the big picture of where opticianry can be over the coming five years.

*Opticians are committed to staying on top of vision care advances.  
This is captured in the 2019 Association tagline  
Opticians: On the Frontline of Vision Care.*

This issue of FOCUS also contains a number of ads from the Association’s terrific sponsors who are also committed to being with us in 2020. Please watch for a new “vendor alley” online marketplace that will help members, via the website, access preferred providers and often with OOA-specific discounts and special offers. The public portal on the website is also being developed to inform the public about the profession and to find YOU, with a new search function: Find the Optician Nearest You.

Please be sure when you renew your membership you check that your clinic information is up to date to enable this search function. On behalf of the entire board of directors, may I wish you a happy holiday season and a prosperous 2020.

Bill Snelgrove

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# 2019 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING RECAP

2019 was a great year for professional learning offered by the OOA. The feedback we received from our attendees was great! You really enjoyed the speakers and according to your comments, the material presented was highly relevant to your professional growth. 2019 saw new presenters and a few returning favourites.



- 90.91% of attendees said they would recommend Inside Optics to other opticians.
- 100% of attendees rated Inside Optics either "Much Better Than Expected, Better Than Expected and About What I Expected"



- "Dr Robert Kloepfer was great!. Very useful information"
- "I found Albert Mo to be engaged and most willing to share his "trade secrets". The most willing to share his knowledge on how to fix eyeglasses."



- 100% of respondents said they would recommend this Professional Learning Event to other opticians.
- Over 66% of respondents said the event exceeded their expectations.
- "This year was the best in all my years attending".
- "This year's event was perhaps the best one to date".
- "Speakers were fantastic".

Plans are well underway for the 2020 events and we want you to know that we listen to your feedback and always strive to continuously improve our offerings to you. Whether it's trying out new venues, or using your suggestions for topics, we appreciate the comments and suggestions given in our post event surveys.

## OUR PLEDGE TO YOU

Beginning in 2020, the OOA pledges to you, Ontario Opticians, that attending two of our shows per year will **FULLFILL ALL OF YOUR ACCREDITATION HOURS** needed to meet your COO QA requirements. Whether you are attending Inside Optics, Professional Learning Ottawa, or the Specialty Symposium, you will come away from each of these shows with two Eyeglass, two Contact, and two Professional Growth accredited hours. Some of these credits will be EG/CL/RF accredited hours which will give you flexibility.

We have you covered!



## VENUE | RETURNING TO THE SHERATON PARKWAY

As part of our continuous goal of providing you with the best professional learning experience, we are always looking for the best venue to ensure your comfort. 2020 will see Inside Optics and Specialty Symposium returning to the completely renovated Sheraton North Parkway Hotel in Richmond Hill.

Not only will you enjoy your day in a new, bright venue, but you will also enjoy our new menu for your breakfast, morning break and lunch.

Check out the **NEW** menu!!

Breakfast- Assorted fruits, yogurts and baked goods.

Morning Break- Warm mini donuts and house-made quinoa brittle.

Lunch- Build your own stir-fry rice bowl. Build your own Asian themed rice or noodle bowl!



## PRELIMINARY SPEAKER LINEUP | INSIDE OPTICS 2020



Dr. Angela Malik – Low Vision

Cathi Mietkiewitz – Professional Judgement

Dr Mark Eltis – Long Term Outcomes and Recent Advances in Refractive Surgery

John Yee, – Ortho C, The Neurological Treatment for Nearsightedness and Related Vision Problems

Amy Chow – RGP's vs Sclerals

Dr Kiran Ramesh – Vision Therapy

College of Opticians of Ontario Update

OOA Annual General Meeting

\*All pending COO accreditation

When you attend OOA events for your con-ed, you are also supporting your profession. The OOA, in partnership with the Canadian Opticians Association, is the only opticians association in Ontario.

We are your voice.

Help us represent Ontario opticians.

The OOA is a non-profit owned by our almost 2,000 members. All money received goes to representing Ontario opticians.

[VISIT THE OOA EVENTS PAGE](#)

## SPEAKING UP & OUT RESPECTFULLY

Opinions are welcome, but the province's health care professionals are being reminded, through the Federation of Health Regulatory Colleges of Ontario, to be very careful about how thoughts, feelings and statements are shared on social media platforms. The Federation reminds all regulated health care professionals, venting on social media can have repercussions.

The OOA is sharing the Federation's caution because of a situation that occurred at the Specialty Symposium. It's a lesson for each and every one of us to be alert to the risks and impact of social media postings.

The OOA recently held its Specialty Symposium. It was very well attended by opticians and our vendors were very excited to see such engagement from our attendees. The OOA prides itself on meeting the needs of all members and being sensitive to the cultural diversities that exist in our professional world. The OOA is very proud of the work it does to find new presentations and speakers from diverse professional backgrounds. The OOA reviews all presentation content by looking at key criteria.

The presentation must be, for the most part, technical in nature, as opposed to commercial or product focused. Another important consideration, presentations must adhere to the Ontario Human Rights Code. In addition, all presentations and slides are reviewed by our regulatory body, the College of Opticians of Ontario. A committee of opticians and lay people review and accredit, or not accredit, each presentation.



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This latest OOA Specialty Symposium saw an attendee take personal offence by remarks from a speaker, interpreting the remarks and a slide as discriminatory. The attendee brought their concern to the attention of the OOA administration and also posted it on their social media platform. The OOA responded immediately to the attendee and a full investigation was initiated. Upon completion of this investigation, it was found that the speaker's remarks were not interpreted by other attendees interviewed as discriminatory. This does not mean the attendee was not offended or was wrong to be offended. For that, the OOA apologizes. We strive to present events where all attendees feel safe and enjoy a positive experience. The OOA takes every member's concerns seriously, and we appreciate and encourage all feedback be submitted to the OOA.

For all speaker presentations at OOA events in 2020, the sessions will be audiotaped, if not audio and videotaped, to provide a record of sessions for reference should controversy over content arise.

*The OOA is here for YOU.*

*If you have a concern or a complaint, please contact the Association Secretariat, the Executive Director or any of the Board Members directly.*

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# NEWS: SHEDDING LIGHT ON BLUE LIGHT

The OOA always strives to present up-to-date and relevant presentations at all OOA continuing education events. Over the last couple of years we have updated our processes for evaluating each presentation's appropriateness and relevance. Thanks to the responses, we receive from attendees through our post-event surveys, we are able to incorporate ideas for topics and also ways to ensure attendees enjoy their day and maximize the benefit of professional learning and networking.

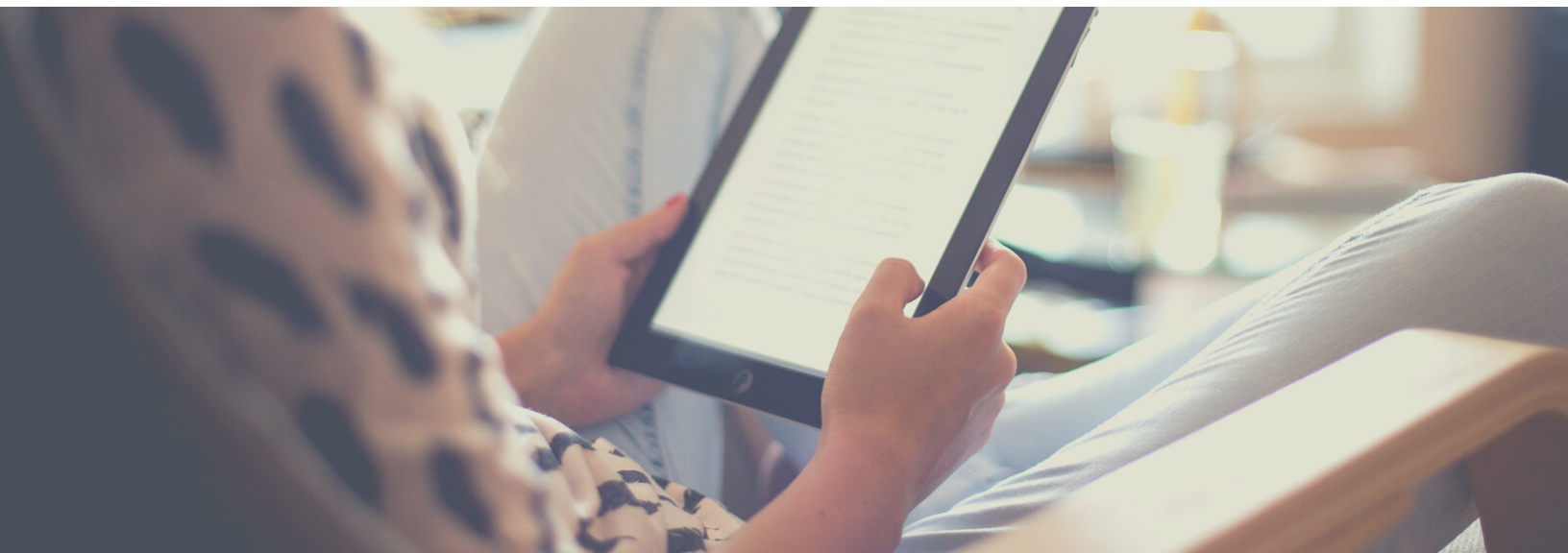
Recently, the CBC program **Marketplace** aired a segment that questioned the need for Blue Light filters and claims of retinal damage made by some opticians and optical store staff. Historically, the accepted information available indicated risks pertaining to sleep and retinal damage associated with Blue Light.

In order to keep opticians up-to-date with current trends, the OOA hosted a speaker in 2017 who spoke on the latest accepted evidence on Blue Light. Since that time, studies have surfaced that have concluded that there are no risks due to exposure to Blue Light from electronic devices.

As opticians, we know that there is more to Blue Light filtering than possible retinal damage and sleep issues. These include the lack of clarity of vision caused by Blue Light and the related visual stress caused. In the opinion of many, **Marketplace** did not present a fair, or balanced report.

Having said that, it is incumbent on all opticians to continually educate themselves about the evolving research findings. It is also important for opticians to educate their patients on the multiple perspectives available when it comes to protecting patients' vision and the products offered. Standards of practice are evolving, giving opticians more leeway to use their professional judgement. In order to meet this challenge, we must continue to educate ourselves.

The OOA will strive to present all perspectives, but in the end, it is important for opticians to keep current with research and to represent risk objectively and accurately.





# VISION CARE TRENDS 2020

In addition to the year 2020 being aligned with the well-used expression of 20-20 vision to measure sight acuity, it's going to be a year of eye care trends that are focused on patient outcomes. The trend analysis folks are predicting a whole-health approach is on tap for vision care in 2020. Specialty eyewear continues to be on the rise as well in 2020, with more patients prioritizing the eye health at work with Blue Light glasses and safety glasses. Given a recent CBC TV Marketplace media story and controversy around "Blue Light" lenses, OOA members may want to take extra care in checking on research related to conditions and remedies before engaging in dispensing.

Vision care professionals are being alerted, by trend predictors, to the increasing prevalence of eye disease given the ageing population and the rise of chronic conditions like diabetes. While they may not be available by 2020, new technologies like phototherapeutic contact lenses, and new glaucoma detection techniques, are showing a promising future for opticians on the frontline of vision care in Ontario.

Vision trends cited regularly also indicate that while discount eyeglasses and low-cost contact were an initial concern, the data shows more people are turning to opticians for specialized options such as prescription sunglasses and safety eyewear. In fact, there is a prediction that requests for safety glasses will grow by 4-5% in 2020.

Improved safety glasses technology is partly responsible for this increase and new advancements have made safety glasses more effective for the end-user. Progressives safety glasses, for example, are driving market growth. These glasses help prevent eye injuries due to non-compliance as they can be worn throughout the day, regardless of what type of task the wearer is doing.

Certain industries are responsible for the demand for safety glasses, as new equipment requires the use of safety glasses on the job. The healthcare industry is leading the charge, with more healthcare applications requiring the use of laser machines in fields like dermatology and dentistry. More people using these machines means more people requiring laser safety eyewear, a specialty type of safety glasses. Improved safety glasses technology is partly responsible for this increase and new advancements have made safety glasses more effective for the end-user. Progressives safety glasses, for example, are driving market growth. These glasses help prevent eye injuries due to non-compliance as they can be worn throughout the day, regardless of the wearer's task.

*Given the recent CBC TV Marketplace media story and controversy around "blue light" lenses, OOA members may want to take extra care in checking on research related to conditions and remedies before engaging in dispensing.*

Opticians should be checking into these specialty-type safety glasses for client needs. As patients make the connection between overall health and good ocular health the trend for more visits to opticians should continue throughout 2020.



JIMMY CHOO

## SOCIAL MEDIA VENTING: CAUTION FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

Venting on social media platforms is not just about “letting off steam”. It’s hurtful. It’s harmful. And, it’s now illegal. If you use Facebook, Twitter and other social media tools to “vent” then think again because you may be subject to libel and defamation legal action.

Anyone active on social media is used to the outrageous comments posted by some pretty angry and unfiltered people. That doesn’t make it acceptable conduct. Regulated health care professional are being cautioned by regulatory colleges about being very cautious about social media comments.

We have all witnessed the fury posted by a disgruntled consumer, an angry ex-partner, an upset employee, or an irate neighbour. Many have become used to “venting” their frustrations easily and seemingly anonymously. However, the internet leaves a trail and is not easily scrubbed, even by the remorseful. A simple online search of anyone victimized by venters usually finds the malicious comments for all to see and to consider. The harm to a person’s reputation from cyber libel is real. Reputations can be tarnished at best or ruined by such hot-headed rants. What about you? Are you guilty of ranting? Are you already a victim of such conduct?

In February of 2018, a significant decision by the Ontario Court of Appeal upheld \$700,000 in damages in what the legal community is cited as an important case for internet defamation law.



In that case -- Rutman v. Rabinowitz -- two businessmen, Moishe Bergman and Saul Rabinowitz, had been found guilty of cyber libel for an internet campaign they conducted against a former business associate who then sued them for defamation successfully. They appealed and lost. The Court of Appeal's decision, dismissing the appeals, found that the "pernicious effects" of internet defamation distinguishes it from defamation in other mediums when it comes to awarding damages. This is an important Decision for that ruling. Other equally as important positions stated by the Appeals Court decision included that while the traditional factors for determining defamation applied, the "internet context" resulted in the offending statements being disseminated widely and viewed instantly by anyone. The Appeals Court Decision reaffirmed that it isn't necessary for a plaintiff to prove specific injury to reputation when it comes to assessing damages for internet defamation. So, check your angry postings and if you are questioning someone's integrity, or calling into question their character also check your bank account and see if you have an extra few hundred thousand dollars to back up your rant. Seriously.

## OFFENCE | DEFAMATION & CYBER LIBEL

Defamation is the making of a false statement concerning a person or business that damages that person's or business's reputation. If a false statement is made and that person or business's reputation is damaged, there can be legal consequences for the person who made the statement. Defamation applies to both written and oral statements that are published to third parties. Publication includes the posting of material on the Internet. Defamation can either be a statement that is verbal or written. If a defamatory statement is made verbally, it's called slander. If a defamatory statement is published in writing, it's called libel.

Be aware of the potential for cyber libel – when something posted on the Internet is both untrue and damaging.

Please, be sure what you post can be fact-checked.

For further information:

[www.regulatedhealthprofessions.on.ca](http://www.regulatedhealthprofessions.on.ca)  
and search cyber libel or social media posting.







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## PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: NEW CE CATEGORY

OOA members, did you see/read the latest message from the regulatory college about changes to the CE – continuing education – credits program?

The OOA is very excited about this new category!

A new accredited activity category was developed to encompass professional development and growth.

**Professional Growth (PG):** CE content may include, but is not limited to topics associated with professional practice such as patient relations, regulatory updates, health and safety, jurisprudence, communications, economic trends to adapt to change, business management, CPR & first aid courses.

Each year, ROs must complete a Professional Portfolio which requires ROs to reflect on their practice, enhance their competence and demonstrate continuous learning. As part of the Portfolio, ROs must complete a combined total of 16 continuing education (CE) hours annually.

*The OOA's events in 2020 will include topics and speakers in this new PG category.*


Beginning 2020, the new annual requirements include:

- 4 accredited Contact Lens (CL) Hours,
- 4 accredited Eyeglass (EG) Hours
- 4 accredited Professional Growth (PG) Hours
- 4 Self Directed Hours, the requirement for the learning goal with the self-directed hours has been removed
- Jurisprudence Chapter 1: Professional Boundaries and Sexual Abuse Prevention required once every three years and count as a Professional Growth Activity
- Members with Refracting status need to complete an additional 2 hours pertaining to EG/ CL / RF
- Accredited continuing education hours reported through the Quality Assurance section of the member portal

As 2020 will be a transition year for the new requirements, opticians may complete 8 self-directed hours or any combination of self-directed hours and accredited professional growth hours.

The OOA is already pleased to have included a new “PG” session to the Inside Optics by a leading health care professions lawyer, Cathi Mietkewiez called “Professional Judgement”.

You won't want to miss it.



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# HAPPY HOLIDAYS & A JOYOUS NEW YEAR

The Ontario Opticians Association wishes everyone a happy and healthy holiday season and a joyful new year.

The OOA Secretariat offices will be open to assist all members Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM **UNTIL DECEMBER 24 @ Noon.**

Membership renewal began November 1. Early renewal Draw Prize winners from Ontario included- Rachel Bain, Guoming Li, Chanel Dametto, Patricia Yvonne Lafontaine & Joseph Michaud.

Congrats!!

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E-Newsletter

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