

Briefing Note

TO: Council

FROM: Registration Committee

DATE: October 2, 2017

SUBJECT: Contact Lens Mentor Policy

Background:

The Contact Lens Mentor policy requires that Registered Opticians (ROs) who wish to supervise the contact lens fittings of student or intern opticians and sign the student or intern logbook, be recognized by the College as a Contact Lens Mentor for either “soft” or “soft and rigid” fits. The policy sets out the criteria for Contact Lens Mentor status.

In the current Contact Lens Mentor Policy, ROs who wish to be recognized as a Contact Lens Mentor by the College must submit an application to the College which confirms that s/he meet the following criteria:

1. Is a member in good standing with the College;
2. Has been registered with the College for a minimum of three years;
3. Is currently and actively fitting contact lenses, and has done so continuously for a minimum of three consecutive years;
4. Currently works in a practice which includes the dispensing of contact lenses as part of the services offered to the public; and
5. In order to supervise soft contact lens fits: has fitted a minimum of 50 soft contact lenses (including 40 spherical and 10 non-spherical [toric or multifocal]) in the previous three years, OR
6. In order to supervise soft and rigid contact lens fits: has fitted a minimum of 50 soft contact lenses as described above and a minimum of 15 rigid contact lenses (including spherical and complex designs) in the previous three years.

Current Issue:

At its meeting on September 11, 2017, the Registration Committee considered the necessity of criterion three, which specifies that a Contact Lens Mentor must have been actively fitting contact lenses continuously for a minimum of three consecutive years. The Committee considered whether the

requirement that a Contact Lens Mentor has *consistently* fitted contact lens for a minimum of three *consecutive* years constitutes a barrier to some applicants.

The Committee considered that the College is tasked with ensuring that members meet the required professional standards to practise opticianry in Ontario. The Contact Lens Mentor policy serves this purpose by setting out the minimum professional standards that an optician must meet in order to be eligible to supervise contact lens fittings carried out by student and intern opticians. However, the Committee noted that the requirement that an individual current and actively fit contact lenses “continuously for a minimum of three consecutive years” may adversely affect individuals who take a leave of absence from the profession for any reason, including reasons that would be covered by the protected grounds under the *Human Rights Code* (for example, medical leave [disability], or parental leave [family status]). Criterion three, on its face, eliminates from eligibility anyone who has had a break for any reason in the three years leading up to their application.

Therefore, the Committee approved an amendment to the Contact Lens Mentor policy to remove criterion three to allow individuals who have experienced a break in their practice to be eligible for Contact Lens Mentor status. The Committee also approved an addition to the Contact Lens Mentor policy to include a statement regarding accommodation requests.

The amended Contact Lens Mentor Policy, with tracked changes, is included for Council’s consideration and approval.

Recommendation:

The Registration Committee recommends that Council approve the amended Contact Lens Mentor Policy, with an immediate effective date.

MOTION:	Approve the amended Contact Lens Mentor Policy, with an immediate effective date, as circulated.
Moved:	
Seconded:	
Vote:	

Contact Lens Fittings Requirements

It is a requirement under Section 5 (2) 3. of Ontario Regulation 869/93, that an applicant for a certificate of registration as a Registered Optician must have,

“... completed, and must present evidence of, at least twenty contact lens fittings, including at least five rigid gas permeable (RGP) contact lens fittings, under the supervision or direction of an optician who is certified in the fitting of contact lenses or an optometrist or an ophthalmologist.”

Supervision of Contact Lens Fittings and Signing of Logbooks

All registered opticians, who wish to supervise the contact lens fittings of student or intern opticians and sign the student or intern logbook, must be recognized by the College as a Contact Lens Mentor for either “soft” or “soft and rigid” fits.

Eligibility Criteria for Contact Lens Mentor Status

A Registered Optician who wishes to be recognized as a Contact Lens Mentor by the College must submit the appropriate application to the College, which confirms that s/he meets the following criteria, as set out by the Registration Committee:

1. Is a member in good standing with the College;
2. Has been registered with the College for a minimum of three years;
- ~~3. Is currently and actively fitting contact lenses, and has done so continuously for a minimum of three consecutive years;~~
- 4.3. Currently works in a practice which includes the dispensing of contact lenses as part of the services offered to the public; and
- 5.4. In order to supervise soft contact lens fits: has fitted a minimum of 50 soft contact lenses (including 40 spherical and 10 non-spherical [toric or multifocal]) in the previous three years, OR
- 6.5. In order to supervise soft and rigid contact lens fits: has fitted a minimum of 50 soft contact lenses as described above and a minimum of 15 rigid contact lenses (including spherical and complex designs) in the previous three years.

A member who is approved by the College as a Contact Lens Mentor must agree to the following:

1. That his/her name be added to an official registry of Contact Lens Mentors for the purpose of supervising student or intern opticians who wish to obtain contact lens fittings;
2. Permit the College to inspect contact lens files for verification of required fittings; and
3. Not charge a fee to sign logbooks or supervise student or intern opticians.

Registered opticians may only begin supervising contact lens fits and signing student or intern logbooks after receiving confirmation from the College that his/her Contact Lens Mentor status has been approved. A letter will be provided by the College certifying the Contact Lens Mentor status.

Registered Opticians who are considered “soft Contact Lens Mentors” may *only* supervise and verify soft contact lens fits. Registered Opticians who are considered “soft and rigid Contact Lens Mentors” may supervise and verify *both* soft and rigid fits.

The Contact Lens Mentor status is valid for a period of three years from the date of approval. Registered Opticians are required to re-apply after three years in order to continue signing student logbooks.

The College is committed to adhering to the principles set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code. Registered Opticians who wish to be recognized as a Contact Lens Mentor may contact the College directly to request accommodation with respect to the criteria set out in this Policy.