

WORLD COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRY
MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD
TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY 18 MAY 2010

Item GB9

**REPORT OF THE LEGISLATION, REGISTRATION AND STANDARDS
COMMITTEE**

1 Introduction

The committee has not met since the last GDM in Melaka in May 2009. A conference call will be organized for June 2010. However, members have been involved with specific activities requiring attention through email contact.

2 Membership

Membership of the Committee was confirmed as follows at the December 09 GBM meeting:

Chairman	Dr Susan Cooper
Secretary	Bryony Pawinska
Africa region	Dr Naomi Nsubuga
Asia Pacific Region	Dr Kah Ooi Tan
Europe Region	Armin Duddek
Latin America Region	Max Schilling
North America Region	Dr.Jeffrey Weaver
Individual Member	Dr.Daryl Guest (Australia)
Individual Member	Bob Hughes (UK)
Individual Member	Dr Pete Kehoe (N America)
Individual Member	Dr Sidney Stern (N America)
Co-optee	Dr.Murray Turnour
Co-optee	Vacant

Subsequent to this Dr. Turnour has expressed his regrets regarding serving on the committee. This leaves both co-optee positions open at this time.

3. Scope of Practice Survey Update

The questionnaire that was developed to capture data on the scope of practice globally has been sent out to members. This work is being funded jointly by the Norwegian Association of Optometry and the College of Optometrists in the UK.

'The survey will be used as a tool for analyzing gaps so that all member countries of ECOO and WCO can utilize the information when preparing their own strategies for developing the profession in their own country. It will therefore be a valuable member benefit and most of the data will only be available for internal use by member countries'

The secretariat is working with a consultancy group to try and obtain funding to support this survey going forward.

4. Response to British Columbia Legislation

On March 19, 2010, the Minister of Health in British Columbia, Canada announced sweeping changes to the delivery of eye care in that province. These changes in regulation were to be implemented on May 1, 2010.

- *Removal of most of the restrictions that allow only opticians or optometrists, or workers supervised by them, to dispense glasses or contacts.*
- *Allowing prescriptions issued by medical doctors and optometrists outside of the province to be filled within B.C.*
- *Allowing people to order glasses or contacts online without having to give the seller a copy of their prescription, sight-test assessment or contact-lens specifications. The initial fitting of contacts to determine the lens specifications will still be done only by an optician, optometrist or medical doctor, or workers supervised by them, using information contained in a prescription or sight-test assessment.*
- *Requiring opticians and optometrists in B.C. to include in a prescription or sight-test assessment the measurement of distance between the client's pupils, which is required for the proper fitting of glasses.*
- *Requiring opticians and optometrists in B.C. to give clients, free of charge, a copy of their prescription, sight-test assessment or contact-lens specifications – whether or not it is requested by the client – and also to give a copy, free of charge, to a third-party eyewear seller or other person if requested by the client.*
- *Opticians will now be able to independently conduct sight-tests for healthy clients aged 19-65. This eliminates the extra step of having a sight-test reviewed by a medical doctor who then issues a prescription. Instead, a screening process will be put in place to ensure a client is healthy enough to be eligible for the sight-test, and is fully informed about the difference between a sight-test and an eye-health examination.*

WCO issued a statement denouncing these changes and supported the Canadian Association of Optometrists position which states:

'The Canadian Association of Optometrists opposes the proposed amendments. If implemented as written, the health and safety of the public will be at serious risk. We are asking the British Columbia government to delay the implementation until such time as consultations have been held and a review of regulatory practices in other jurisdictions has been conducted'

5. Review of Case Statement

Executive Director to report on progress.

6. WCO Code of Conduct

This is still to be reviewed.

Respectfully submitted

Susan Cooper OD FAAO
May 2010