

Goal:

To ensure Saskatchewan optometrists remain in the forefront of Canadian optometric practice - recognizing that current optometric training and competencies include diagnosing, treating, and managing glaucoma, and prescribing oral medications for the treatment of eye disease.

Mandate:

In 2015 (June 3 - 5 and October 15-17) the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists (SAO) authorized the development and delivery of an “Advanced Scope of Practice Certification Course” offered by the University of Waterloo. The Advanced Scope of Practice Certification Course supports national initiatives ensuring Canadian optometrists are providing patient care that reflects current training and competencies and was designed to prepare Saskatchewan Association of Optometrist (SAO) members for changes to scope of practice. Scope of practice changes would allow optometrists licensed in Saskatchewan to diagnose, treat and manage glaucoma, and prescribe oral medications for the treatment of eye disease.

Membership:

SAO members who do not obtain certification at the 2015 Saskatchewan Scope of Practice Certification Courses will be required to obtain similar certification prior to applying for their 2017 licence renewal. Until such time as members have successfully completed an “Advanced Scope of Practice Certification Course” they will only be allowed to practice at their current therapeutic level until proof of certification is forwarded to the Registrar. Any member who has not produced proof of successfully completing an Advanced Scope of Practice Certification Course by December 15, 2016 will not be eligible for or issued a 2017 license renewal.

Optometrists who graduated from an accredited School of Optometry after January 1, 2015 will automatically be granted “Advanced Scope of Practice Certification”. Optometrists successfully passing the Canadian Assessment of Canadian Optometry (CACO) or its equivalent in 2012, 2013 or 2014 were not required to attend the course lectures and were allowed to challenge the examination after paying examination fees of 200 dollars. New applicants to the SAO who meet all requirements for licensure and have graduated from an accredited School of Optometry prior to 2012, are required to obtain certification equivalent to the “Advanced Scope of Practice Certification Course”, prior to their second optometric license renewal.

Advanced Scope Accreditation Course Specifics:

- Two Continuing Education Courses were held: June 4 - 6 and October 15 -17, 2015.
- Pre-reading and a pre-lecture materials and assignments were made available and upon completion, members were provided 7 TPA continuing education hours upon submitting a signed affidavit and the assignment prior to the specified deadline.
- The Advanced Scope of Practice Accreditation course provided 16 hours of live lectures followed by a 2 hour examination of 50 multiple choice questions, for a total of 18 hours designated as TPA.
- Alcon Canada supplied an on-line and print study guide.
- Participants were allowed up to a maximum of 2 hours to complete the examination.

- Passing mark was 70%.
- Those participants who were unsuccessful in the spring session were invited to re-write the examination and attend the October lectures at no additional cost. Additional CE hours were not granted for attending the course a second time.
- Following the examination, the examination booklets were destroyed and the examinations sent to the University of Waterloo for marking. A listing of the participants, marks and certificates were forwarded to the SAO office for distribution.
- A cover letter from the Registrar was provided to the participants with the official Advanced Scope of Practice Accreditation certificates.
- Members who were unsuccessful received written notice and were reminded of the deadline to obtain similar, approved accreditation for their 2017 license renewal.