



COVID-19 Update #9: Essential Service Provider List

April 4, 2020 – 3:00 pm

Dear Registrants,

As you are aware, the Minister of Health has [directed](#) that health care providers restrict their practice to only essential services. Some optical dispensaries have remained open to provide essential services such as critical repairs and replacements of eyeglasses as well as refilling contact lenses.

Creation of a Directory of Opticians Available for Urgent and Essential Services

We have received requests directly from patients who need essential services including repairs and contact lens refills. We are working on creating a list on our website of the opticians who are available to assist existing and new patients with essential services. If you wish to be included on this list, please contact the college at mail@collegeofopticians.ca

When providing essential services, we strongly recommend using remote care for consultations and delivery of ophthalmic appliances. Evaluate thoroughly whether an in-person meeting is required and if the issue is urgent. If an in-person meeting is required and you cannot maintain a physical distance of at least 2 metres, PPE is strongly recommended. Consider, however, that frontline healthcare providers are in urgent need of PPE; Opticians should avoid competing for these scarce resources.

Health Care Provider Recruitment – Ministry of Health

The [Ontario Government](#) is seeking those with experience in providing health care to help provincial efforts to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19. The Ministry of Health is looking for: health care providers who may be working part-time and want to and are able to increase their work hours, former health care providers who are retired and are prepared to return to employment, or anyone who is inactive with their regulatory college or registered but not currently employed.

If you are interested, please register with [Ontario's Health Workforce Matching Portal](#) . Please note that the College is not involved in the selection or matching process. Individuals that are selected through the portal or matched to an organization will hear directly from the Ontario Government or the organization itself. Please see the [information](#) , [training guide](#) and [FAQ](#) documents put out by the Ministry of Health for more information.

Professional Judgement: Balancing Public Interest and Public Health

With many optometry and optical clinics closed during this period, you may have patients request your services for whom you do not have information such as PD, heights and required contact lens measurements. Normally, best practice would be not to proceed without this information.

During this pandemic period, maintaining a safe distance is paramount and may outweigh the need to have exact spectacle measurements or contact lens parameters. As is referenced throughout the [Standards of Practice](#) , Opticians are encouraged to use their knowledge, skills and professional judgement in the best interest of the patient. For example,

- Consider using alternate ways of determining PD, including a best estimate
- Consider working with parameters supplied by the patient from their existing contact lenses and dispense a minimum supply of contact lenses to assist the patient during this period of social isolation
- Consult with the patient using teleconferencing or videoconferencing technology to assess if making these exceptions will serve the patient's health and safety
- Note the interaction in patient's file and follow up with the patient [as soon as feasible](#) to ensure patient outcomes are met

We will continue to keep you updated and provide guidance. If you require additional practice advice, please reach out to us at practiceadvice@collegeofopticians.ca

Kind regards and best wishes over the holiday weekend.

Fazal and the COO Team