

It's not your fault!

In general, Canadians have a reputation for being easy-going and exceptionally nice people, and certainly this is something to be proud of. As optometrists, we seem to take these characteristics to the next level. It seems that our profession attracts this personality type, which is good because being caring and friendly are necessary for exceptional practice growth.

However, there is a downside to being this generous and I see it often in the practices that I consult with. We tend to take on our patients' problems as if they were our own and work to resolve them even when it is not in our best interest. There will be times when you need to give things away but try and make sure these are the exceptions and not the rules.

Not all the problems that patients present with are our fault. To help I thought of a little oath you may want to review from time to time.

It's not your fault ...

- ▶ *The provincial health care system doesn't cover the cost of an eye exam. Blame the government.*
- ▶ *The lab breaks that specialty lens for the second time. Make the lab pay for this one – it is their fault!*
- ▶ *Two-year old lenses have scratches. Make your warranties reasonable. A significant scratch is one that is deep enough to feel or easily visible near the line of sight.*
- ▶ *Contact lenses, which are fractions of a millimeter thin, will occasionally tear. Certainly with disposables it is easy to replace a lens or two throughout the year but watch for the chronic abuser.*
- ▶ *The antibiotic you prescribed didn't cure the infection. When you have to see the patient again someone should pay for that time and any follow-up you might have to do.*
- ▶ *An eight-year-old broke his glasses by throwing them against a brick wall. There has to be reasonableness in what a warranty on a frame will cover. Many use the term "will replace in 1 (or sometimes 2) years when the frame breaks under normal wear and tear". Even with this, it is helpful to state that you will only do this once, to stop some from coming back every 6 months.*
- ▶ *The patient's medical plan didn't cover the cost they believed*



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PRACTICE MANAGEMENT PRATIQUE ET GESTION

would be covered. It is the patient's responsibility for the total cost of the exam and products purchased. If the insurance doesn't come through, they have to make up the difference.

- ▶ A quality, fashionable pair of single vision glasses that a patient purchases about once every 3 to 4 years costs about same as pair of designer shoes, or a couple of dinners out, or couple of trips to the salon. When patients complain about prices, put it into perspective. It is a purchase that they make only every few years and the value it provides, in making them look fashionable and providing the gift of clear, comfortable vision, surpasses the other things they spend their money on.
- ▶ The appointment with the ophthalmologist will be sometime

next year. Even though access to your practice is reasonable, it may not be the case for those professionals that you refer to.

Of course you do your best with referral letters and perhaps follow-up calls but, in the end, it's the ophthalmologist's fault if they don't see the patient in a timely manner. Of course, for patients whose sight and eye health is threatened, you should go above and beyond to get them seen as early as possible.

- ▶ Patients can't adapt to their new prescriptions. Vision is complicated. Some people will not adapt to changes. Don't take it personally, take care of the patient and move on.
- ▶ The courier didn't get the contact lens order to you within 8 hours. Patients' expectations should be set realistically



Part Two: The revitalization project of the Members' Web portal.
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MEMBERS' WEB PORTAL

ACCESS / LOGIN

Initial access?

The site can be accessed from the public CAO site "http://www.opto.ca" member's link (as before), or directly from "http://portal.opto.ca". From here, you simply require to enter your User-Name and Password to access the secure site. This information will have been e-mailed to you. If you did not receive it, please contact info@opto.ca for your login credentials.

Once signed-in, your environment will display your account name in the top right corner, under the menu tabs.

Courtesy sign-in

The site has integrated best practice sign-in features, which provide you with fully automated password retrieval process (i.e. *get your lost password within seconds, 24 hrs a day*). The site also has a "Remember me" feature, which will always retain your username on next logins.

USER CONTROLS

Since this new platform is fully user aware, you can access your personal account preferences from "My Profile" link located at the top right user bar (directly under the main tab top menu). This Profile page will provide you with 3 key account sections.

- 🏠 Website preferences: *Password Reset & settings*
- 🏠 Your CAO Account profile: *direct access to membership record*
- 🏠 In Touch e-mail newsletter subscription: *Allows you to subscribe or unsubscribe to the electronic version of InTouch.*

SITE FEATURES

The CAO website is hosted on an advanced Content Management System (CMS), which has many integrated features to help deliver the best experience possible, while focusing on getting you to the information as well as guiding you to the content.

The basic principals of this site are found in the three primary sections; top header, side portlets and the main content body. The top header consists of the primary tab navigations sections, site map and accessibility help, the search bar, the location reference bar (*bread crumbs*) and your own user bar. The portlets to the left display the main navigation tree, as well as the "Recent changes" portlet, which collects all recent additions and modifications listed by date. The portlets to the right provide recent news pages, as well as a calendar of events. When available, a poll will display with various features.

Then you have the primary body page where the page content is visible. All content pages have several key characteristics about its managed content. Each has the title clearly shown in the top left, with the last modified date directly below. To the top right of the content pages, you will find page actions: 'print this page', which only prints actual content; and 'full width toggle' that hides the portlets. You then see the page's content description, if available, proceeded by the content itself.

When navigating folders, the system may show you a summary window of all content for each item within.

While navigating from the main left navigation tree, you


PRACTICE MANAGEMENT PRATIQUE ET GESTION

on product orders and delivery. Sometimes it's better to overestimate the time so when it comes in "early" the patient is pleasantly surprised. Disney made an art out of this — those line-ups are never as long as they say and you feel good when the wait was "only" 45 minutes instead of the posted 1 hour!

- ▶ You can't bill a patient's insurance directly. It is the insurance company that made this decision. They don't want to make it easy for the patient to take advantage of the insurance.
- ▶ Fifty-year olds who get laser surgery cannot read afterwards. It doesn't matter how many times you tell the patient, they all seem to come back afterwards with the comment that they didn't know it was going to be this bad. Some doctors have

gone to the point where they will get the patient to write out on their chart that they will not be able to read after the surgery and reading glasses will be required for eating, computer and reading or any close-up activity.

Well, those are the few I thought up. I'm sure you have many more that are specific to your office. It might be a good idea to share them with your staff for they are often left to deal with these situations.

Most patients are reasonable in their expectations but it's just the people on the fringe that try and take advantage of your good nature. So, try and remember that sometimes it's just not your fault and move on. 

HOW TO ...

may hover over the link as a summary alt tag will appear when available, displaying summary and/or description of the content. You may also choose to use the location bar (bread crumbs) to jump directly to a previous content folder.

Search

Finding content has never been so easy! You will notice a rapid LIVE search feature to the top right of the layout. Simply start typing the keyword(s) you are looking for, and a lower window will automatically display below with your relevant content. Simply keep typing to narrow your search. Once you have entered your keywords, hit enter to have the result page display in the main body area. From here, you will have access to an "advanced search" feature which allow for much more precise searches.

RSS

While navigating the "All News" and "All Events" pages, you will see an RSS icon (Really Simple Syndication). For those of you who use RSS readers from your computers or cell phones and blackberries... these sections are available to you on demand. RSS is a recent content fetching standard which allows users to "fetch" all RSS compliant content they have registered in their RSS readers. To learn more about RSS technology... simply type RSS in any internet search engine.

SITE ACCESSIBILITY CONTROLS

In the top right corner of the site, there is a link to an "accessibility" page, which will provide user with various access options. Most common are the site test size options which range from Small, to Normal, to Large. This text sizing option does more than just resize the main body, it will effect the entire site including links and menus.

The site is also scripted to use Access Keys (for those who like to use keyboard shortcuts). For example; you can use Alt+3 keys, then hit enter... this will take you directly to the Site Map, or Alt+4 then enter will position your cursor directly into the top right Search field. The site become very efficient to get around by leveraging these little techniques.

The platform which operates the new member's website also complies with the latest requirements for people with disabilities. You can research this feature by searching for "Section 508". It also assist's people with visibility problems to have access capabilities by having a Section 508 compliant site.

INTERACTIVE AREAS

Discussion Threads

One of the best features of this site is, without question, the ability to participate within in-place discussion threads. On any given page, you may find a discussion thread at the bottom of that page. You can now easily participate in discussion or initiate your own feedback and point of view with other constituents on pages where this feature is enabled.

Classifieds

You now have full control over placing your own ads. You can add and edit all your classified ads from both "Careers" and "For Sale" sections. Both of these areas have been optimized for geographical and content type ads to help you easily browse relevant items. You can also post comments and questions on any of these classified ads, as well as remove or respond to any within your own ads. All ads are automatically removed after 60 days.

We hope you find your new member's portal experience to be a pleasant one. Finding relevant content should now be a snap.