

**TO:** Council

**FROM:** Fazal Khan, Registrar

**DATE:** May 28, 2019

**SUBJECT:** 21.6 National Meeting Report

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The National Meetings were held on April 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in Calgary. The College sent its President, Vice President, Registrar and Deputy Registrar.

CAOE	Canadian Association of Opticianry Educators
COO	College of Opticians of Ontario
NACOR	National Association of Canadian Optician Regulators
NAIT	Northern Alberta Institute of Technology
OAC	Opticians Association of Canada
OCC	Opticians Council of Canada
NEC	National Examination Committee

The NACOR meetings were split over both days. The educators, under the umbrella of the CAOE had asked for some time on the agenda to address questions they had regarding the upcoming accreditation cycle and the updated national competencies.

The primary focus of these meetings from a regulatory perspective was to approve the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition of the National Competencies as well as discussing regulatory trends including board governance reforms that are currently taking place in British Columbia on the heels of the report on the College of Dental Surgeons written by Mr. Harry Cayton. NACOR had the opportunity to have Mr. Cayton present to the group about his recent report and what he considered best practices.

### **Accreditation Update:**

To date, NACOR has conducted its own accreditation process for all opticianry education programs across Canada. The process, however, is very costly and time intensive. At a previous meeting, the NACOR board of directors determined that a third-party accreditation process

would be consistent, objective and impartial. . To that end, NACOR has applied to Accreditation Canada to have opticianry brought under its accreditation umbrella. Accreditation Canada is a professional third-party accreditation organization, which accredits the education programs of 13 other healthcare professions in Canada. Accreditation Canada has accepted the NACOR application and will be conducting the next round of school accreditations in 2021.

### **Update on Regulatory Changes in British Columbia:**

Lisa Bannerman, Registrar, College of Opticians of British Columbia (COBC), provided an update on the regulatory changes happening in the province considering the recent report made by Harry Cayton regarding the College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia. The COBC has also relocated its office to a shared working space with other Colleges, termed a 'regulatory hub'.

### **Competency Profile:**

Over the last 10 months, NACOR has been working towards a revised version of the National Competencies for Canadian Opticians document. The competencies are the entry to practice benchmarks that the educational programs are built around and that are tested by the national exam and the PLAR. The competencies were approved by the NACOR board and now require approval by each provincial board. The technical report will be reviewed by the Registration Committee and Council, which will be asked to approve the process undertaken to develop the revised competencies. In developing the competencies, almost 1700 Canadian opticians participated in a survey to verify the validity of the competencies developed by practicing ROs, association members, educators, regulators and industry participants across Canada. Practice illustrations will be developed over the coming months to help add additional context to each competency indicator.

### **Alberta Scope Expansion:**

One of the healthcare promises made by the conservative party in Alberta in the recent provincial election was the expansion to the scope of practice to opticians and paramedics. Given the majority won by the conservative party, it is possible that the scope of practice of Alberta opticians will be expanded to include refraction. Accordingly, development of a national exam to reflect the refraction competencies will be an upcoming task for the National Examinations Committee.

### **Harry Cayton Presentation:**

Harry Cayton presented to the NACOR group remotely via skype on his report to the College of Dental Surgeons of BC. Mr. Cayton addressed part two of the report in which he makes recommendations on the BC regulatory framework which would usher in a different model of regulation that would be more public interest focused. He recommends to any regulator that it conduct a self-reflection of the recommendations made to the Dental Surgeons but was complementary of the efforts undertaken by the College of Opticians of Ontario in embarking on a governance reform strategy.

**Meeting with Educators:**

The educators were invited to attend the OCC meeting to ask questions and provide updates. The educators were advised about NACOR's application to Accreditation Canada to conduct NACOR accreditations as a third-party provider. The educators were invited to appoint a representative to liaise with the National Exams Committee as way for educators to share information about their curriculum and ask questions about the exams process.

**OCC Meeting:**

With the OAC and the CAOEC withdrawing from membership of the Opticians Council of Canada (OCC), NACOR remains a sole member of the OCC. Given the change in membership, the by-laws have been amended accordingly. As a group, the OCC will continue to examine the activities and composition of the group moving forward and how the group can work with remaining provincial associations and individual schools which who see a value in collaborating at this level.

An update was provided by Fute Marketing on the Becoming an Optician website, which provides videos and resources on how to become an optician in any province in Canada for highschool students and those considering a career change. The site also assists international applicants to self-evaluate whether they could proceed with the PLAR process and includes information about what a Canadian optician does and how to immigrate successfully, living in Canada, and language proficiency requirements. Metrics on the number of people visiting the website and further clicking to the websites of one of the accredited opticianry schools was presented.

**Future Meetings:**

With the departure of the OAC/Association from the Opticians Council of Canada it was decided that there is no longer a value to scheduling national meetings at the same venue and time as the OAC trade show. NACOR decided that it would have its national meetings on October 31, November 1, 2019 in Quebec City. This is in the same week that the CNAR (Canadian Network of Agencies for Regulation) meetings are taking place allowing delegates from the national meetings to attend valuable regulatory seminars. The educators were made aware of this and were given a standing invitation to join the regulators if they wish to collaborate with the regulators.

**Reference:**

Map – Opticianry in Canada

## Members of the Opticians Council of Canada

