

Spring 2009 Newsletter

Ohio State Board of Optometry
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The Board welcomed our newest member, Dr. Karen Riccio, who was appointed by Governor Strickland for a five year term that expires October 3, 2013. Dr. Riccio is a graduate of the Ohio State University, College of Optometry and is currently in private practice at Eye Designs in New Albany. Prior to her appointment to the Board Dr. Riccio was active in the Ohio Optometric Association where she most recently served as President. We look forward to working with Dr. Riccio and utilizing her experience and expertise to the benefit of everyone in the optometric community.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- Q. Can an optometrist prescribe the drug Latisse?
- A. Latisse is a drug that received FDA approval as a treatment for hypotrichosis of the eyelashes, the condition of having inadequate or not enough eyelashes, and will be marketed for both therapeutic and cosmetic purposes. Ohio therapeutically certified optometrists may prescribe a pharmaceutical agent for the treatment of an abnormal condition of the visual system but not for cosmetic purposes. Therefore, while “hypotrichosis” is a relative term, a licensed optometrist who holds a therapeutic pharmaceutical agents certificate could prescribe Latisse for a diagnosed condition of hypotrichosis supported by proper documentation in the patient’s record.
- Q. When do I have to report an instance of a clinically significant drug-induced side effect in a patient resulting from the use of a topical ocular or therapeutic agent?
- A. During the recent review of the administrative rules the requirements for this report was updated to read “A clinically significant drug-induced side effect means an unexpected reaction by a person resulting from topical ocular or therapeutic pharmaceutical agents administered by an optometrist which occurs within twenty four hours after the drug is administered and requires either referral to a medical doctor for treatment or hospitalization of the individual.” The Board must be notified within 24 hours and a form provided by the Board must be completed and returned within 10 days.
- Q. Is an Ohio optometrist required to provide a patient with a pupillary distance (PD) measurement as part of a prescription?
- A. This question has become more frequent due to an increasing number of individuals ordering spectacles on-line. By federal definition an “eye examination” is the process of determining the refractive condition of a person’s eyes or the presence of any visual anomaly by the use of objective and subjective tests. A “prescription” is the written specifications for lenses for eyeglasses which are derived from an eye examination, including all of the information specified by state law, if any, necessary to obtain lenses for eyeglasses. And finally, “ophthalmic services” are the measuring, fitting and adjusting of ophthalmic goods subsequent to an eye examination. Since Ohio law does not specify the information required in a spectacle prescription, you would not have to

perform this measurement during the eye examination and thus it would not be required in the prescription. However, you should be cautioned that if you do take this measurement as a part of your “eye examination” or the measurement is taken as part of the “ophthalmic service” by any of your staff, the PD would then be a part of the patient’s record and thus subject to release to the patient upon request.

Q. What are the changes for the new continuing education requirements?

A. Generally speaking, the only major change is that now ALL optometrists must obtain TWENTY-FIVE hours of C.E. which includes TEN hours of pharmacology. For the other changes, please go to our website www.optometry.ohio.gov and click on “C.E. Requirements.”

Q. What oral, therapeutic and schedule III drugs are optometrists permitted to administer and/or prescribe since the changes in our scope of practice?

A. That depends on whether you are licensed as an optometrist, an optometrist with a topical ocular pharmaceutical agents certificate or an optometrist who holds a therapeutic pharmaceutical agents certificate. The definitions for each of these as well as information on topical, therapeutic and schedule III drugs can be viewed at our website by clicking on the appropriate link. If, after viewing this information you still have questions, please call the Board office.

Q. What C.E. courses are considered pharmacology for purposes of meeting the ten hours of pharmacology?

A. OAC 4725-15-04 contains all the information relative to this question. However, there are five areas which relate to pharmacology:

- (1) General and ocular pharmacology
- (2) Signs and symptoms of ocular disease
- (3) The diagnosis, treatment and management of ocular disease
- (4) Appropriate criteria for referring patients to physicians and co-managing patients with physicians
- (5) The use of those instruments which are utilized in conjunction with the topical ocular pharmaceutical agents and therapeutic pharmaceutical agents approved pursuant to section 4725.01 of the Revised Code.

Q. Can an Ohio optometrist with a therapeutic certificate use dichloroacetic acid?

A. The Board recently reviewed this question and decided that the use of dichloroacetic acid for the removal of superficial skin lesions from the eyelids (and ocular adnexae) does fall within the scope of optometry. However, it remains an optometrist’s responsibility, based upon their experience and training, to decide when such treatment is appropriate or if a referral for a biopsy is in the patient’s best interest.