

BRIEFING NOTE

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Fazal Khan, Registrar/CEO

DATE: December 5 and 6, 2022

SUBJECT: NACOR Report

☐ For Decision

☒ For Information

☐ Monitoring Report

Purpose:

This report is for information only.

Background:

The College participates in two National Alliance of Canadian Opticianry Regulators (NACOR) meetings each year. The College, along with all other Canadian opticianry regulators, is a member of NACOR. NACOR provides regulatory support to all provinces to ensure consistency between provinces and assist with processes such as labour mobility. Tools include the National Registration Examination as well as Prior Learning Assessment tools.

For Consideration:

The Fall NACOR meeting took place November 16-17, 2022. COO participants included the Board Chair, Vice Chair, Registrar and Deputy Registrar. Attached is a copy of the Ontario Provincial Report.

Highlights include:

November 16, 2022-NACOR Board Meeting

-Jodi Dodds gave a high-level overview of the history and mandate of NACOR as there were several new faces at the NACOR table. Topics included the National Exam, PLAR (Prior Learning, Assessment and Recognition tool) and PART (Pre-Arrival Readiness Tool), National Competencies and Bridging Modules. A version of this presentation will be given at the next COO Board orientation session. Overviews of the PLAR process will be given by Ms. Dodds at the Registration Committee orientation session in the new year as well. The presentation

-The College of Opticians of BC gave an update on further refinements to the PART tool that were underway through the use of a provincial grant. The tool is free to use by prospective international applicants to evaluate their skills in comparison to the competency profile of a Canadian optician. A GBA+ (Gender Based Analysis) lens was being applied to ensure minimizing any biases in the questions and analyze for any unintended barriers. The Deputy Registrar from BC will be hosting a webinar in the near future for other NACOR member who are interested in learning more about the GBA+ analysis tool for application in broader policy work.

-As part of continuous improvement and refinement of the PLAR tool, a Pilot Survey for new PLAR assessment questions is being sent out to all regulators to distribute to their registrant base for participation to help validate the new question bank. These surveys will cover eyeglass and contact lens content and will award continuing education credit/hours for participants.

-A discussion was held regarding National Exam costs and fees. Typically, moderators from the NACOR office attend in person at each provincial exam session to ensure consistency with the administration of the exam. With rising travel costs, the financial burden of moderator costs has become an issue, particularly for smaller provinces that have small candidate numbers. In order for exam costs to be uniform, to reduce provincial financial costs and to reflect actual administration costs of the national exam, the NACOR Board approved an increase of \$25/section to the National Exam fees. The Eyeglass and Contact Lens exam sections will move from \$750/section to \$775/section as of March 2023. The last adjustment to exam fees was in 2019.

-The Spring meetings are expected to be held in Montreal and the Fall meetings will be coordinated with the CNAR in BC to allow the Board and Administrative team to take advantage of the regulatory continuing education symposium.

-On day two of the National Meetings, NACOR hosted a Profession Round Table Event that included regulators, educators, associations and industry from across Canada. There were approximately 60 attendees including representatives from major industry employers including Loblaws, Costco, FYI Doctors, Luxottica and Hakim Optical. The COO was directly involved in the organization of this event. The event was a facilitated day of exploring challenges facing the profession including managing Health Human Resources, particularly the perceived shortage of opticians, trends in enrollment and retirements, and the impact of the pandemic on the profession. This was an ambitious agenda and participants were generally very positive and appreciative for the opportunity to connect and collaborate. The intention is to continue the conversation in fall.

Public Interest Considerations:

Participation and membership in NACOR support the public interest as it ensures consistency in opticianry competencies, skills and service across jurisdictions.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations:

Participation in NACOR ensures access to registration tools such as PLAR (Prior Learning, Assessment and Recognition) that ensure fair and equitable access to the profession by foreign applicants.

Recommendations/Action Required:

This report is for information only.

Respectfully Submitted by
Fazal Khan, RO
NACOR Representative for the COO