



# dispensingoptics

November 2010



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## Cover point

suffered by our contact lens opticians of having to gain 50 per cent more points than any other registrant is finally to be corrected. From the next CET cycle they will only be required to gain 36 points like everybody else.

These are two fundamentally important changes which address the real concerns of many ABDO members. We have campaigned hard on these issues and we have been particularly well supported by past president James Russell who, as a member of GOC, has spoken so passionately on behalf of registrants.

### Conference 2010

This year's conference, held against the backdrop of these difficult economic times, could have been hard to fill. Instead we had a sell out gala dinner of over 350 and over 550 people registered for the exhibition and or CET. It was a first class event and I have had many messages from members, guests and exhibitors, all of whom have spoken in glowing terms about the atmosphere and vitality of the event. Elaine Grisdale, Michael Potter and our partners at Event Exchange pulled out all the stops for a very memorable weekend. And, for the first time, the bookings for the conference, accommodation and dinner were managed in-house, by Katie Docker and the Membership Department team. A remarkable achievement at a busy time for them.

Tony Garrett ■

### GOC offers changes

It is no secret that we at ABDO have been fiercely critical of the GOC in recent years over a number of issues. It is therefore very pleasing to be able to report on two very significant proposals being put forward.

First of all our concern over the effect of retention fees on part-time low wage earners has been addressed by the proposed introduction of a lower band for those affected whether they be dispensing opticians or optometrists.

Secondly, the long running injustice



Front cover:  
Inside the AR Coating  
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Armorlite Kodak CleAR  
Lens laboratory

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# Have you ever tried a trifocal?

By Anthony Blackman

**Competences covered:**  
**Target group:**

Optical appliances  
Dispensing opticians, optometrists

During their training, all dispensing opticians (DOs) learn about trifocals, but how many DOs have actually dispensed a pair, either to an existing wearer, or, even rarer, to a first time wearer?

The next few pages will:

- give a reminder of an old style of lens,
- explain the principles behind trifocals,
- show what is still available to DOs,
- show why they should not be ignored as an option for vision correction.

Hopefully the reader will gain some useful information and be more aware of their usefulness.

## Age, amplitude of accommodation and range

As DOs we know that when patients reach their forties they will become presbyopic and will need a prescription for near work in the form of a reading addition (add). The add will restore the near range of clear vision which they had in their youth. As shown in **Table 1** and **Figure 1**, with

increasing age the range achieved with a single addition (on top of any distance prescription) reduces. When a patient reaches their mid-fifties, a mid-range gap forms between the distance prescription's range and the near portion's range. Therefore a second, weaker add is needed to fill this mid-range gap and restore continuous clear vision. Most conveniently this is as a trifocal or progressive lens, but other options are available. An examination of the suppliers' catalogues shows that the availability of trifocals starts with a near add of +1.50D, which is about right for a typical patient in their mid-fifties.

The spectacle lens options available to fill this intermediate gap are:

- Single vision intermediate spectacles
- Bifocals (either distance/intermediate or intermediate/near)
- Trifocals
- Progressives
- Enhanced readers
- Occupational Progressive Addition Lenses (OPALS)

All of the above options have their

advantages and disadvantages, which are, briefly, as follows.

Single vision intermediate spectacles will provide the greatest field of view, and can be calculated to offer accurate intermediate corrections (the amplitude of accommodation and working distance being required). However the wearer will only be able to use the spectacles for tasks at intermediate distances, and they will give poor distance vision and difficulty with small print close to them.

There are two bifocal options which have the advantage of providing clear vision in the intermediate and either the distance or near range. This is certainly more convenient than single vision intermediate spectacles; but will still leave older presbyopes unable to see clearly for some tasks.

This brings us to the progressive options. Progressive lens designs have improved immensely over the years, with each new generation offering wider fields of clear vision, particularly for distance and near. The intermediate area was rather limited in



This article has been approved for **1 CET point** by the **GOC**. It is open to all FBDO members, including associate member optometrists. Insert your answers to the six multiple choice questions (MCQs) online at [www.abdo.org.uk](http://www.abdo.org.uk), or on the answer sheet inserted in this issue and return by **16 December 2010** to **ABDO CET, Courtyard Suite 6, Braxted Park, Great Braxted, Witham CM8 3GA** OR fax to **01621 890203**. If you complete online, please ensure that your email address and GOC number are up-to-date. The pass mark is 60 per cent. The answers will appear in our January 2011 issue.



Age	Add(D)	WD(cm)	Range*(cm)
45	+0.50	40	200 to 29
	+1.00	35	100 to 25
	+1.25	30	80 to 24
50	+1.00	40	100 to 33
	+1.50	35	67 to 29
	+2.00	30	50 to 25
55	+1.50	40	67 to 33
	+2.00	35	50 to 29
	+2.25	30	44 to 27
60	+1.75	40	57 to 36
	+2.25	35	44 to 31
	+2.75	30	36 to 27
70	+2.50	40	40 to 33
	+3.00	35	33 to 29
	+3.75	25	27 to 24

Table 1: Range of clear vision for some ages, adds and working distances (WD)<sup>1</sup> \*The range of clear vision is the distance between the artificial far and near points while wearing the near vision correction

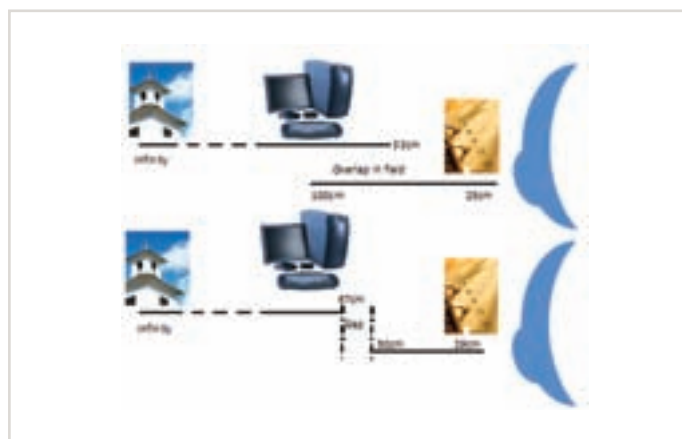


Figure 1: Range of vision with a bifocal. An early presbyope (45years) has clear vision through the distance portion from infinity back to 33cm; and their near portion provides a range from 25cm to 1m away. The second lens is a presbyope in their mid-fifties; due to their reduced accommodation they can only accommodate from infinity back to 67cms and the near portion has a reduced range of 29cm to 50cm – leaving a gap of unclear vision.

width with some designs but this appears to be less of a concern with patients nowadays. However there may still be problems with aberrations, which can be off-putting for patients. These do offer better cosmesis compared with other multifocal lenses and, due to their gradual progression to the near add, they offer a complete range of clear vision.

Enhanced readers (degressive lenses) offer very good fields of vision for the near and intermediate range (such as the Zeiss Business lens), but lack a distance correction. OPALs also offer good fields of vision for near and intermediate, but they also provide the wearer with a distance zone. However this portion of the lens is very restrictive with a poor field of vision (such as the AO Technica). This renders them unsuitable for everyday, general use, and DOs should advise wearers never to use these lenses for driving.

A trifocal lens allows for clear vision from distance to near. Also, because they have a specific intermediate portion, they can provide wider intermediate fields of view than many progressive designs. This can make them an excellent option for progressive non-tolerances who require one pair of spectacles for clear vision at distance, intermediate and near. Also, there is no distance peripheral blur present as can be the

case with progressives. However having two segment dividing lines on the lens can be distracting and gives poor cosmesis – particularly in an E-type design! Another benefit of having the intermediate portion between the distance and near portion is that it reduces the 'jump' experienced by the wearer. Rather than a single 'jump' in bifocal lenses (with the exception of the E-line 'no jump'), with trifocals there are two smaller 'jumps' instead.

### IP/RP ratio

The IP/RP ratio for a trifocal is the ratio of the addition of the Intermediate Portion (IP) to the addition of the (Near) Reading Portion (RP)<sup>2</sup> (Table 2).

This can be rearranged to find the intermediate add (Inter. Add = IP/RP ratio X Near Add, or the near add (Near Add = Inter. Add ÷ IP/RP ratio). For example, if a trifocal lens had an IP/RP ratio of 50%, and the reading add was +2.50D, then the intermediate add of the lens would be +1.25D.

When selecting the IP/RP ratio there is not as much choice as there used to be, with many only offering 50%, which is good for general use; however it is still possible to locate other percentages, such as 60%, which can be considered more of an occupational lens. It is important to

remember that the higher the IP/RP ratio dispensed, the closer the intermediate working distance will be for the patient. Obviously the range for near will be unaffected, as the reading add remains unchanged.

It is also worth noting that dispensing opticians are legally allowed to adjust the additions of a prescription to take account of the patient's working distance. However, it is important to make a note that you have done so on the record card.

### Lens availability

The term trifocal is termed due to the presence of three distinct portions of differing focal power, which makes it one of the simplest forms of multifocals. They were patented in 1827 by John Isaac Hawkins<sup>3</sup> and although there have been many different types over the years, what follows is a review of currently available trifocal designs in the UK (Figure 2 a-d). As can be seen, trifocals are still available in plastic (standard and mid-index) and glass; they are also available with additional processes such as photochromic and polarising<sup>4</sup>. Also the methods of construction are the same as for bifocals, with the options of fused, solid and cemented trifocals.

The availability of these lenses can be of concern to some people, as most of the larger lens companies do not offer trifocals. The exceptions are Norville, who carry many of the lenses discussed below, and Zeiss, who still offer a limited range. It is worth

$$\text{IP/RP ratio} = \frac{\text{Intermediate Portion Addition}}{\text{Reading Portion Addition}} \quad (\times 100 \text{ if expressed as a percentage})$$

Table 2

Continued overleaf

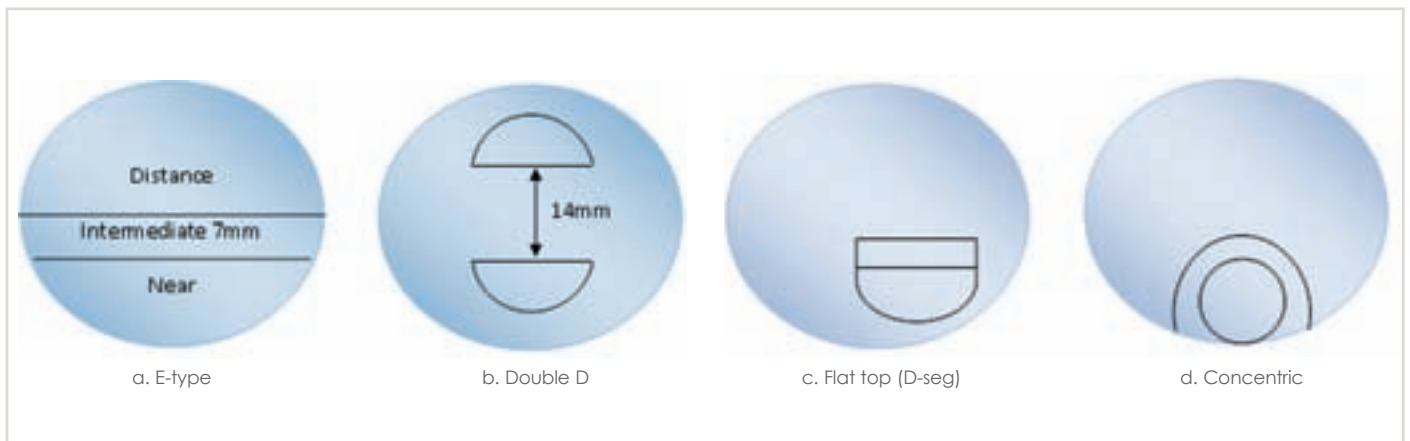


Figure 2: Available trifocal designs

contacting local independent labs to see what options they are able to source.

### Double 'D'

This CR39 lens has two D- type 28mm segments, one set below the eye as in a D-seg bifocal, and the other, inverted, set above the eye. The distance between the segments is 14mm. It is more of an occupational lens with an IP/RP ratio of 60%, giving a closer range of vision. The intermediate is usually the top segment. However, depending which way round the segment is glazed, the intermediate could be positioned as the bottom segment instead. It can also be ordered to give the same (reading) prescription in both segments.

### E-type

This lens is similar to an E-type bifocal but with a 7mm deep intermediate zone, which provides excellent width of vision for intermediate, but poor cosmesis, especially in plus prescriptions. Its IP/RP ratio is 50% and it is available in CR39.

### Flat (straight) top or D-segment

The description of these lenses may include a letter 'S' or 'D' followed by a number. The letter 'S' is short for straight top and a 'D' refers to the shape of the segment (as with bifocal lenses). 'S' and 'D' refer to the same segment shape. Some companies use 'S' for CR39 lenses and 'D' for glass. The number code gives the details of the segment size, for example 728 means that the intermediate portion is 7mm deep and the segment diameter is 28mm, as for a bifocal. There are

three segment sizes available; 728, 835 and 1435. The 728 and 835 have a 50% IP/RP ratio, with the much deeper 1435 being an occupational lens with a 60% IP/RP ratio.

The flat top is the only type of trifocal which is available in materials other than CR39; with the 728 also available in polycarbonate and crown glass (1.523). The 835 is also available in polycarbonate with a slightly smaller 735 equivalent available in crown glass. The 728 is available in photochromic (brown and grey) as well as grey polarised. The larger 835 can also be ordered with a photochromic option.

It is also worth mentioning that Zeiss offer a C828 glass trifocal (as well as a plastic 728) which fulfil the same criteria as the D-seg alternatives above.

### Concentric

The concentric designs also have a number code which describes the shape, and there are three sizes to choose from, 22/36, 28/42 and 12/36. The first number is the diameter of the near portion and the second (larger) number is the diameter of the intermediate portion. If the difference between the diameters is halved, this will give the intermediate depth, eg, for the 22/36 design,  $36\text{mm} - 22\text{mm} = 14\text{mm}$  which, when halved, gives an intermediate depth of 7mm.

Again this design is only available in CR39, but it has the advantage of being available with higher add powers of up to +10.00D (28/42 and 12/36) and +16.00D (22/36), while the other trifocal designs above usually

stop at +4.00D. All three sizes have an IP/RP ratio of 50%.

Other rarer options include a Franklin split version, which allows the DO to customise each portion of the lens, such as creating any IP/RP ratio, specifying the intermediate portion depth and being able to have a different inset for the intermediate and near portions. However, this is a very expensive option as three pairs of lenses are needed.

### Something old, something new . . . Sola SmartSeg (Figure 3a)

Launched in 1989 by Sola Optical (and ceased production in May 2005), the Smartseg looked like a D-seg bifocal with a 30x23 flat top segment, the top 12mm of which was a progressive zone which provided some intermediate vision and a large reading area<sup>5</sup>.

So from something old, to a new lens, which at first glance appears to offer patients a similar product to the SmartSeg.

### PixelOptics AtLast!® (Figure 3b)

This lens has an embedded round segment coupled with a progressive power gradient, providing a reduction in jump, and continuous vision for intermediate and near over the lower half of the lens. The lens is available in two types; composite 59 and 67. Composite 59 is a combination of a Trivex front (1.53) and a polycarbonate back (1.59), while Composite 67 has the same Trivex front but the back section is made from 1.67 plastic. Both of these are also available as photochromic grey or brown.



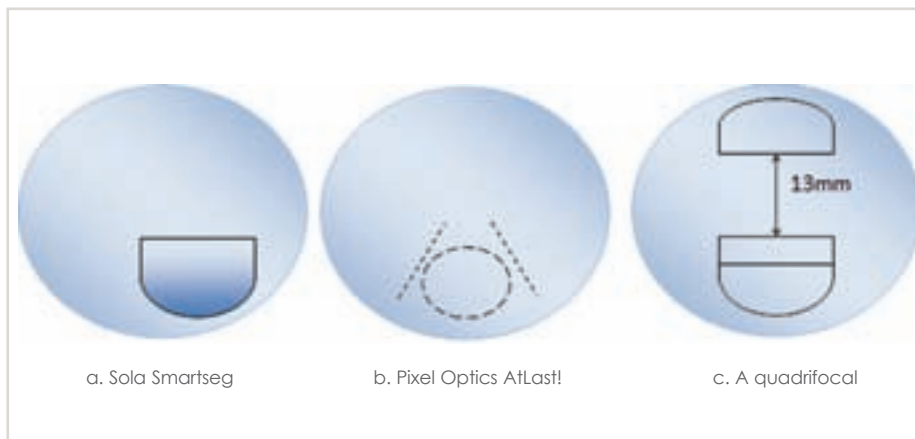


Figure 3

### Quadrifocal lenses (Figure 3c)

These are not available in the UK but can be found in America and have similar characteristics to trifocals. They are essentially a D-seg trifocal with an additional inverted D-segment set at the top of the lens. The main lens will normally be for distance with one segment providing intermediate and near, while the other segment may be supplied as either near only or a second intermediate addition<sup>2</sup>. The separation between the segments is usually 13-14mm for a quadrifocal, (similar to the double D-seg bifocal or trifocal).

### Measurement and fitting of trifocals

The positioning of the segment is always going to be a compromise, with the top of the intermediate segment being set higher than in a bifocal, causing some intrusion into the distance field of view. Also, the near portion will end up being in a lower position than would be the case in a bifocal, causing the wearer to adopt a slightly different reading position (Figure 4).

The 'textbook' fitting position for a trifocal lens is to the bottom edge of the pupil, or 1mm below this, placing the top of the segment between the lower limbus and bottom of the pupil (measured in normal lighting). The reason for the variation is that it is best to set the segment higher for more near use and lower for more distance/inter requirement. It is also important to check the positioning of any current or previous segmented multifocals the patient may have, in case they are used to the division line

in a certain position on the lens.

Should the optician or patient be unsure about the positioning of the segment dividing lines it can be helpful to mark the dummy lenses with both the position of the segment top, and the dividing line between the intermediate and near portions. This allows for checking that not only the positioning is correct, but that all three portions are useable.

When ordering a bifocal lens, one of the measurements stated is the inset. It should be no surprise, therefore, that we can, and should, order an inset for trifocals. It is important to remember that the inset for the intermediate portion and near portion will be exactly the same, as it is not possible for them to have different insets (unless the lens is a 'split' trifocal made from three lenses).

### Conclusion

We have looked at the age at which an intermediate addition is required, the pros and cons of trifocal lenses, as well as the range of trifocals currently available, along with their fitting. Whilst their availability has decreased over the years, they do provide the intermediate range missing from bifocals, and can be a brilliant occupational lens. This is why it is important to consider a patient's lifestyle, occupation and hobbies, as one pair of spectacles may not fulfil all their visual needs.

With the success and popularity of progressive lenses, trifocals are always going to be a 'specialist' lens option; but one which should not be

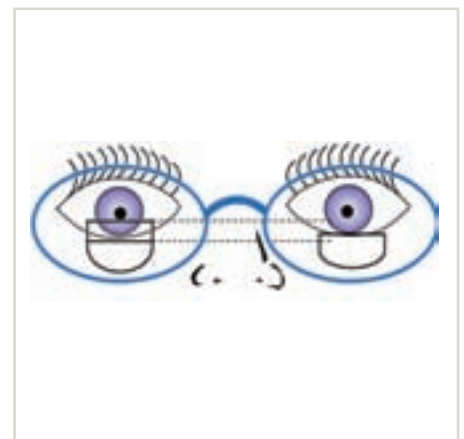


Figure 4: A comparison of the segment top positions of a D-seg trifocal set for general use (left) and a D-seg bifocal (right)

overlooked or forgotten as a method of correction.

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## Multiple choice questions (MCQs):

### Have you ever tried a trifocal?

**1. When a patient reaches their mid-fifties what happens to their range of clear vision with bifocals?**

- a. Due to reduced accommodation the distance range from infinity reduces
- b. The distance range remains unchanged but the near range reduces
- c. A gap develops between the distance range and the near range
- d. Nothing happens, a bifocal will continue to provide clear vision

**2. Which of the following is NOT an advantage of trifocal lenses?**

- a. They can provide a full range of clear vision (distance, intermediate and near) in older presbyopes
- b. For D-seg trifocals there is reduced jump compared to a D-seg bifocal
- c. They have a wide and clear intermediate zone
- d. As the segment lines are positioned differently to a bifocal they are not a distraction

**3. A trifocal lens has an IP/RP ratio of 50%. If the reading addition is +2.00D, what will be the intermediate addition?**

- a. +1.00D
- b. +1.50D
- c. +2.00D
- d. +2.50D

**4. Which of the following is the most commonly available IP/RP ratio in the UK?**

- a. 50%
- b. 60%
- c. 66%
- d. 70%

**5. A patient is wearing trifocals with an IP/RP ratio of 50%. Their new pair has an IP/RP ratio of 60%. What effect will this have on their working distance? (assume a near add of +2.50 in both pairs).**

- a. Their range for intermediate and reading will both be closer to them
- b. Their range for intermediate and reading will both be further away from them
- c. Their intermediate range will be closer, with the reading range unchanged
- d. Their intermediate range will be further from them, with the reading range unchanged

**6. A patient is having trifocals for the first time and will be using them for general use. Where is it recommended to fit the segment top?**

- a. The same as for a bifocal lens
- b. At the bottom of the pupil or 1mm below
- c. In line with the lower limbus
- d. 1mm above the bottom of the pupil

**The deadline for posted or faxed response is 16 December 2010 to the address on page 4. The module code is C-13053**

**Online completion - [www.abdo.org.uk](http://www.abdo.org.uk) - after member log-in go to 'CET online'**

**After the closing date, the answers can be viewed on the 'CET Online' page of [www.abdo.org.uk](http://www.abdo.org.uk). To download, print or save your results letter, go to 'View your CET record'. If you would prefer to receive a posted results letter, contact the CET Office 01621 890202 or email [cet@abdo.org.uk](mailto:cet@abdo.org.uk)**

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## Frequently asked questions

Answered by Kim Devlin FBDO (Hons) CL

**Q:** I've been asked twice this week for a PD; I've refused but I'm feeling pressured. Was I right to refuse?

**A:** There has been lots of coverage recently in the media about a patient's 'right' to obtain their PD, to enable them to purchase their spectacles online and this has put a lot of pressure on DOs; you are not alone. As always with questions of professional conduct there are different ways of looking at the problem. The law is very simple; a PD is not part of a spectacle prescription. It is not usually recorded on the clinical record and certainly not included on a spectacle prescription form, be it NHS or private.

If a patient, new to your practice, requests their PD you can in all honesty say you do not have that measurement on file. If you wish to be helpful, and it is your choice, you may offer to measure their PD and charge them a fee for such a service. What might you

charge? This is up to you as there is no suggested fee but remember, if the spectacles subsequently made up to your measurement give problems, and if it can be shown that you made an error, you could be sued. So, the fee has to be worth that risk.

If the patient requesting their PD is an existing patient of your practice, it is a slightly more difficult situation. You do of course have the information they want on file and they do have the right to a copy of their records (with certain legal hoops to jump through). How should you answer such a request? Always politely; you can use the form of words on the ABDO website (Advice & Guidelines 2.8.3.) to explain why you cannot give them what they require. If a legal whiz kid pushes you to disclosure, always give in gracefully. Such patients are best left to sort their own problems out; you cannot help them all.

It is still a small proportion of patients who wish to buy online, so it is wise not to get the problem out of perspective. Treat patients courteously, explain the problems that remote sales bring and help if it is appropriate – but learn that not everyone understands the worth of a good dispensing. ■





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ABDO's new President Jennifer Brower and Vice President Peter Black



Bob Jardine receives his Medal of Excellence from Barry Duncan



Jim Gordon Hamblin Memorial Prizewinner and James Russell

# Changes, challenges and achievements at ABDO 2010

With exhibition attendance up by 40 per cent and more than 150 delegates registered for CET, last month's 2010 ABDO conference and exhibition in Bristol proved once again the Association's commitment to doing right by its members. Nicky Collinson reports



Barbara Doris PA to Tony Garrett receives her Honorary Fellowship from Jennifer

**F**ollowing feedback from last year's conference and exhibition in Brighton, the ABDO conference organising team worked hard during the intervening 12 months to ensure that the 2010 event better matched the needs of delegates, exhibitors and sponsors. The result was a slightly pared down programme and a single day exhibition as opposed to a two-day event. A change of planned venue also ensured that delegate costs were kept to a minimum. The result? A 40 per cent increase in the number of delegates attending the exhibition, rising to just short of 550 visitors compared to 2009, a total of 179 delegates registered for CET presentations, and 356 guests attending for the annual gala dinner.

## Teeing off proceedings

Teeing off this year's conference, at the Marriott Bristol City Centre on 9 and 10 October, was the adidas eyewear golf tournament on the Friday at nearby Kendleshire Golf Club. Fuelled on a breakfast of bacon butties, 28 competitors set off at 10-minute intervals in conditions that

happily did not mirror those endured by this year's rain-lashed Ryder Cup competitors at Celtic Manor in Wales – where the conference was initially going to be held.

After a well-fought tournament, the four-man team event winners were Peter Savage and Christian Hill of Marchon and Martin Brock and Adrian Walsh of Ocuco, with 91 points. Outgoing ABDO President Barry Duncan took home the Frank Clipson Cup as the ABDO member winner, with 40 points, while Rob Davis of Maui Jim UK won the best individual prize for a non-ABDO member with 38 points. Kevin Gutsell claimed the prize for the longest drive, John Kernick took the nearest pin, with Alan Smith of Ellis & Killpatrick Opticians receiving the booby prize for the lowest score.

Golf day organiser, Jim Gordon, said: "Many thanks to Ben Ashlin and his team at adidas for making the golf day a great spectacle, no pun intended. The weather was very kind to us and Julie and her team from the Kendleshire looked after us very well.



T Pavanakumar and Barry at the Association's AGM

After the golf we had a rather excellent three-course meal, during which we viewed photos of the day were displayed on two large screens, which was a nice touch by adidas."

The adidas welcome area and interactive sessions with optometrist Nick Dash from Loughborough University were very well received. Ben Ashlin, brand manager of adidas eyewear, commented: "The golf day provided the perfect platform to introduce our golf research that was presented at the conference as a CET presentation. It is crucial from a service perspective that dispensing staff are comfortable with sports products, even if they do not personally partake in that sport – and that is what the adidas eyewear training offers. Overall, the conference was a huge success for adidas eyewear, as we were able to directly engage with many dispensing opticians and optometrists about our product solutions and brand activation in their businesses," added Ben.

### Facing difficult challenges

At the Association's AGM on the Saturday, outgoing ABDO President Barry Duncan told members that the past 12 months had seen increased activities by Association officers and staff on behalf of members. "Our dealings with other optical organisations have increased dramatically so we now have a stronger, louder and more powerful voice," he said, adding that although ABDO fully supported the establishment of the Optical Confederation, the Association would retain its own identity. He said the Association would continue to remind the General Optical Council (GOC) of the increasing financial burden being felt by members, and about concerns



The AGM

over revalidation and unregulated suppliers – although he felt the recently announced changes regarding the CET scheme and reduced fees for lower earners (see News) were positive.

Continuing, Barry stressed that the Association had faced financially testing times recently, recording a loss of £321,000 during 2009/10, but that immediate action had been taken to address the problems. With regards to the continuing debate about a name change for the Association and its members, Barry announced that the results of a membership survey had revealed a slight majority in favour of a name change. The Board would be discussing how to proceed later in the month. He concluded by wishing all the current and new directors all the best and paid tribute to Kevin Milsom and Garry Kousoulou who were stepping down from the Board. Fiona Anderson, Ashton Galloway and Ted Moffatt were welcomed as newly elected members of the ABDO Board, with Jennifer Brower and Peter Black as incoming President and Vice President.

In response to questions from the floor, the Board confirmed that cost cutting during the current financial year would restore the Association's finances



Ewan McPherson, Jim Gordon, Kevin Gutsell, Daniel and Barry Duncan after the golf match



Tony Garrett, David Kirk and Jennifer Brower at the Benevolent Fund AGM

within three years; though a rise in membership fees could not be ruled out. Responding to a request for more openness with financial figures and more information to be supplied to members, ABDO general secretary Tony Garrett stressed that the Association's accounts were prepared in line with all applicable rules and regulations and further information was available on request. Speaking from the floor, John Fried said he believed the Board had dealt with recent financial difficulties in a professional manner.

During the AGM of the ABDO Benevolent Fund that followed, chairman Jennifer Brower reported that the recession had caused an increase in the number of applications for assistance. However, the Fund had also experienced a threefold increase in the number of people making donations. The Fund's affinity card had made a very valuable contribution, along with donated lecture fees and ABDO prize values. The Fund would continue to raise awareness among members, past and present, that help is available and consider all applications carefully.

### Exciting new plans

Before the close of the AGM Michael Potter, ABDO head of marketing and



The Vision Aid Overseas and ABDO football teams after their match on Saturday. VAO won 9-8





The Duncan family: Lisa, Lucy, Lauren, Barry, Daniel and Chloe

communications, announced a new approach to the Association's annual conference and exhibition. To begin with, explained Michael, next year ABDO will hold a celebration luncheon at Plaisterers' Hall in London on 6 May to mark the Association's 25th anniversary. There will be no 2011 conference and exhibition or gala dinner; instead joint discussions with the Federation of Manufacturing Opticians (FMO) are underway regarding the possibility of holding CET events for ABDO members alongside Optrafair in April. In 2012, ABDO will hold its AGM, conference and exhibition and gala dinner in the spring, with the date and venue to be confirmed. From then onwards, these events will be held every two years. In 2013, with the co-operative support of the FMO, the ABDO AGM and CET events will be held at Optrafair 2013 and possibly the ABDO gala dinner on the Sunday evening. If successful, this alignment initiative with Optrafair will then also be subsequently repeated biennially.

"These exciting new plans are a result of direct feedback from our members, exhibitors and sponsors and we therefore believe they will be widely welcomed," commented Tony Garrett. "The biennial alignment with Optrafair will enable the Association to



Peter Black, Jennifer Brower and Nick Boys on the Maui Jim stand

strengthen its resources and work more closely with other optical bodies and partners in the optical profession. The 25th anniversary event will focus on key figures who have played a vital part in the successful development of ABDO since its inception in 1986. It will also provide unique sponsorship opportunities and promises to be a truly memorable and fitting celebration of the Association's considerable achievements during the past quarter of a century."

Commenting on the announcement, ABDO member Brenda Rennie of Area 12 told *Dispensing Optics*: "I think running the conference and exhibition every two years from 2012 is a good idea as there will be more new resources, frame styles and other products for members to investigate. Holding the conference in the spring may also help members spread out the cost of attending." Jim Gordon of Area 7 agreed, saying: "I think that it makes perfect sense to have our exhibition and conference on a non Optrafair year, especially in the current economic climate. Attending two venues in one year places a severe financial and time burden on our members. This would inevitably mean they would have to choose which one to attend, resulting in reduced attendance at both events. I also think



Dispensing optician and Master of the SMC Michael Barton, ABDO College Trustee Huntly Taylor and Peter Black

to hold our main CET event and AGM in conjunction with Optrafair is a good idea. I would like to congratulate the ABDO Board on responding to feedback they received from their members in such a positive manner," Jim added.

### Tributes and toasts

Later on the Saturday evening, the ABDO gala dinner brought together just over 350 guests for an evening of great food, great company and great entertainment sponsored for the third year running by Transitions Optical. It was the chance for outgoing President, Barry Duncan, to bid farewell after two challenging but rewarding years in office and to welcome Jennifer Brower and Peter Black as the Association's new President and Vice President. Before handing over the chain of office, Barry thanked everyone who had supported him during his term and paid tribute to his wife Lisa. In response, Tony Garrett told the gathering that Barry had been a "fantastic President" who had "given his all during two very difficult years for the Association". He presented Lisa Duncan with a small gift for the family as a mark of appreciation.

Jennifer Brower then took to the stage for her first address as ABDO President.



Jennifer, Peter and Katie Docker Head of ABDO Membership Services



One of the well attended lectures



A makeover during 'Rimless aesthetics' from Silhouette

# BLITZ KIDZ







Frame adjustments workshop



Andy Hepworth, Garry Kousoulou and Julie Heaney enjoying their lunch



Low vision workshop

"Since my early days in the profession, the Association has come a long way," said Jennifer, who believed the establishment of the Optical Confederation would help ABDO achieve great things for its members. The President also pointed to the new low vision pathways due to be unveiled at the National Optometric Conference this month as an "exceptional opportunity for members to offer local services in the primary healthcare setting". Regarding the scaling back of revalidation, Jennifer declared that "common sense had prevailed" although a serious concern for members continued to be the rise of poor quality dispensings by unregistered sellers. "We intend to introduce a plan to highlight these problems and produce action," she said. "We also want to increase support for our Areas, the communities they serve and our members. The future is bright and I look forward to it with great anticipation," concluded the President.

Another year of achievements were marked during the gala dinner with some surprises in store. The annual awards were presented as follows: **Special Recognition Awards:** to Sally Bates, Alicia Thompson, Chris Bottomley, Duncan Counter and Kevin Milsom, who went beyond the call of

duty to ensure the ABDO exams in Malaysia went ahead during the volcanic ash cloud debacle. **Medals of Excellence:** to Past ADO President Robert Jardine, who has "loved every minute" of his 50 years as an ABDO member. Also, to Stephen Golding, who has been an Area committee member for more than 16 years. **Life Memberships:** to a "gob-smacked" Duncan Counter, Elvin Montlake and Kim Devlin. **Area Prize:** presented by Colin Lee to Clive Marchant and Mike Cody of Area 5. **Dispensing Optics Readership Prize:** to Richard Harsant for, 'A visually impaired patient's first LV assessment'. **Non-CET Journal Prize:** to Mike Hall for his Health & Safety series. **Honorary Fellowship:** to Barbara Doris, PA to Tony Garrett, who she described as "the best boss ever". **Hamblin Memorial Prize:** presented to Jim Gordon by James Russell for his contribution to the profession over a long period of years.

### Sunday buzzy Sunday

This year's scaled down exhibition on the Sunday produced a buzzy atmosphere around the 40 plus stands showcasing the latest products and services from many of the UK's leading optical suppliers. Delegates were also drawn to hear an array of interesting CET lectures, covering everything from frame production technology to how

to differentiate from your competitors, with standing room only in some lectures. Presentations on new electronic lenses by Pixel Optics, on Trivex by PPG Industries, and on Drivewear by Younger Optics attracted very high numbers of delegates. The low vision and frame repair and material workshops were filled to capacity, and the conference organising team is considering a mix of interactivity and lectures again in 2012.

Commenting on the trimmed down exhibition space, Nick Browning of BBGR said: "Although the venue felt a little congested at times, the smaller exhibition area created a substantially better atmosphere than in 2009 and led to easier interaction between delegates and exhibitors. The Rupp+Hubrach/BBGR team spoke to many potential new customers and the congress should provide us with a healthy return on investment." For Nick Boys of Maui Jim UK, the conference was "just amazing". "The gala dinner was very well organised," enthused Nick, "with excellent food, superb service and some great rock and roll music. The exhibition was very well attended on the Sunday and we had superb results for both leads and orders. We'd like to thank everyone at ABDO



Transitions who sponsored the Gala Dinner



New to the ABDO Board: Ashton Galloway and Fiona Anderson



Jennifer visits the BBGR (Rupp + Hubrach) stand





Low vision workshop



Dancing the night away



Cheers!

for organising what for us has turned out to be the highlight of a brilliant year."

Neal Grimason and the team at Continental Eyewear said they would have preferred the opportunity to have the exhibition over a longer period of time, say two days. However, the condensed format meant that the team was busy most of the time with lots of enthusiasm shown for the company's products. "The limited space meant that we were unable to display our full product range but all our new releases were on show and many orders were taken and appointments arranged," said Neal. "Regarding ABDO's plans for the future, having an exhibition in the alternating years with Optrafair makes a lot of sense so I am fully supportive of the move," he added.

"The conference was a tremendous success for us," said Stepper's Peter Reeve, "from a commercial perspective and a social aspect. It was good to meet up with friends old and new and to support ABDO. The conference and exhibition had the buzz of the conferences of old and it was a pleasure to be associated with it. The plans for the conference going forward look exciting and if 2010 is anything to go by, we will be happy to

participate," added Peter. Essilor remarked it was pleased it could 'piggy back' the conference with its university and college symposium, allowing academics from optometry and dispensing optics to interact and enjoy the social events and exhibition as well as its own bespoke programme.

### Quality over quantity

For Elaine Grisdale, ABDO head of professional services and a key driving force behind the annual event, this year's conference succeeded in bringing back the buzz. Elaine told *Dispensing Optics*: "The consensus seems to be it was a great event and that delegates were pleased with the quality and quantity of the exhibition and CET on offer. One group of delegates who had not attended a conference in recent years said they had all enjoyed the weekend very much and were impressed at the improvements all round since they last attended.

"On a personal note, I was pleasantly surprised at the constant flow of people through the exhibition hall. This was due to the promotion of the free exhibition – something we will definitely be doing again. However, the volume of people generated quite a lot of noise and this meant difficulties for

people who were lecturing and listening in the exhibition lecture area. We made improvements in the afternoon with a change in the sound system but things were a bit difficult earlier on in the day. In hindsight we should have partitioned this area off.

"The gala dinner was a fantastic networking event and we are very grateful to Transitions Optical their sponsorship and support. Once again we showed that ABDO know how to throw a party. A lot of people were amazed at how the room was transformed overnight from a party disco room to a professional, buzzing conference and exhibition hall. All credit to the Event Exchange team for staying up through the night with the hotel staff to achieve this. Credit must also be given to the exhibitors who got up very early on Sunday to set up their particular stand spaces," Elaine concluded.

Elaine and the rest of the organising team are now collecting full feedback from delegates and industry partners in order to start working towards the next ABDO conference in the spring of 2012.

**The photographs were taken by Steve Williams and many more can be viewed on the ABDO website at [www.abdo.org.uk](http://www.abdo.org.uk)** ■



Liz Shepherd shows Peter Stepper frames while Nigel McMain looks on



How many?



Low vision workshop



This month Antonia Chitty outlines some practical approaches to help you market your business

# Creating a marketing strategy

**H**ow do you market your business? Do you rely on 'doing what you've always done' plus a steady footfall past your door? Or do you have an active plan that you work on every week to reach new customers and grow your business? Read on for some easy and affordable ideas for how to market your practice, to find out why a marketing plan will set you head and shoulders ahead of the competition and to learn how to create your own strategy.

It is easy to be complacent when marketing your business if everything is ticking over nicely, but an active marketing strategy will help you prevent quiet periods. Spending two or three hours working out a plan will mean that you have all your ideas for activities right in front of you when you sit down to do some marketing. Here are some straightforward exercises to help you create your own plan.

## About your business

What are your business aims? If you are sure and clear about your overall business aims, it is much easier to make an accurate and well thought out plan that will help you get closer, step-by-step.

What are your business aims?

- To build the business profile?
- To find new contacts?
- To make sales?

Note down your business aims as the first part of your marketing strategy.

Do you understand about your practice's USP (unique selling point) and UPB (unique perceived benefits)? What makes your business's offering special and different? Unless you are clear about this you can't market effectively. If you know and understand the specific benefits that your company offers, and how they differ to the competition's products or services, you are in a much better position to share this with your target audience. If you are not clear, why not gather some material to help develop your USP? Chat to colleagues and ask them how they see your enterprise standing out from others. More importantly, ask your customers and clients why they come to you. The UPB for your business looks at how your customer feels they benefit from your offer, rather than the USP, which is traditionally created from your company's perspective.

Make some notes in your plan about what makes your practice stand out and why existing customers come back to you. Ask yourself the questions from a patient's point of view; "Why should I buy from you?" and "How will your business help me?"

## Your marketing campaign

Now you have a little background to your business firmly fixed in your mind, it is time to think about why you are marketing the business and what you want to achieve. It is clear that without marketing it is hard to grow a business and attract new customers. It is much easier to market effectively if you are certain about what you want the outcomes to be and you know who your target audience is (refer back to September's article on building a niche for your practice for more about defining your target audience).

Thinking about your target audience, do you have a picture of your ideal customer? Perhaps look at the customers who are loyal repeat visitors, and those who spend the most. Bear in mind that you want to attract more of this

**Continued overleaf**



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type of person. If you ask people "Where did you hear of us?", does this show you trends for where to find your most valuable customers? On the converse side, do you have people who are timewasters? How are they attracted into your business? It is well worth finding out, so you can focus your marketing on attracting great clients rather than those who make your heart sink.

### What do you want to promote?

You may want to create a campaign to raise your practice profile in general, or you might want a specific campaign to launch a new product or service. Consider this carefully as you develop your plan. You could have a campaign that ties into an important season for your business. What optical products might people give as Christmas gifts? In the New Year, will you be clearing out last season's frames in a practice sale, or highlighting 'New Year, New Look' promotions? If you are clear about what you want to promote it is much easier to succeed. Note down in your plan exactly what you want to promote – and be as specific as possible.

### What action do you want others to take?

Once you know what you want to promote, you should look at the action you need others to take. If you are trying to raise your business profile, one of the strands of your marketing campaign may simply be to make more people aware of

your practice as a great place for eyecare. Or, you might want to get them to take action and sign up on your website to receive your newsletter. Or, you might actually want to get previous customers to the point of purchase of a new product.

### Working out your campaign objectives

Once you know who you are targeting and what you want them to do, as well as the overall aims for your marketing, it is time to break things down and work out some specific objectives. Note down your current statistics. How many customers, enquiries, sales and website visitors do you get each week? Then create your targets for each of these.

### Activities

Promoting your business is easy if you break it down into small steps and do a little each week. Make some time to work out what you will do to promote your business this year. A simple way to do it is to work on a different activity each week, every month. You could do something like this:

- Week 1 PR
- Week 2 Advertising
- Week 3 Online marketing
- Week 4 Offline marketing

Write this into your plan, and start noting down different themes and promotions for the next 12 months. If you know that you have a sale in January and July, work out how far in advance you need to set in

place the marketing. When do you need to order flyers and posters? How soon should you mail out, and will you be booking advertising to coincide with the sale? Add all this into your plan. Note down new product and service launches that you have planned for the next year. Can you invite in the local press to try out a new service, or will you be mailing groups of existing patients who have bought designer frames in the past to let them know you have a new designer range in stock soon?

Then, look at other seasonal promotions. What special activities can you do for Easter, Father's Day, Back to School or Halloween? These are perfect for filling in months where there is nothing else to promote. Come up with a relevant special offer or devise a competition. Will you write to customers about this, send them an email, invite local schools to take part or promote it in the local paper? For each event you want to tie marketing into, think about relevant activities and put them into your plan. Then set a reminder on your computer or in your diary each week to remind you what you should be working on.

### Evaluation

Finally, devise a way to check if your marketing is working. The key to making the best use of your resources for promoting your business is to understand what gets results. The only way to know what works is to ask your customers, "Where did you hear of us?" Build this question into your order form and sight test booking system or simply put a notepad next to the till and jot down people's responses. Start doing this now, and you will be able to see which marketing methods are helping your business as you create and implement your plan and try out different marketing activities.

**Antonia Chitty is a former optometrist who writes on business and health. She is a Member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations and author of 'A guide to Promoting Your Business'. ■**

## Optician Index - August 2010 summary

- Eye examinations increase by 12 per cent from July
- Progressive lenses up 16 per cent from last month
- Single vision lenses improve by 6 per cent from July
- New contact lens fits 11 per cent higher than last month
- Total turnover climbs by 12 per cent against August 2009
- Total dispensing is now 13 per cent higher than last month at 89 index points

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In his recent Presidential Address, 2010-11 BCLA President and ABDO member, Shelly Bansal, considered the risks and challenges faced in everyday contact lens practice. Nicky Collinson reports

# Be aware of risks, says BCLA President

**Shelly began his address – entitled ‘Safety in numbers’ – by asking the 85-strong audience of BCLA members and guests: “What is truly safe?” The answer, of course, was nothing. Shelly then proceeded to consider safety from three different perspectives – those of the practitioner, the practice and the patient.**

## Practitioner safety

With regards to improving practitioner safety, Shelly believed that the key to this was education – taking ownership of responsibilities and successfully managing risk through developing skills and experience. Communication was also important to ensure that patient needs were being met, asking ‘what if’ questions without being patronising and helping patients to avoid unnecessary risks. “We can plan for the unexpected, but we can’t legislate against bad luck,” said Shelly.

Stressing that practitioners had a duty to inform patients about the latest products available, Shelly cited a recent case where a practitioner had been taken to court over such an omission. The President also pointed to new research commissioned by *Optician* magazine, which found that 72 per cent of practitioners believed they were vulnerable to litigation.

“These are good pressures to have,” said Shelly, “as they keep us on our toes.” There were also financial risks that needed to be considered, especially in the current economic downturn. “One way to keep ahead of the game could be to develop a reputation as a specialist,” suggested Shelly.

## Practice safety

In terms of practice safety, the key issues were hygiene, finances and record keeping. All practices needed to be on top of hygiene and patients needed to see and experience the practice’s hygiene regimes, such as hand washing and the use of sterile wipes. Shelly emphasised the absolute importance of recording everything and always backing up the practice software systems.

Financial issues were a concern, but a way to combat this was to ‘lock patients in’ with monthly direct debits. Shelly talked about the stagnant market and the patient drop-out rate, which was currently around 30 per cent. He estimated that losing just one patient could equate to a profit loss of £4,300 over a patient’s lifetime in contact lens wear. “If you lose thirty per cent of your contact lens patients, that’s a lot of lost profit,” he warned.

Conversely, an average practice with around 400 contact lens patients (five per cent of the patient base) could yield a £60,000 yearly profit. “If you could double the number of contact lens patients, that would be a phenomenal result,” said Shelly, who believes that in five to 10 years time, 80 per cent of spectacles could be dispensed online. “The argument that spectacles are more profitable is just not true. Do something different to protect your practice,” he urged.

## Patient safety

Lastly, Shelly turned to patient safety in which the primary concerns were hygiene, compliance and infection. He underlined the importance of discussing personal hygiene with patients, particularly lens case hygiene. Environmental hygiene was also a risk. Shelly added that his greatest hang-up was practices that got stuck in offering just one lens modality, encouraging the audience to be flexible in the types of lenses they offered.

The biggest issue was the risk of severe infections. Shelly referenced research by Stapleton *et al* published in 2008, showing that the rate of microbial keratitis (MK) infection was 4.2 in 10,000 contact lens wearers. The research also showed that daily





BCLA President, Shelly Bansal, with his wife Manjit and daughters Priya and Simran



Tony Garrett, with past BCLA President and ABDO Board member, Nick Atkins

disposable daily wear gave the lowest ratio of incidences of severe MK, and indicated that more research was needed with regards to silicone hydrogel lenses, which were occasionally worn on an extended wear basis, and had a higher rate of infection. Practices could help their patients to avoid risk factors associated with severe infections, such as smoking and poor lens storage. "Risks are avoidable and we need to tell patients if they are at risk. We have a duty of care to provide good

guidance and promote the appropriate products," stressed Shelly.

In conclusion, Shelly stated that the three biggest risk factors were overnight wear, hand washing and case hygiene. A patient who had poor hygiene, smoked and slept in lenses was at high risk, whereas a patient who was meticulous about hygiene and didn't smoke would be at less risk if they used their lenses overnight. "We should not use statistics to tar all patients with the same brush," declared Shelly. "We

should look at each patient on an individual basis and evaluate and manage the risk for them."

Summing up, Shelly recalled a speaker who he had once heard describe contact lens practitioners as 'freedom fighters' – as they opened up a free new world for their patients. "We are freedom fighters," concurred Shelly, "but we are also guardian angels, as we have a duty to look after our patients after we give them that freedom." ■

## More to membership than meets the eye

Whatever your level of skill and knowledge in contact lens practice, there's arguably no greater source of professional development than the British Contact Lens Association (BCLA), writes Vivien Freeman

The BCLA provides direct access to the very latest clinical findings from the world's leading experts, whilst helping members to develop and enhance their practical skills with like-minded colleagues. The launch of BCLA Online earlier this year, as part of a significant redevelopment of the Association's website, means even more membership benefits are now in place to help contact lens opticians achieve best practice. BCLA Online provides:

- Clinical photographic library
- Clinical poster library
- Research document library
- Virtual lecture library
- Helpful glossary and much, much more

As well as access to BCLA Online, BCLA membership offers more than £400 worth of savings annually:

**Six free copies *Contact Lens & Anterior Eye (CLAE)*:** CLAE is one of the most highly regarded clinical, educational and scientific resources for those wanting to acquire more in-depth knowledge of contact lens-related

issues. It covers all the latest developments, thinking, clinical trials and innovations in the contact lens field. Members also receive 50 per cent off the US journal, *Contact Lens Spectrum*.

**Free ACLM Contact Lens Year Book:** One of the most valuable resources for contact lens opticians, the ACLM Year Book features technical details for all contact lenses, solutions and materials produced by ACLM member companies. It covers most products available in the UK and is an essential product guide and handy reference.

**Free place at BCLA Pioneers Conference:** This free annual CET conference and exhibition is open to BCLA members only and covers a range of relevant and interesting topics. It brings members the latest news on innovations and changes in the contact lens industry and profession.

**Free BCLA evening lectures:** Evening lectures

are held throughout the year and allow members to network and relax with colleagues whilst listening to an informative talk on a relevant topic.

**Free BCLA workshops:** These very popular practical CET workshops are held in the BCLA office as well as in member practices around the UK. They are delivered at both basic and specialist level, and are held throughout the year for BCLA members only.

**Discount and early bird rate for BCLA Clinical Conference and Exhibition:** Each year the BCLA holds the largest contact lens conference and exhibition in the UK. With four days of workshops, three tracks with advanced clinical sessions as well as more intermediate and basic level presentations, the conference is *the* place to meet your precise learning objectives.

To find out more about becoming a BCLA member, visit [www.bcla.org.uk/membership](http://www.bcla.org.uk/membership) ■



7th BCLA Pioneers Lecturer, Professor Lyndon Jones

## Book now for BCLA Pioneers Conference

The 7th British Contact Lens Association's (BCLA) Pioneers Conference will take place on 23 November at the Royal Society of Medicine in London (12.30-7.30pm).

The Pioneers Conference is a free CET event for BCLA

members only. New on the programme this year is the chance for delegates to put their questions to the 7th Pioneers Lecturer, Professor Lyndon Jones, during a 75-minute 'Ask Professor Jones' session. The Q&A session will kick off with three pre-prepared

questions – on extended wear, red eye and ulcers, and unrealistic claims by contact lens companies. Professor Jones' evening lecture (open to BCLA members and their guests) is entitled: 'Comfortable contact lenses: a realistic dream for 20/20?'

Professor Jones said: "I am delighted to be participating in the forthcoming Pioneers Conference in London. Honorary Pioneers Conference organiser Nigel Burnett Hodd has put together another excellent

programme, with presentations from academics and clinicians that are directly applicable to modern contact lens practice. The rapid-fire format lends itself to providing lots of information in a short period of time, which I think makes it a 'must attend' event for all members of the BCLA."

BCLA members can view the programme and register online at [www.bcla.org.uk](http://www.bcla.org.uk)

\* The BCLA is offering a new course for receptionists, run by optometrist and staff development consultant, Sarah Morgan. 'Contact lenses: the ins and outs' will be held at the British Association of Dermatologists in London on 7 December (9.30am to 5pm). The cost is £195 for staff of BCLA members and £250 for staff of non-members. Find out more and book a place on the BCLA website. ■

**ABDO Benevolent Fund** if you know of a dispensing optician, or a dependant of a dispensing optician, who might benefit from the ABDO Benevolent Fund, please get in touch with Barbara Doris on 020 7298 5102 or email [bdoris@abdolondon.org.uk](mailto:bdoris@abdolondon.org.uk) or write to her at ABDO, 199 Gloucester Terrace, London W2 6LD. ■

## Lower earners to pay reduced GOC fee

The General Optical Council (GOC) is developing proposals to introduce a reduced retention fee for practitioners on a lower income.

At the Council's September meeting, members agreed that a reduced fee would be more beneficial to those earning lower incomes than the ability to pay the standard retention fee in instalments, which would require changes to the Registration Rules. Members also noted that the latter would involve "significant costs" to set up, which would either need to be borne by all registrants regardless of whether they used the system, in the form of higher retention fees, or an additional administration fee. It was decided that a

staged payment facility could therefore end up disadvantaging those who it was intended to benefit, such as low earners.

Council members also noted that despite recent fee increases, the GOC retention fees remained among the lowest of all the UK healthcare regulators. The Council highlighted that no other regulator with fees below £400 per annum currently offered a staged payment facility. The Council concluded that introducing a discounted retention fee for registrants on a lower income could potentially be more beneficial. "A different fee for practitioners on a low income would positively benefit women practitioners, older people and disabled registrants," stated the Council. ■

If you have a job vacancy in your practice, please remember that the **Situations Vacant** section in the Bulletin Board area of the ABDO website provides you with a quick and easy facility to advertise completely free-of-charge. ■



Ian Tebbutt (right) presents Chris Horrell with the Stercks Martin Silver Salver

## DOs support NES funded CET training day

**The first-ever government-funded CET training day for all optical professionals, including dispensing opticians, took place in Edinburgh recently. Robert Callander reports**

As the Edinburgh Conference Centre at Heriot Watt-University is just outside the city's ring road, those travelling to the training day happily avoided the on-going congestion being caused by the construction of the new tram system. Beautifully landscaped grounds surround the conference centre, which is rival to many a hotel in terms of conferencing and event facilities. The location proved an excellent choice judging by the numbers in attendance. Perhaps more telling was the top-notch quality of lectures, encouraging the vast majority of delegates to remain for the duration. This was quite a result considering that registration was at 10:30am with the final lecture beginning at 8pm. Even after more than nine hours, most delegates were still hooked.

The range of subjects covered was wonderfully broad, again emphasising the diversity of opportunities within our profession. From paediatrics to geriatrics, from Tscherning Ellipse to the freeform revolution, the full gamut of dispensing

possibilities covering every age and lens technology was touched on in one lecture or another. The other theme of the day was colour; colour for use in therapies for dyslexia and visual stress, UV and high-energy blue light at one end of the spectrum. Finishing the day off on a clinical note, we looked at red eye and other conditions that present in practice.

This training day was a first for dispensing opticians in Scotland for while there is a fund for optometric training and development, there has until now been no access to these resources for dispensing opticians. Fully funded by NHS Education for Scotland (NES), the training day was the fruit of negotiations between ABDO, Optometry Scotland (OS) and NES to bring government-funded CET to a wider audience. My understanding is that Barry Duncan, in particular, has been working on this for quite some time both through ABDO and OS. I would congratulate all those involved in getting this conference off the ground. ■

## Horrell takes the Silver Salver

Eight dispensing opticians and their guests enjoyed a day of golf at the Robin Hood Golf Club in Solihull, Birmingham, recently in a bid to take home the Stercks Martin Silver Salver.

Norman Stercks Martin presented the salver to ADO in 1970 and in that inaugural year, it was won by Ian Tebbutt. Ian

continues to enjoy his golf and in his current capacity as ABDO Golf Society president, was delighted to present the trophy to this year's winner, Chris Horrell. Also presented with prizes were Mark Keaney of Continental Eyewear who won this year's guest prize and Andrew Dewhurst who won the prize for the longest drive. ■

**Membership renewal notices** will be posted out in Mid December for the 2011 membership year. Please take this opportunity to check that your address details and all other membership details are correct by either using the online update details facility on our website - [www.abdo.org.uk](http://www.abdo.org.uk) - log into the members area and update your personal details or, call us on 01227 733902, 01227 733912, 01227 733922 or, email [membership@abdo.org.uk](mailto:membership@abdo.org.uk) ■

## Up for an exciting challenge in 2011?

**Fight for Sight is offering an exciting programme of overseas challenges for 2011. Trek, climb or cycle your way around some of the world's most exotic locations and help Fight for Sight to fund vital research into the prevention and treatment of blindness and eye disease.**

**These once-in-a-lifetime challenges include trekking through the jungle in Borneo, over the vast**

**Sahara desert and across the stunning Himalayan mountains. Alternatively, walk along the ancient Inca Trail or the Great Wall of China, climb Africa's mighty Kilimanjaro or cycle from the heart of London to the Eiffel Tower in Paris.**

**To find out more go to [www.fightforsight.org.uk/fundraising](http://www.fightforsight.org.uk/fundraising) or contact the Fight for Sight events team on 020 7929 7755 (email [jo@fightforsight.org.uk](mailto:jo@fightforsight.org.uk)). ■**





NEG members head for Blenheim Palace

## Palatial setting for NEG conference

Blenheim Palace, birthplace of Winston Churchill and home of the 11th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, will be the spectacular setting for a new CET event for independents on 29 November.

Organised by the National Eyecare Group (NEG), 'Building for success' is a complimentary one-day conference and exhibition sponsored by the CIBA Vision Academy for Eyecare Excellence and is accredited for five CET points. Offering a mix of clinical and business lectures, networking and buying opportunities, the conference is also supported by headline sponsors, Hoya Lens UK, CooperVision, David

Thomas Contact Lenses and Bausch+Lomb.

Speakers include: Dr Katharine Evans of Cardiff University on contact lens care; Paul Bullock of Hoya on digital lens technology; UltraVision keratoconus consultant Lynn White on fitting irregular corneas; optometrist Craig Wilcox on practitioner/patient communication; optometrist Andy Clark on how the independent practice can be positioned as a centre of excellence; Hugh Greenway of Reed Learning on learning from the internet; and consultant ophthalmologist Mike Tappin on cataract and refractive surgery pearls. The day will round off with a prize draw to win an Apple iPad.

NEG managing director, Michael Daunt, commented: "We believe that Blenheim Palace offers a perfect backdrop to the day's events. Our aim is to create a relaxed atmosphere where delegates can make the most of the day and return to their business with ideas and inspiration to make it more successful."

Optinet PMS users may also attend for free while non-NEG members and their staff can book a place at a cost of £125 + VAT per person (including lunch and refreshments).

For a booking form, email Phil Mullins at [p.mullins@nationaleyecare.co.uk](mailto:p.mullins@nationaleyecare.co.uk) ■

## Call for NHS to prioritise early diagnosis

Eighty-eight per cent of people questioned in a recent YouGov poll said they believed the NHS needed to make early diagnosis of sight loss a priority. Other NHS priority areas should be dementia (90 per cent) and hearing (79 per cent), revealed the poll.

The results of the survey, which was commissioned by the Alzheimer's Society, RNID and Eye Health Alliance (EHA), were debated during fringe events at this year's political party conferences. The poll also found that people recognised that an early diagnosis of dementia (69 per cent), hearing loss (59 per cent) and sight loss (64 per cent) would enable people to manage their symptoms.

## Minister responds to diabetic screening call

Speaking in a Westminster Hall Debate on 16 September, Labour MP George Howarth called on the government to improve services for children and young people with diabetes.

Following briefings from the Eye Health Alliance, Mr Howarth raised the issue of ensuring all people with diabetes had access to diabetic retinopathy screening. In response, Minister of State for Health, Paul Burstow MP, said the coalition government wanted to "make a significant move in respect of their commitment to introducing a much stronger payment system for children's diabetes services, which will help to bring them out of the shadow of other NHS services".

He added that there were plans to introduce in stages from April 2011 a new mandatory tariff that would "recognise paediatric diabetes care as a clear and discrete specialism within the NHS, and will provide a clear funding stream to support such services over the long term". ■

Heather Marshall, EHA head of public affairs, said: "Sight loss in the UK costs the NHS and social care £2.2 billion a year. Fifty per cent could have been prevented through regular eye tests and early access to sight-saving treatments. Not only can substantial savings be made through reducing the high level of avoidable sight loss, but saving a person's sight can dramatically improve their quality of life." ■



Professor John Marshall, Michael Barton and Gordon Jones



Michael Barton and Mouhamed Al-Aqaba

## New SMC Master installed at annual service

The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers held its Annual Service of Thanksgiving, Remembrance and Rededication at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, London, on Wednesday 6 October.

During the service the declaration for the new

Master and Wardens took place. Dispensing optician Michael Barton was installed as Master, Professor John Marshall became Upper Warden and Gordon Jones became the Renter Warden.

Later the same day, Michael's first official task

as Master was to present the ninth Ruskell Medal to Mouhamed Al-Aqaba at the Court Lunch held at Apothecaries' Hall.

Mouhamed, an Iraqi citizen from Basrah, received the

medal as being the first named author of a paper entitled 'Architecture and distribution of human corneal nerves', which has been published in the *British Journal of Ophthalmology*. ■

## Specialist CET requirement to end in 2012

From 2013, contact lens opticians (CLOs) will no longer be required to obtain additional specialist CET points in addition to their general points requirement. Instead they will be required to ensure that at least six general points per year are in contact lens CET and to undertake one peer review activity per cycle.

The announcement comes after the General Optical Council (GOC) agreed revised principles and requirements for its CET scheme post 2012 at its September Council meeting. The principles will form the basis of a revalidation scheme for optometrists and dispensing opticians that will be introduced from January 2013. The three-year CET cycle and 36-point requirement will remain, but other changes include the

introduction of a wider scale of points, for example, interactive CET such as peer review; clinical skills CET will carry greater points value than attendance at lectures or text-based distance learning activities, which will be limited to a certain number of points.

Every six years, optometrists and CLOs who are working in practice will be required to demonstrate that they have been subject to a clinical skills assessment in ocular abnormalities and ocular examination. This would still carry CET points, which would count towards a registrant's points total but only one such activity would be required across two cycles. The GOC plans to develop these proposals later this year and will issue new guidance to registrants. ■

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Double-whammy for optical assistant, Alison

## Back-to-back prizewinner is WCSM first

A slice of history was made when the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers (WCSM) held its annual presentation of certificates at Apothecaries' Hall in London on 18 October.

Alison Anderson, an optical assistant at Specsavers in Long Eaton, Derbyshire, was presented with this year's WCSM prize for achieving the best mark for the Level 3 Certificate in Optical Practice Support (OPS) – 12 months after she won the same prize for the Level 2 Certificate. "This is

the first time a candidate has won the OPS prize at two different levels," said WCSM Master Michael Barton, "and to do it back-to-back is a real achievement."

Alison, 43, who juggled her studies with bringing up two young children at home, said the OPS course gave her lots more confidence at work. "It's helped me in my supervisory role, and it's helped me deal with customers. Just after I'd studied high index lenses, for example, a lady came into the practice saying she

was having problems with her spectacles. I saw that she had just changed to a thin lens and, straightaway, I knew what the problem might be."

The secret of Alison's success? "I just tried to keep on top of the course and work through it gradually," she explained. "Also, my colleagues at Specsavers have been fantastic and really supportive." Our photograph shows Alison collecting her 2009 prize from John Shilling, the then WCSM Master. ■

## CET presentation offered

**Dispensing opticians and practice managers looking to achieve a more competitive edge for their business are invited to take advantage of a series of five CET-approved presentations provided by Younger Optics.**

**The CET presentations can be delivered to individuals or groups in the practice in the evenings and include free bespoke marketing support. "Long-term sustainable profitable growth is achievable irrespective of the size of your business," said Julian Wiles of Younger.**

**"Implementing a planned strategy need not involve additional expense and is easier than you might think." Email [julian.wiles@youngereurope.com](mailto:julian.wiles@youngereurope.com) to find out more.** ■

## Golden award for BBGR progressive

BBGR's Anateo Mio progressive lens took home a prestigious Silmo d'Or award at this year's Paris-based trade show. The award was given in recognition of the product's quality and originality.

Scheduled for launch in the UK in January, Anateo Mio integrates a patented new parameter into its design – the natural reading distance. This fourth parameter builds upon the individualisation offered by the current Anateo family of lenses, which optimises the various lens zones according to the shape of the eye, the shape of the frame, the thickness of the lens and the wearing conditions.

To allow simple, precise and professional measuring of the natural reading distance, BBGR has developed a patented

measuring device called EyeTab. This automatically measures the distance between the reading surface and the lens, based on the wearer's natural posture, with pinpoint accuracy. To simplify lens ordering, BBGR has also developed a questionnaire for patients.

**"Just as Anateo Mio is about to be launched across Europe, we are delighted that our customers and professional colleagues share our belief that we have succeeded in the difficult task of improving upon the ground-breaking Anateo and Anateo PdM designs," said Jean-Felix Biosse DuPlan, BBGR marketing and international sales director. Exclusive previews will be offered to existing UK Anateo customers during December.** ■

## 2010 ABDO Graduation

The 2010 ABDO Graduation and Prizegiving Ceremony will take place on Wednesday 24 November at Canterbury Cathedral.

For information about the ceremony, visit the ABDO website at [www.abdo.org.uk](http://www.abdo.org.uk) or email Deanne Gray [dgray@abdocollege.org.uk](mailto:dgray@abdocollege.org.uk) ■





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Ray-Ban will be on show in the Fashion Quarter



New app to aid the dispense

## Niche space attracts fashion names

**Optrafair 2011 will see the major launch of a new US frame and sunglass collection into the European market.**

**Adam Woods, marketing director of the Jonathan Cate Collection, will exhibit the largely Italian-made designs within the niche Fashion Quarter of the show, which takes place at the Birmingham NEC from 9-11 April. "As a fashion boutique company with a very wearable price point, we think that Optrafair will be a good stepping stone into the European market and we will be looking for sales agents to support us; we're very excited about the opportunities."**

**The Fashion Quarter, with 50 per cent of the space already booked, is one of the most in-demand sections of the show with niche companies recognising the value of exhibiting together. Other exhibitors will include Orange Eyewear, Ray-Ban, William Morris Eyewear, Jai Kudo and Ebony Optical. ■**

## GOC names interim registrar

Satjit Singh has been named as interim chief executive and registrar of the General Optical Council (GOC). Mr Singh's appointment comes after Dian Taylor resigned from the position in September after 20 years' service. A qualified chartered accountant, Mr Singh has more than 30 years' experience working within the public, private and voluntary sectors. He has previously worked for the General Pharmaceutical Council, the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence, the NHS and social services. ■

## New iPad app for lens consulting

Rodenstock has launched an iPad application for lens consulting, which shows the benefits of its different products. It also demonstrates the effects that individual parameters have on visual fields.

The Rodenstock Consulting apps program has been designed to help dispense high quality lenses in a user-friendly way. The app can be used in any corner of the practice and in any consulting situation, thanks to the wireless iPad. Rodenstock will be inviting

customers to participate in a promotion where an iPad, loaded with the new software, can be provided to the practice at no charge.

\* The Rodenstock Group is on the search for a new CEO after Dr Olaf Göttgens resigned from office. Peter Körfer-Schün, chief executive of Grohe AG, has been appointed as advisor to the company on the continued implementation of its growth strategy. The company stated that it had witnessed "a sustained reversal in market economics" and that current trading "had further improved throughout 2010". ■

## Director changes at Essilor

**Marc Tersigni has moved into the newly created position of managing director, Essilor Group, UK & Ireland.**

**Marc has been with the Essilor Group since 1996 and with Essilor since 2008. Within his new role, he will continue to build solid foundations for the Essilor Group subsidiaries whilst exploring new opportunities in the UK market. Mike Kirkley, who has been with the Essilor Group for 25 years, most recently as executive MD for the Essilor partner labs, is now Essilor managing director.**

\* The five lucky winners of Essilor's Crizal Forte scratchcard promotion, who jetted off with a guest to Las Vegas for the top prize of a four-night break at the famous Bellagio Hotel, were: Louise Gibbs from Cecil Amey Opticians in Norfolk; Jenny Walker from Broskill Opticians in Leeds; Lynn Chang from Bayfield & Barlam Opticians in Leeds; Rowena George from Radyr Eyecare in Cardiff; and Sharon Haynes from Pabari Opticians in Birmingham. ■

## Fly-drive offer to entice visitors

Lynx IDG has launched a 'fly-drive' offer to encourage practitioners to visit its newly refitted optical interiors designer showroom on the outskirts of Manchester.

The state-of-the-art showroom features Lynx's 2011 ranges of bespoke optical furniture and security frame display devices. To make a visit easier, Lynx will pay all reasonable travel expenses and refreshments throughout the day. For more details telephone 0800 387287. ■





All in a good cause



Abdul Jahangir with Elaine Styles



Seasonal theme for new collection

## Norville supports fundraising campaign

Norville Opticians joined practices up and down the country in the World Sight Day Challenge on 14 October. For the month of October, the company's practices across Gloucestershire asked patients for a donation whenever they carried out an adjustment or a minor repair to someone's spectacles.

Norville Opticians managing director, Adrian Street, said: "We have supported Optometry Giving Sight for many years and we are proud to support such a worthwhile cause. It's easy to take vision care for granted here in the UK, so taking the World Sight Day Challenge is a great way to raise funds to give sight to people who don't have access to the vision care our patients do."

Optometry Giving Sight has guaranteed that 85 per cent of all funds raised will go directly to programmes that give sight to those most in need. Our photograph shows Norville dispensing optician and technician, Nicolas Upton, undertaking a free repair to raise money for the Challenge. ■

## Positive performance for relocated Silmo

Attendance at Silmo in Paris rose by four per cent compared to 2009, attracting 33,065 visitors to its new location on the outskirts of the city.

The choice of the Paris-Nord Villepinte exhibition centre as the show's new venue proved popular, according to the show's organisers, providing more effective organisation, more comfortable facilities, excellent visibility of products and services and a new programme of events.

Transport difficulties over the weekend of the show, including a strike and rail

engineering works, did slightly dampen proceedings however.

There was also a slight fall in the number of French opticians attending (down six per cent) but this was made up by an increase in visitors from abroad, which rose by 14 per cent.

For a round-up of the show, and a list of Silmo d'Or award winners, visit [www.silmo.fr](http://www.silmo.fr) ■

## Technology boost for homeless centre

The latest technology in retinal cameras has been presented to the London centre of Vision Care for Homeless People by Topcon.

Abdul Jahangir, London area sales manager for Topcon who presented the Topcon NW100 to the clinic, said: "We are delighted to

make this donation and it is somewhere that we can clearly add a real benefit to the charity." First patient to be screened on the technology was 47-year-old ex-British Army soldier, Chris Lathan, who served for more than 12 years and is now homeless. After a successful fundus screening he was dispensed reading glasses which have transformed his daily life. ■

## Prizes galore in lens promotion

Kenyan safaris, sightseeing trips to Rome and shopping sprees in New York are just some of the prizes to be won in Hoya's premium lens sales incentive programme – Vision Success Experience (VSE). Practices have until the end of July 2011 to collect their VSE points.

"The concept is to support our customers to dispense more premium products as this then brings very tangible benefits in terms of revenue and patient satisfaction," said Paul Jones, Hoya Lens UK regional sales manager.

The promotion is open to new customers as well as long established Hoya independent partners. For details contact VSE Club Registration on 0845 3300984 or email [vsefteam@hoya.co.uk](mailto:vsefteam@hoya.co.uk) ■

## Dynamic new range of rimless

Titan Dynamics is the new, 12 model rimless eyewear line from Silhouette. The range is said to represent "refinement in design, which is the working embodiment of the company's ethos of 'Seeing without boundaries'".

Titan Dynamics is available in a range of colours embracing tones of the seasons and calendar, such as November Chestnut, April Leaves and July Sparkling. Eighty per cent of each model is hand-crafted in Austria and the design uses no screws. Titan Dynamics – just like all Silhouette models – are among the highest quality rimless eyewear in the world, said the company. ■





The Area 11 September meeting



Peter Reeve from Stepper

## Area news

### Area 11 (London): Eventful evening Inn

Area 11 had a good attendance for its September meeting at the Holiday Inn Bloomsbury, where delegates were able to pick up 2.5 CET points. The evening kicked off with Peter Reeve from Stepper UK who gave a really interesting presentation on frame production and material technology. Peter came well equipped with the materials and tools used in frame production, which was particularly beneficial to the students in the audience (who also enjoyed the Stepper

chocolates). Now we certainly know how to spot a well-manufactured frame (and chocolate).

After a short break Alicia Thomson, ABDO's director of professional examinations, gave a talk entitled 'The route to registration'. We found out about changes to the ABDO exams and ophthalmic dispensing syllabus. It was also a great opportunity for students and supervisors to ask Alicia questions regarding the exams, the filling out of

the pre-qualification portfolio and issues regarding supervision. A light buffet was provided giving members the chance to catch up with friends and browse the ABDO bookshop.

Further bookings were taken for the Area 11 CET day on Sunday 7 November 2010, again at the Holiday Inn Bloomsbury. There are some great speakers lined up and we are combining our CET day with the London Area AGM. The fee

for the day is only £25 for ABDO members, which includes a hot lunch and refreshments, and five CET points are available. To ensure your place, book online at [www.abdo.org.uk](http://www.abdo.org.uk) or contact Hishu Monji by email at [hishumonji@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hishumonji@yahoo.co.uk) or on 020 7837 3276. On behalf of the London Area Committee I'd like to thank all who attended as well as our two wonderful speakers.

**Report by Ian Anderson  
chairman Area 11 ■**

## Specialist optician volunteers needed to help homeless people this Christmas

Specialist volunteers are urgently needed to donate their services to help homeless people in London over the festive season as part of Crisis At Christmas, running from Thursday 23 - Thursday 30 December 2010.

Up to nine temporary centres will be set up in London by Crisis, the national charity for single homeless people, as part of Crisis At Christmas. The centres will provide vital companionship and hot meals for homeless and vulnerably housed people as well as essential services like health checks, housing advice, training and further education opportunities.

The opticians service provides eye examinations to the same standard as

those completed at high street opticians.

This year we are aiming to build on the success of Crisis At Christmas 2009 when 189 homeless guests had an eye test and 222 pairs of glasses were dispensed and we need you to make that happen. We are looking for dispensing opticians, optometrists and optical receptionists and assistants to help run our opticians service this year.

If you have relevant skills and experience, please apply to join the team. And if you know anyone else with these skills, please spread the word.

Elaine Styles is one of the opticians

service organisers and she describes her first impressions of CC: "What an amazing set up it was. It had a fantastic positive energetic buzz. The range of services available for people was excellent and I found it inspirational. I think that it expressed the true meaning of Christmas to me not the commercialisation that we have become so wrapped up in." What makes it memorable for Elaine are "the amazing people I have met, both among the guests and volunteers. Quite a few individual characters stick out in my mind; people whose life I have made a difference to just by being there, but equally they have had a huge impact on my life. I enjoyed the community spirit of being among friends for Christmas."

To find out more about volunteering at Crisis At Christmas email [ccvolunteering@crisis.org.uk](mailto:ccvolunteering@crisis.org.uk) or apply online [www.crisis.org.uk/volunteering](http://www.crisis.org.uk/volunteering). ■



## Let us further your career

ABDO College provides comprehensive education for dispensing opticians and is currently accepting applications for a range of different courses. Some of the reasons why you should make ABDO College your first choice to either start or further your career in optics are:

- An extensive range of courses to suit your individual needs
- Dedicated and experienced academic staff
- Friendly and supportive learning environment
- Consistently high theory and practical examination results
- Helpful course tutors
- Vibrant and positive attitude towards students
- Committed to the furtherance of the optical profession

### Access Courses

#### An opportunity towards a career as a dispensing optician

ABDO College's Access Courses are designed to help prospective dispensing optician students to meet the necessary entry requirements. They are also a useful refresher for those who have been out of education for some time. The entry requirements for the Fellowship Dispensing Diploma (FBDI) and ABDO College Foundation Degree/ BSc (Hons) Course are five GCSEs at grade C or above, which must include English, mathematics and a science. Each access course is considered the equivalent of one GCSE. The access courses are available in the five key subjects of English, Mathematics, Optics and Dispensing, Human Biology and General Science.

- Courses commence: February 2011
- Method: Distance learning
- Entry requirements: Candidates should ideally be educated to GCSE standard and possibly have already attained some of the GCSEs required for enrolment to dispensing courses
- Duration: Approximately 20 weeks

**Application deadline:**  
**21 January 2011**

### 2010 Winter Revision Courses

#### An ideal way to prepare for your forthcoming examinations

ABDO College will once again be offering its popular revision courses this winter to help students prepare for the ABDO examinations. Half day sessions will be offered in the theory subjects, the four final dispensing practical elements and the three theory contact lens subjects. A one day course is offered for POE (1st year) and Contact Lens practical revision. If you are taking any of these exams this winter these courses are for you. All revision courses will be held at ABDO College, Godmersham, Kent.

- Courses will take place week commencing 22 November 2010
- Method: Half day or full day tuition
- Costs: Half courses £60, full day courses £120
- Lunch is provided with full day courses and when two half day courses are taken on the same day
- All courses are subject to minimum numbers
- Overnight accommodation can be provided if required

**Application deadline:**  
**4 November 2010**

### Low Vision Honours Course

#### An opportunity to further your professional career

The job satisfaction you get from working in low vision is arguably greater than in any other area of dispensing practice. You can begin a consultation talking to a patient who is frightened and depressed and end it with that same person being ready to go out and face the world again. If you really want to help people, this course could definitely be for you. This interesting and popular honours course includes both theory and practical aspects of low vision consultation that fully prepares students for the FBDI (Hons) LV examinations. Distance learning assignments are complemented by a short block release at ABDO College to reinforce practical skills and routine.

- Course commences: January 2011
- Method: Blended learning
- Entry requirements: Fellowship Diploma and GOC registration
- Duration: Approximately 27 weeks
- Block release accommodation can be provided

**Application deadline:**  
**17 December 2010**

For further information and application forms for these and other courses please contact DLJ at ABDO College on 01227 733 921 or email [info@abdocollege.org.uk](mailto:info@abdocollege.org.uk).

## Disjointed jottings from a DO's desk . . .

The good thing about growing seniority is that the young think you are not young enough to know everything, and the old think you still have much to learn, writes Chris Hunt

# Customer evaporation is a very slow leak



Chris Hunt

In my case, if I had known as a younger man what I know now, I would have made all the same mistakes – but much sooner. However, what also comes with age, is the ability to see things emerging that you have seen before – often dressed up in a different guise but nonetheless, the same core issues. A case in point is the recent lengthy debate regarding whether or not prescribing optometrists should be facilitating the purchase of spectacles via the internet by freely giving the customer's PD measurement as part of the refraction details.

My early years in practice included a lengthy spell in a central London location, which had no sight testing facilities and was totally reliant on 'walk-ins'; principally private patients from the ophthalmologists working in nearby Harley Street. All of the prescriptions issued at that time contained a diagram showing axis notation, the refractive prescription, visual acuities, the patient's PD and when necessary (because of high powers) the back vertex distance. Of course, the patient had paid handsomely for the services of the oculist but was now free to choose where to purchase their spectacles. Competition for those patients was fierce. From our practice window alone, we could see at least three other practices all working under the same structure.

Because we did not have a captive source of patients, the service emphasis was totally focused on

ensuring that those patients we did have received top drawer treatment. Our task was to see that they left our premises so impressed with our service, that they would willingly become the practice's natural ambassadors amongst their acquaintances. At that time, under GOC rules, there were strict regulations on advertising – so much so, that all practices were almost solely dependent on word-of-mouth referral. It was in that environment, working alongside my older and more experienced peers, that I first learned the science of people skills and the significant intrinsic value this has in the purchasing process. Our patients' prescriptions contained all the information they needed to have their spectacles dispensed where they chose; our task was to make sure that they never wanted to go anywhere else other than our practice.

### Focus on patient experience

Later in life, I went on to manage an enormous practice where the eye examinations were executed on the premises by a team of ophthalmic medical practitioners and ophthalmologists, many of them local hospital consultants. With two consulting rooms operating flat out every day and 20-minute intervals for the examination, it was a far cry from my London experiences. It was whilst I was managing this practice that a patient wrote to the local family practitioner committee (FPC), as they were known then, complaining that Mr X had performed the most cursory of

eye examinations, which was only 10 minutes in duration, giving her no time to remove her coat. The FPC duly wrote to the specialist concerned, enclosing the patient's letter of complaint and informing him that they wished to send an observer to sit in during one of his clinic days. The specialist's reply was short and succinct, sending them an open invitation to observe that, "Five minutes of the ten minutes is always wasted in idle chit chat". Of course, they never came.

It was in this environment, that I learned first-hand just how much the patient's experience in the consulting room can impact not only on their later purchasing decisions but also the lasting impression they retain regarding the overall service of the practice. At least in the London situation, if the oculist had upset the patient it might have made them seek another oculist for the future, but it still gave our practice the chance to win their spectacle purchasing loyalty. In the practice where the eye examinations were executed on the premises (by non employees), the dangers of the whole process not being executed with the same degree of 'personalisation' were all too obvious.

In fairness to the specialist concerned, his eye examinations were no less thorough than many of his peers' and his record-keeping was meticulous. The numbers of non-tolerances to his prescribing were so infrequent that they would not warrant mention, but



# Book review

his curt manner did not leave his patients with a good feeling – they tolerated him because they appreciated his skills. It was perhaps just coincidental that many of his patients were themselves frequently curt and intransigent – like attracting like perhaps?

## Realistic business view

I have related these experiences because, whilst I understand the fears that the availability of spectacles on the internet might have for the High Street practice, the presence of the patient's PD on a prescription does not in itself pose the most major of threats. Many manufacturers already supply this information on the patient guarantee cards that accompany progressive lenses. The real contributing factor to patient (customer) losses is the experiences gained when they encounter your service and the quality of the personalisation of that service. This is something the internet supplier could never match; although that said, some of the call centres are becoming extremely skilled in personalising transactions.

Computer technology will soon circumvent the optician for the measuring of a PD for internet spectacle purchases so that need is only a question of time. However, the need to analyse and address why new customers do not see your practice as first choice, or why others slowly drift away is, of necessity, a matter for circular and brutally truthful self-appraisal. Of course, one can be blasé about such losses and many practitioners are, but they ultimately end up too expensive for most businesses to employ. So, if customer evaporation is a topic of conversation in your business, one thing is for sure – to include the PD or not to include it may be the topical question, but it is neither the major threat nor the ultimate solution to bunging up those leaks.

**Chris Hunt MBA, FBDO, FinstSMM is a strategic development consultant. He is also senior vice president of the Association of Optometrists and serves as a senior assistant on the Court of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers. Email [huntconsulting@btinternet.com](mailto:huntconsulting@btinternet.com) ■**

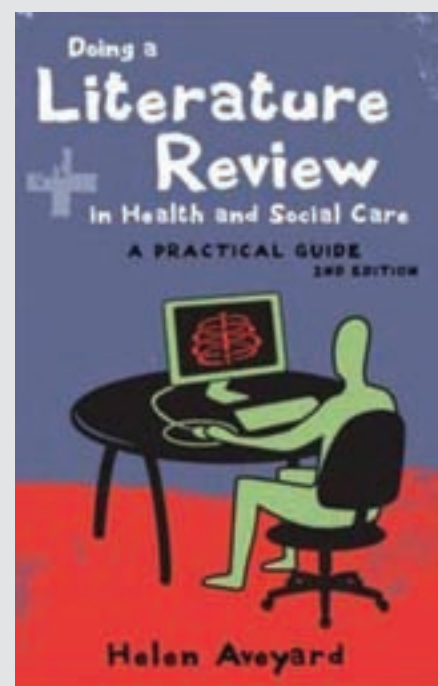
## Doing a Literature Review in Health and Social Care: A Practical Guide Second edition

By Helen Aveyard, published by Open University Press (2010), ISBN 9780335238859, £18

This useful little book explains, step-by-step, how to tackle a literature review. The first chapter includes an overview of what literature reviews are, and why they are needed in health and social care (including historical instances of when they would have proved useful). Starting from the background reasons for undertaking a literature review, the book moves through the development of a research question, followed by explanations of valid methods of searching databases for suitable information. Following this is a chapter outlining how to evaluate the information uncovered.

One of the tricky parts of a literature review is appraising the wealth of information that can be found, and one chapter is devoted to clear guidance on structuring a sensible approach to this. This leads on to a chapter, which suggests concisely how to structure and present the final work. Each chapter finishes with 'top tips' and 'key points' to consolidate the information given – always a useful revision tool particularly when processing a great deal of information.

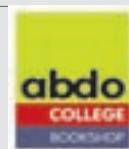
The book is easy to read and free of jargon and, with comprehensive contents and index pages, can be



quickly referred to when needed. The suggestion in the title that it is a 'practical guide' is absolutely accurate. It would be an invaluable reference for anyone undertaking a literature review for the first time.

**Reviewed by Rowena Shipley FBDO (Hons) CL, contact lens optician, distance learning tutor and courses co-ordinator for ABDO College. ■**

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## CET answers: The measurement of spectacle lens power - part two

by Professor Mo Jalie

1. When measuring a spherical bifocal lens whose segment lies on the convex surface, the focimeter gave the following readings:
- |   |                |            |
|---|----------------|------------|
| concave surface in contact with focimeter support | Distance -6.00 | Near -4.25 |
| convex surface in contact with focimeter support  | Distance -5.87 | Near -4.37 |

What is the correct specification for the lens?

- a. -6.00 Add +1.75      b. -6.00 Add +1.50      c. -6.00 Add +1.62      d. -5.87 Add +1.62

**b is the correct answer.** The DP power is measured with the concave surface in contact with the focimeter support. In this case, where the segment is on the convex surface, the addition must be measured from the difference between the DP and NP readings when the convex surface is in contact with the focimeter support.

2. When measuring a bifocal lens whose segment lies on the convex surface, the following readings were obtained from the focimeter:
- |   |                |                       |
|---|----------------|-----------------------|
| concave surface in contact with support | Distance +4.00 | focal lines along 165 |
|   | +2.25          | focal lines along 75  |
| convex surface in contact with support  | Distance +3.87 | focal lines along 165 |
|   | +2.12          | focal lines along 75  |
|   | Near +5.75     | focal lines along 165 |
|   | +4.12          | focal lines along 75  |

What is the correct specification for the lens?

- a. +4.00/-1.75 x 75 Add +1.75      b. +3.87/-1.75 x 75 Add +1.75  
c. +4.00/-1.75 x 75 Add +1.87      d. +4.00/-1.75 x 75 Add +2.00

(See Part one)

**d is the correct answer.** See comment for Q1 and remember that the focal lines nearer to the vertical should be used for checking astigmatic powers as stated in Part One of this paper.

3. When dispensing the prescription -4.00 Add +2.00 in bifocal form, the best optical performance will be obtained in the near portion when the segment is:

- a. situated on the concave surface of the lens  
b. situated on the convex surface of the lens  
c. partially buried within the lens (as with a fused bifocal)  
d. it does not matter which surface incorporates the segment

**a is the correct answer.** The segment should be on the convex surface for plus prescriptions and the concave surface for minus prescriptions.

4. When a plus spherical lens is tilted about the 180 meridian the effect obtained is:

- a. increase in sphere power and the introduction of plus cylinder with axis at 90  
b. decrease in sphere power and the introduction of plus cylinder with axis at 180  
c. increase in sphere power and the introduction of a plus cylinder with axis at 180  
d. decrease in sphere power and the introduction of a plus cylinder with axis at 90

**c is the correct answer.** A plus lens tilted about the 180 meridian produces a small increase in sphere power ( $F_{SPH} = F(1 + \sin^2\theta/2n)$ ), and a plus cylinder ( $F_{CYL} = F_{SPH} \tan^2\theta$ ), whose axis is at 180.

5. When a minus spherical lens is tilted about the 90 meridian the effect obtained is:

- a. increase in sphere power and the introduction of a plus cylinder with axis at 90  
b. decrease in sphere power and the introduction of a plus cylinder with axis at 180  
c. increase in sphere power and the introduction of a plus cylinder with axis at 180  
d. decrease in sphere power and the introduction of a plus cylinder with axis at 90

**c is the correct answer.** A minus lens tilted about the 180 meridian produces a small increase in sphere power ( $F_{SPH} = F(1 + \sin^2\theta/2n)$ ), and a minus cylinder ( $F_{CYL} = F_{SPH} \tan^2\theta$ ), whose axis is at 180.

6. The lens +5.00/-0.25 x 180 is tilted 10° about the 180 meridian. What effect does this have on the cylindrical power of the lens?

- a. there is no effect on the cylindrical power or its axis  
b. the cylinder axis changes by 90°  
c. the cylindrical power of the lens decreases  
d. the cylindrical power of the lens increases

**c is the correct answer.** The plus cylinder axis 180 which is introduced will tend to neutralize the -0.25 cylinder x 180 of the prescription.

7. The lens +5.00/-0.25 x 180 is tilted 10° about the 180 meridian. What effect does this have on the spherical power of the lens?

- a. there is no effect on the spherical power  
b. the spherical power increases very slightly  
c. the spherical power of the lens decreases  
d. the spherical power of the lens increases dramatically

**b is the correct answer.** See comment for Q4.

8. The lens +5.00/+0.25 x 90 is tilted 10° about the 180 meridian.

What effect does this have on the cylindrical power of the lens?

- a. there is no effect on the cylindrical power or its axis  
b. the cylinder axis changes by 90°  
c. the cylindrical power of the lens decreases  
d. the cylindrical power of the lens increases

**c is the correct answer.** The plus cylinder axis 180 which is introduced will combine with the +0.25 cylinder x 90 of the prescription to reduce the resultant cylinder power.

9. The lens +5.00/+0.25 x 90 is tilted 10° about the 180 meridian. What effect does this have on the spherical power of the lens?

- a. there is no effect on the spherical power  
b. the spherical power of the lens decreases  
c. the spherical power of the lens decreases by about +0.25D  
d. the spherical power of the lens increases by about +0.25D

**d is the correct answer.** See comment for Q8. If the tilt produces +0.25 DC x 180 it will combine with +0.25 DC x 90 to produce +0.25 DS.

10. When compensating for pantoscopic tilt in the case of a pair of single vision lenses intended for near vision use, the vertical position of the optical centres should be:

- a. 3mm down and 3mm in from the distance optical centre position  
b. one millimetre below the pupil centre for each 2° of pantoscopic angle  
c. two millimetres below the pupil centre for each 2° of pantoscopic angle  
d. 8mm down and 2mm inwards from the distance optical centre position

**b is the correct answer.** The centre of rotation condition is identical for both DV and NV – "lower the OC by 1mm for each 2° of pantoscopic tilt".

11. Which of the following benefits have become possible through freeform technology?

- a. progressive lenses with zero surface astigmatism  
b. aspheric lenses with zero surface astigmatism  
c. single vision lenses optimised for vision at any given distance in front of the lens  
d. single vision lenses optimised for vision at all distances in front of the lens

**c is the correct answer.** The form of the lens can be optimised for the working distance. For spherical lenses, the best form for NV is about 2.00 D shallower than the best form for DV.

12. The chief advantage of freeform technology when used to make progressive lenses is that:

- a. aberrational astigmatism can be completely eliminated for all zones of the lens  
b. the progressive surface can be worked on the concave surface of the lens  
c. coma can be completely eliminated for all zones of the lens  
d. an aberration pattern such as that depicted in Figure 9a can be achieved for all prescriptions

**d is the correct answer.** The progressive surface design can be optimised by an atoric prescription surface to produce virtually the same iso-cylinder plot for all prescriptions.

# Diary of events

## November

**BCLA** - Basic workshops: 1<sup>st</sup>, Multifocal contact lens fitting workshop with Susan Bowers; 2<sup>nd</sup>, Basic soft toric contact lens fitting workshop with Keith Cavaye; 4<sup>th</sup>, Basic gas permeable contact lens fitting workshop with Keith Tempny, BCLA office, London, 4 CL CET points. To book a place, email [events@bcla.org.uk](mailto:events@bcla.org.uk) or telephone 0207 580 6661.

## November

**Sight Care** - 'Market for results', Bristol 8<sup>th</sup>, London 9<sup>th</sup>, Manchester 10<sup>th</sup>, Newcastle 11<sup>th</sup>, Birmingham 12<sup>th</sup>, Belfast 15<sup>th</sup>, Scotland 17<sup>th</sup>. 'Confident frame styling, adjustments, dispensing and collection', 7 CET points, Belfast 16<sup>th</sup>, Scotland 18<sup>th</sup>, Bristol 22<sup>nd</sup>, London 23<sup>rd</sup>, Manchester 24<sup>th</sup>, Newcastle 25<sup>th</sup>, Birmingham 26<sup>th</sup>. For further details visit [www.sightcare.co.uk](http://www.sightcare.co.uk)

## November 2

**Area 12 (Scotland)** - Lectures by Jordan McLeod from Adidas Eyewear and Kevin Gutsell from Nikon Optical, and Giles Kenyon will represent Ebony Eyewear, Two Bridges, South Queensferry. For further details email [Brenda.Rennie@f2s.com](mailto:Brenda.Rennie@f2s.com)

## November 7

**Area 11 (London)** - AGM and CET Day, speakers include Andy Clark and Julian Wiles, mini exhibition, and CET points, starts 9.10am, Holiday Inn Bloomsbury, Coram Street, London WC1N. Book online at [www.abdo.org.uk](http://www.abdo.org.uk) in the events section or contact [hishumonji@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hishumonji@yahoo.co.uk)

## November 11

**Optrafair Masterclass** - Secrets of Successful Exhibiting: the Optrafair 2011 Masterclass for those planning how to maximise their investment in next April's NEC show, at the NEC, Birmingham, £75 + vat for FMO members and £95 + vat for non-FMO members, both including buffet lunch. For further details contact the FMO on 020 7298 5123

## November 23

**Area 9 (South East)** - CET event, 'The FBDO route to registration and skills to keep you registered' by Alicia Thompson, ABDO's Director of Examinations and 'Trivex: Making life simpler' by Julian Wiles from Younger Optics who are sponsoring the meeting, buffet at 18.30pm, first

speaker at 19.00pm, The Europa Hotel, Balcombe Road, Maidenbower, Crawley, RH10 7ZR. All members of the Association from Area 9 and surrounding Areas are extremely welcome. Area 9 is quite central with convenient transport links from West Kent, South London and South/West M25. To book your place email [abdoarea9@gmail.com](mailto:abdoarea9@gmail.com) or [kevin.gutsell@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kevin.gutsell@yahoo.co.uk) as places are limited

## November 23

**BCLA** - 7th BCLA Pioneers Conference to be delivered by Lyndon Jones, free for BCLA members, 12.30-7.30pm, Royal Society of Medicine, London. To book a place, email [events@bcla.org.uk](mailto:events@bcla.org.uk) or telephone 0207 580 6661.

## November 24

**ABDO Graduation Ceremony** Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury, Kent

## November 27/28

**Identity Optical Training** - ABDO Final Year Practical Exam Revision Courses (old syllabus), London: 27<sup>th</sup> Section 2 10am-5pm, 28<sup>th</sup> Section 4 11am-5pm, £75 per day, £40 per half day. For further details phone Sally Bates on 020 8504 0967 or email [sal\\_bates@hotmail.com](mailto:sal_bates@hotmail.com)

## November 28

**Area 2 (North East)** - Annual CET Day, exhibition, AGM, Village Hotel Leeds North. For further details email Emma Ward at [cetsunday@hotmail.com](mailto:cetsunday@hotmail.com)

## December

**Identity Optical Training** - ABDO Final Year (FQE) Practical Exam Revision Courses (new syllabus), London: 3<sup>rd</sup>, Section C prescription analysis, Section F completion of the logbook; 4<sup>th</sup>, Section B frame fitting and special optical appliances, Section D abnormal ocular conditions; £70 per day, £40 per half day. ABDO Final Year (FQE) Mock Practical Exams, London: 12<sup>th</sup>, Sections B, C and F, £75 per section. For further details phone Sally Bates on 020 8504 0967 or email [sal\\_bates@hotmail.com](mailto:sal_bates@hotmail.com)

## December 1

**Area 3 (North West and Isle of Man)** - AGM and CET Evening, Thistle Hotel, Haydock, hosted by Rodenstock, buffet, £5. If you have transport problems contact Richard Morris by email, [rs.morris@btopenworld.com](mailto:rs.morris@btopenworld.com). ■

## dispensingoptics

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ABDO members are welcome to attend Area meetings in any area they wish



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