

Updated 16 March 2010

ADVICE & GUIDELINES ON PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR DISPENSING OPTICIANS

APPENDIX A [1] - GOC CODES OF CONDUCT

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR INDIVIDUAL REGISTRANTS

CODES OF CONDUCT FOR INDIVIDUAL REGISTRANTS and CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BUSINESS REGISTRANTS

Select [this link to view](#) the GOC current Codes of Conduct.

INTRODUCTION (updated 16 March 2010)

~~Patients (including customers) must be able to trust optometrists and dispensing opticians with their well being. To justify that trust, professionals have a duty to maintain a good standard of practice and care and to show respect for all aspects of human life.~~

~~In all matters, a practitioner must never discriminate unfairly against patients or colleagues and must always be prepared to justify his or her actions.~~

~~This document describes principles of good practice in professional conduct and standards and sets out the framework of conduct expected in all aspects of professional work. The principles are linked to the values which have been agreed by healthcare professionals to be common to each profession.~~

~~Failure to comply with the duties and responsibilities set out in the Code may put registration at risk.~~

~~The GOC recognises that other bodies have issued detailed guidance with regard to the matters covered in this Code. Practitioners are expected therefore to be familiar with the relevant guidance and advice issued by other organisations and, in particular, that of the professional and representative bodies. Reference may be made by the GOC to the guidance and advice of other bodies in the exercise of its functions. In addition, the GOC may from time to time supplement the Code with guidance on specific matters.~~

THE CODE

A registered optometrist or dispensing optician must:

- ~~1. make the care of the patient his or her first and continuing concern;~~
- ~~2. treat every patient politely and considerately;~~
- ~~3. respect patients' dignity and privacy;~~
- ~~4. listen to patients and respect their views;~~
- ~~5. give patients information in a way they can understand and make them aware of the options available;~~
- ~~6. maintain adequate patients' records;~~

- ~~7. respect the rights of patients to be fully involved in decisions about their care;~~
- ~~8. keep professional knowledge and skills up to date;~~
- ~~9. recognise the limits of his or her professional competence;~~
- ~~10. be honest and trustworthy;~~
- ~~11. ensure that financial and commercial dealings do not compromise the interests of the patient;~~
- ~~12. respect and protect confidential information;~~
- ~~13. make sure that personal beliefs do not prejudice patient care;~~
- ~~14. act quickly to protect patients from risk where there is good reason to believe that he or she, or a colleague, may not be fit to practise;~~
- ~~15. avoid abusing his or her position as an optometrist or a dispensing optician;~~
- ~~16. work with colleagues in the ways that best serve patients' interests;~~
- ~~17. register with and maintain registration with the GOC.~~

~~Dated the 30 day of June 2005~~

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BUSINESS REGISTRANTS

INTRODUCTION

This document describes principles of good practice in professional conduct and standards and sets out a framework of conduct expected of business registrants.

The Code supports and should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants and such other guidance as is issued by the GOC from time to time.

The Code is not exhaustive. The GOC expects business registrants to be aware of relevant guidance and advice issued by other organisations and in particular that of professional and representative bodies.

The duties and responsibilities of Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians registered with GOC are set out in the GOC's Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants.

Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians, regardless of whether they are employed or self-employed, are individually responsible for acting at all times in the best interests of their patients and for delivering clinical practice which complies with the GOC's competencies for their profession.

In support of, but in no way lessening this individual responsibility, business registrants employing or otherwise engaging Optometrists, Dispensing Opticians and other clinical professionals in the delivery of optical services play an essential part in maintaining standards and protecting the public. In particular, business registrants fulfill a key role in supplying the infrastructure which supports clinical practice; providing essential support to recruitment and professional training, including the provision and delivery of continuing education and training; maintaining and enhancing standards in clinical and corporate governance; and in creating an appropriate working environment in which practitioners enjoy clinical freedom.

THE CODE

Business registrants play an integral part in the provision of optical services and products to the public. Patients, consumers and professionals must be able to trust business registrants to maintain and support a good standard of clinical practice and care.

To justify that trust, a business registrant will take reasonable and proportionate steps to

1. ensure that each person who undertakes activities regulated by the Opticians Act does so in accordance with the Act;
2. require as a condition of employment or engagement that those individual registrants currently employed or otherwise engaged to provide optical services comply with the GOC's Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants;
3. not knowingly act in a way which might contribute to or cause a breach of the Code of Conduct for Individual Registrants by any individual registrant employed or otherwise engaged by it to provide optical services;
4. ensure that individual registrants are always able freely to exercise their professional judgement in the best interests of patients;

- ~~5. provide a system for the proper maintenance of patient records;~~
- ~~6. respect and protect confidential information for both patients and employees in accordance with current legislation;~~
- ~~7. ensure that any advertising or publicity complies with appropriate advertising codes of practice;~~
- ~~8. provide mechanisms to enable those that work for or are otherwise engaged by the business registrant to raise concerns about risks to patients;~~
- ~~9. protect patients if it has good reason to believe that an individual registrant may not be fit to practise;~~
- ~~10. ensure that the criteria enshrined in this code are applied as may be appropriate to registered medical practitioners in relation to the GMC and any other relevant codes and guidance~~

~~Dated the 30 day of June 2005~~