

OPTIFORUM

OCTOBER 2022 EDITION



SAOA

South African Optometrist Association

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	FOREWORD	18	FLOODS DEVASTATE OPTOMETRIC PRACTICE
4	SAOA THEME 2022	18	TRIBUTES TO THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED
5	PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES	19	TELE-OPTOMETRY
6	THE SAOA BOARD	19	SAOA SUPPORT OF TELEMEDICINE IN OPTOMETRY
6	INTRODUCTION	20	LOVE YOUR EYES: CONTINUED
7	ETHICS AND TRANSFORMATION	20	ADMINISTRATION ACCREDITATION FRAMEWORK
8	EYE CARE AWARENESS: 2022	21	SCATHING RULING, LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC,
9	SAOA AWARDEES	21	SAFETY PRECAUTIONS
10	THE SAOA BOARD: ELECTIONS	22	SAOA WEBINAR SERIES: 2022
11	EDUCATION AND CLINICAL STANDARDS	23	WHY BECOME A MEMBER
12	MARKETING	24	MEDICAL MALPRACTICE INSURANCE
13	PRIVATE PRACTICE	25	PARTNERS
13	CODING COMMITTEE	26	G STUDIO BRANDING AGENCY
14	ETHICS COMMITTEE	27	ETHICS CORNER
15	PUBLIC HEALTH	28	INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES
16	SPECIAL PROJECTS	28	CONCLUSIONS
17	OFFICE OF SAOA OMBUDSPERSON		



FOREWORD

The Optiforum, published biannually, is to be regarded as an official mouthpiece of the SAOA, presented as a compendium of news, views and reviews, which are relevant to the professions of optometry and dispensing opticianry.

Importantly, the Optiforum is also made available to our partners and stakeholders with whom we regularly engage and whom we thank for their continued support.





OPTOMETRY AND DISPENSING OPTICIANRY – THE PRIMARY EYE CARE PROFESSIONS

The concept of Primary Health Care (PHC) has been repeatedly reinterpreted and redefined in the years since 1978, leading to confusion about the term and its practice. A clear and simple definition has been developed to facilitate the coordination of future PHC efforts at the global, national, and local levels and to guide their implementation:

“PHC is a whole-of-society approach to health that aims at ensuring the highest possible level of health and well-being and their equitable distribution by focusing on people’s needs and as early as possible along the continuum from health promotion and disease prevention to treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care, and as close as feasible to people’s everyday environment.”(WHO and UNICEF. A vision for primary health care in the 21st century: Towards UHC and the SDGs).

From the perspective of the SAOA, all activities introduced during the course of the past six months are underpinned by this theme, encouraging members of the public to undergo regular eye examinations, and SAOA members to embrace their full scope.

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVES

Greetings, Colleagues, members of the supplier industry, members of schemes, regulatory bodies and other stakeholders within our great Professions of Optometry and Dispensing Opticianry. We, once more, are excited and humbled to have an opportunity to present this Optiforum, as a half year look back into 2022. As always, the SAOA has been inundated and hard at work for the advancement of our scopes, the autonomy to practice our craft with the rights and freedoms deserved and reserved, as well as the recognition of the overwhelming importance of Eyecare, Vision and eye health in our daily lives, as we unite under the SAOA 2022 Theme **'Optometry: THE Primary Eye Care Profession'**.

Looking back at the past 6 months, the country saw devastating natural disasters in the province of KZN, with torrential rainfalls that affected roads, houses, malls which included Optometry practices and also sadly human lives. Our members in KZN, who were adversely affected, remain in our thoughts and our resources have been made available to assist where possible. The unfortunate War in the East has also affected the economy of our country where costs of goods, petrol and livelihood have increased; this has a general bearing on the health sector in that prices are published in January and to be implementable for the rest of the year. The burden of loadshedding has not only affected the profitability of practices but has also brought an unnecessary and unwarranted strain on Optometry Practices, government eye clinics and other places, where provision of eye care services have been disrupted.

The past 6 months have also been very unkind to the profession, with many lives lost, we started January with the burial of our North West Regional Representative, the late Edward Machuba, and continued to lose members thereafter. On the 18th of April, Easter Monday, the entire SAOA and the profession were devastated by the news of the passing of Mr Lucky Nkosi. The late Lucky was our Membership Liaison Manager. We further lost members of the profession and continue to wish strength to all their families. May these members, our soldiers, rest in eternal peace. For their part in the advancement of our professions, given what they could, we will honour their memory by continuing to carry the baton forward and upward.

The activities of the SAOA continue - The Marketing committee in advertising all relevant information on WhatsApp groups, emails newsflashes and social media;

The Education and Clinical Standard Committee, once more is leading the delivery of world class Webinars under our theme **'Optometry: THE Primary Eye Care Profession'**; The Private Practice Committee continues to engage all relevant stakeholders including schemes to ensure full recognition of our scopes; The Public Health Committee leads with public awareness campaigns; Special Project Committee with Codes and Dispensing Opticians scope practice and protection; and lastly, but not least, the Finance Committee, that has excellently ensured that the SAOA has a good looking balance sheet.

We can guarantee that, as we did during the height of the Covid 19 pandemic, at our darkest and weakest hours, our home of Optometry and Dispensing Opticianry, the SAOA will forever be with and for us. While the past half of the year may have been not as expected, and at times sad and painful, we know that the darkest hour is before dawn, that we have already seen some rays of the sun. Our next half of the year, the SAOA will continue to work tirelessly for all our members, to ensure that indeed 'Optometry is the primary eyecare provider'

On behalf of the SAOA Board, I wish you all well and to be safe.



DOLLARS BOLOKA

SAOA President

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO



HARRY ROSEN

"Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort"- Paul J Meyer

INTRODUCTION

Having just entered the third quarter of the 2022 calendar year, the past few months are to be considered in two parts:

1. The overall performance of the SAOA
2. The personal tragedies that have impacted on the SAOA and professions of optometry and dispensing opticianry, in general, subsequent to the AGM held in February 2022.

The year 2022 began with much enthusiasm and ambitious intention, borrowing the attributes of the tiger, in accordance with the Chinese almanac (Year of the Tiger), which include ambition and vigour.

The AGM was the appropriate platform to pay respects to those who had fallen during the preceding year. In addition, reports presented highlighted some of the hardships experienced by practitioners which included the loss of loved ones due to Covid, financial challenges at practice level (also due to the pandemic), the impact of looting that took place in July (primarily KZN and Gauteng), amongst others. As with the advent of Covid, there was nothing to prepare us for the events which followed subsequent to our AGM held on 19 February 2022, which include the floods in KZN, the passing of practitioners and, of course, the unexpected and sudden loss of our Membership Liaison Manager, Lucky Nkosi.

Incredibly, through the various levels of turmoil and disruptiveness, the SAOA has remained strong and steadfast. We have continued to operate, in general, in accordance with our plans, address key issues and have advocated for change, where applicable. Nevertheless, and understandably, there are certain areas where there have been delays and loss of focus.

KEY FACTORS: SUMMARY

The following represent key factors and/or actions that have characterised the SAOA operations, year to date.

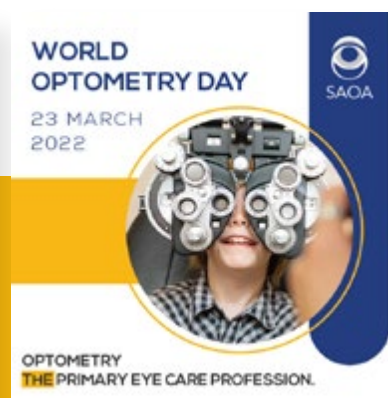
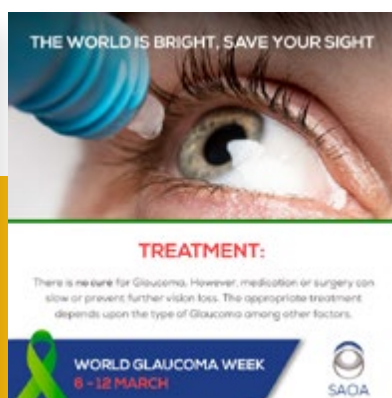
1. **Advocacy** – continued extensive engagement with key stakeholders including Department of Health, regulatory authorities, medical schemes and administrators, other health care professions and associations and NGO's.
2. **African Council of Optometry** - Withdrawal from the AFCA Board and Secretariat.
3. **Annual General Meeting** held on 19 February 2022.
4. **Awards** in recognition of individual exemplary effort.
5. **Centennial Celebrations:** Planning.
6. **Certificate of Need** declared invalid and unconstitutional.
7. Complaints lodged against OSSA President with HPCSA for casting aspersions relating to skills and probity of optometrists (with specific reference to the expanded scope).
8. Complaints lodged against practicing ophthalmologists for casting aspersions, on a public platform, regarding the value of optometric services.
9. Despite (7) and (8) above, engagement with OSSA continues to address matters of common interest (co management, etc), with **invitation to meet extended to OSSA, accepted.**
10. Covid related regulations: Response and Position
11. **Driver Certificates:** Continued engagement with Road Traffic Management Corporation and Department of Transport re online system for the issue of driver licences in the future.
12. **Ethics Committee:** Composition change
13. **Financial Performance:** The SAOA is financially stable with assets that exceed all previous years.
14. **Limited Administration Accreditation Framework:** Response in support of draft by CMS.
15. **Marketing activities** introduced regularly and consistently.
16. **Membership Liaison Manager:** Passing of Lucky Nkosi - Memorial.
17. **National Department of Health** – Letter to Director General of Health, highlighting key issues.
18. **National Department of Health** – Invitation to Minister to meet.
19. **Membership in Good Standing** – the driving force of the SAOA.
20. **Netcare Plus Optometric Network:** SAOA Position.
21. **Ombudsperson:** Change in Office of Deputy.
22. **OSSA:** Invitation to engage accepted.
23. **Prescribed Minimum Benefits:** Ongoing process.
24. **Public Health Forum** – Comprising entities actively involved in the public eye health space. Well supported.
25. **Public Health Initiatives** – screenings and education.
26. **Physiotherapy Society:** we have provided a letter of support to the Physiotherapy Society relating to their actions opposing Section 59 of the Medical Schemes Act.
27. **PBODO** – Pending matters including online sale of optical devices, Dispensing Opticianry (scope), NGO's, Mobile practices to accommodate community projects, amongst others.
28. **Succession Planning** – Replacement of Membership Liaison Manager.
29. **Webinar programme 2022**

EYE CARE AWARENESS: 2022

The past two years have been exceptionally challenging in the face of a global pandemic, bringing with it uncertainty on so many levels in terms of the physical and mental health of individuals as well as the economic health of our country.

Whilst we strive to recoup and bring our best to help the country recover economically, an unspoken challenge that goes unnoticed is the plight of the 1 in 7 people globally who are need of eye/vision care. There are approximately 1.1 billion people around the world living with vision loss due to ignorance, or because they do not have access to basic eye care services, of which 91 million of this number represents children.

There is an ethical obligation to raise awareness regarding the importance of regular eye health and vision examinations amongst the public, with particular reference to the prevention and treatment of avoidable blindness. The SAOA assumes this responsibility on behalf its members throughout the year.



SAOA AWARDEES

Honorary Memberships for 2022 were granted, and awards presented by the SAOA President at the SAOA Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 19 February 2022.

Honorary Memberships for 2022 were presented to the Heads of Departments at the various academic institutions to the following persons.

Prof Tuwani Rasengane – Free State (UFS)
Dr Ingrid Metsing – University of Johannesburg (UJ)
Ms Angelique Hendricks – Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).
Dr Velibanti Sukati – University of Limpopo
Dr Naimah Ebrahim Khan – University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN)

The following awards were presented:

President's Discretionary Award to Prof Percy Mashige

In recognition of academic achievement within the field of Optometry and exemplary service to the SAOA, over time.

Distinguished Service awarded Mr Brian Sneag

In recognition of outstanding service to the SA Optometric Association and ongoing commitment to the profession of Optometry

Distinguished Service Award to Prof Alan Rubin

In recognition of exceptional and meritorious conduct in the rendering of services to the South African Optometric Association and, the profession of Optometry, over time.

Certificate of Appreciation to Dr Unben Pillay (ASAIPA)

In recognition of exceptional and exemplary services rendered to the South African Optometric Association and the profession, with particular reference to the role played by Dr Pillay in the roll out of Covid 19 vaccinations to optometrists and dispensing opticians.

Certificate of Appreciation to Ms Liezel Kotze (Coper Vision)

In recognition of exceptional and exemplary services rendered to the South African Optometric Association and the profession, over time

The efforts of the Awards Committee were acknowledged, namely Prof Tuwani Rasengane, Ms Zena Jacobson and Mr Chris Eksteen.

Recognition for Academic Excellence was presented to a student from each academic institution as nominated by the respective Heads of Department:

Cherise Prithipal (UKZN)
Hemani Bhika (UJ)
Precious Ndlovu (CPUT)
Kayla Gerber (UFS)
Eslitha Tshekisokefilwe Mocheko (UL)

Congratulations were extended to all award recipients by the SAOA President on behalf of the Board. Congratulations were also received from members in attendance.



President's Discretionary Award:
Professor Percy Mashige



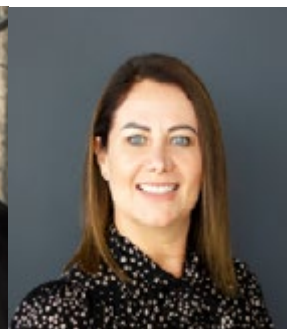
Distinguished Service Award:
Mr Brian Sneag



Distinguished Service Award:
Professor Alan Rubin



Certificate of Appreciation:
Dr Unben Pillay (ASAIPA)



Certificate of Appreciation:
Liezel Kotze (Cooper Vision)

THE SAOA BOARD: ELECTIONS

Raymond Mabaso, in his capacity as Electoral Officer, presented his report at the SAOA AGM on behalf of the Electoral Committee, comprising himself, the late Mr Lucky Nkosi and auditor, Mr Johan Leiding. In essence, there were 3 (three) vacant position positions on the Board due to the ending of the tenures of 3 (three) Directors.

3 (three) nominations had been received for members in good standing who were eligible to serve on the Board. With 3 vacancies and 3 nominations, there was no necessity for elections to be held.

The three nominees, Nivien Subramany (re-election), Bignocia Masinge and Martelie Burger were congratulated as they were successfully elected to the Board.



Nivien Subramany



Bignocia Masinge



Martelie Burger



SAOA STRUCTURE AND PORTFOLIOS

The structure of the SAOA has been instituted in accordance with its strategic intent, and to ensure the desired focus on identified strategically significant areas. To this end, SAOA directors assume responsibility for the strategic areas, termed portfolios, supported by committees and sub-committees. The CEO is mandated to oversee the management, implementation and orchestration of SAOA strategic plans, policies and SAOA affairs in general.

EDUCATION AND CLINICAL STANDARDS

The following are the core responsibilities of the Education and Clinical Standards Committee.

1. To ensure availability of Clinical Standards for all relevant optometric procedures
2. To collaborate closely with Coding Committee regarding development of procedural codes and related clinical standards.
3. To advocate for desired content within curricula of academic institutions
4. To establish relationships with academic institutions
5. To develop an annual CPD programme with proposed budgets
6. To liaise closely with marketing portfolio to ensure appropriate educational content incorporated within publicity material, website, etc.
7. To develop academic programme for SAOA HO CPD events (Not regional, unless requested)
8. To establish pool of credible speakers
9. To establish pool of expertise to address queries from public, health care providers, medical schemes, government etc.
10. Present report to board on quarterly basis



Casandra Seethal



Tuwani Rasengane



Solani Mathebula



Raymond Mabaso



Patrick Mawila

FINANCES

The following are the core responsibilities of the Finance Committee:

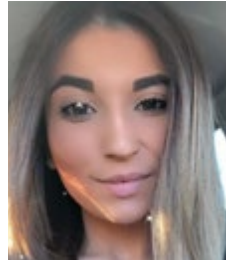
1. To ensure institution of policies and procedure regarding financial management of SAOA
2. To draft and propose budgets to board in collaboration with the CEO
3. To monitor actual income and expenditure in relation to budget on monthly basis
4. To effectively manage debtors and creditors
5. To provide monthly financial reports to the Executive Committee and Board to include income statement (profit and loss), cash flow report and age analysis with Members in Good standing Report.
6. To ensure appropriate financial controls
7. To approve expenditure within limits of authority as specified within SAOA policies.
8. To liaise with appointed auditors, when and where applicable
9. To present report to board on monthly basis
10. The Finance Committee is to assume responsibility for the orchestration of Budget design meetings in collaboration with each portfolio by end August each year to establish plans for the following year.



Nivien Subramany



Harry Rosen



Melissa De Sousa
Moniz



Loretta Ciancamerla



Mildred Ubombo

MARKETING

The following are the core responsibilities of the Committee:

1. To develop an annual marketing plan with proposed budgets
2. To determine and implement all communication strategies
3. To ensure comprehensive public relations and publicity plan, as extension of marketing plan
4. To ensure effective communication, internally and externally
5. To ensure implementation of marketing strategy
6. To be responsible for SAOA 'corporate' identity and image
7. To effectively manage SAOA events ('event management').
8. To ensure all marketing activities comply with HPCSA Ethical Rules
9. To present report to board on quarterly basis.
10. The Marketing Committee is to participate in the Budget design meetings orchestrated by the Finance Portfolio by end August each year to establish plans for the following year.



Sandy Govender



Chris Eksteen



Vhutshilo Magoro



Noko Thema



Michelle Naidoo



Harry Rosen

PRIVATE PRACTICE

The responsibilities of the Private Practice portfolio are captured below:

1. To ensure interests of needs and interests of practitioners in private practice are accommodated
2. To keep members in private practice updated regarding developments and interventions which impact or have the potential to impact on private practice
3. To institute and maintain a stakeholder engagement strategy to include medical schemes, administrators, optometric networks and regulatory bodies.
4. To maintain an updated coding structure to facilitate claims to medical schemes
5. To educate and advise members on practice management
6. To educate and advise members regarding ethical rules and other legal consideration



Dollars Boloka



Martelie Burger



Sandy Govender



Enrique Nzula



Sandra Thomas White



Ntombi Maserumule



Harry Rosen

CODING COMMITTEE

The Coding Committee is a sub-committee of Private Practice, the objectives of which are summarised below.

1. To maintain an updated coding structure.
2. To advise and educate members and profession on coding related matters.
3. To ensure understanding and adherence to ICD-10 codes and any other coding model which, may have relevance to audiologists in private practice.
4. To recommend advocacy and communication strategies relating to the SAAA codes.
5. To ensure that the codes are timeously made available to medical schemes, administrators.
6. To develop Relative Value Units for each of the procedural codes.
7. To ensure the appropriate mentorship and succession planning for committee members.



Martelie Burger



Marna Pieterse



Nivien Subramany



Peter Brauer



John Stein



Jeanne Wentzel



Ronel Ducci



Audience Maluleke



Ntombi Maserumule



Harry Rosen



Casandra Seethal

ETHICS COMMITTEE

As healthcare professions, the activities of the SAOA and its membership are always underpinned by high professional standards and ethical conduct. The objectives of this committee are summarised below.

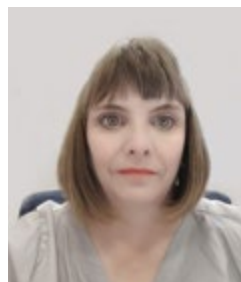
1. To review SAOA Governance Documents at least on an annual basis- To ensure appropriateness of content
 - Memorandum of Incorporation
 - Rules
 - Code of Conduct
2. To address issues of an ethical nature brought to the attention of the Committee from time to time.
3. To review matters on an ad hoc basis as mandated either by the Board or CEO
4. To ensure terms are well defined.



Harry Rosen



Brian Sneag



Marietjie Richter

PUBLIC HEALTH

In essence, activities of the Public Health portfolio are dedicated to three primary areas, namely, the facilitation of eye care to communities in need, eye care awareness and education of the public and advocacy to address challenges within the public sector. The following are the core responsibilities of the Public Health Committee.

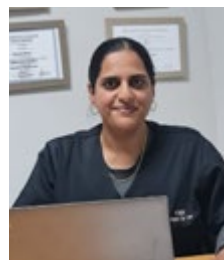
1. To educate the public and promote awareness regarding eye health and in collaboration with the Marketing portfolio.
2. To facilitate vision screening primarily aimed at economically compromised communities
3. To establish relations and alliances relating to the provision of affordable, accessible, quality care
4. To pursue relationships at all levels within the public sector to ensure the desired provision of optometric services, whether on the basis of, - Private Sector/Public Sector partnerships (PPP's), insourcing of optometry services or outsourcing of optometry, public sector posts
5. To ensure familiarization and an understanding of the public sector in terms of hierarchy, infrastructure, key stakeholders on personalized basis, protocols and policies, key issues, etc.
6. To ensure that the needs and interests of members in the public sector are accommodated
7. To institute advocacy activities at public sector level to ensure that the role of optometry and dispensing opticianry are recognized as major forces within SA healthcare.
8. To inform the board and members of the profession of matters relating to public health
9. To report to the Board timeously on the key happenings within the eye health arena, such World Sight Day, World Glaucoma Week as well as legislative developments (e.g. National Health Insurance)
10. To set up ad hoc, sub- committees when deemed necessary
11. The Public Health Committee is to participate in the Budget design meetings orchestrated by the Finance Portfolio by end August each year to establish plans for the following year.



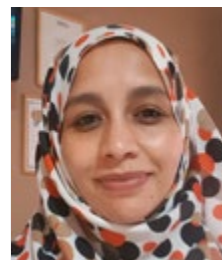
Bignocia Masinge



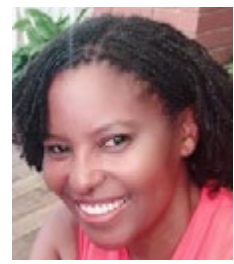
Dollars Boloka



Haseena Majid



Faiza Allibhai



Ntombi Zitha



Rajeshree Budhoo



Harry Rosen

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Scope of the Committee

‘Special Project’ means a strategically significant task or project that requires dedicated focus and resource to achieve a predetermined outcome, usually within a specified timeframe.

A Special Project can result from a key issue identified by any portfolio where dedicated focus and resource may be required.

The Director for Special Projects, ideally, manages tasks on a project management basis to accommodate key organizational initiatives as assigned by the Board. The following are the core responsibilities of the Special Projects Committee:

1. Take ownership of special projects as directed.
2. To work closely with President and CEO.
3. Work closely with CEO regarding orchestration and management of projects.
4. Provide effective and inspiring leadership.
5. The Special Projects Committee is to participate in the Budget design meetings orchestrated by the Finance Portfolio by end August each year to establish plans for the following year.



Marna Pieterse



Harry Rosen

OFFICE OF SAOA OMBUDSPERSON

The Office of the Ombudsperson, comprising of Ombudsperson and Deputy, was established by the SAOA Board as an independent service, primarily for the benefit of SAOA members, but also available to all optometrists and dispensing opticians, members of the public, suppliers and members of other health care professions.

The responsibilities of the Ombudsperson are to:

- **Facilitate** the resolution of complaints or disputes
- **Advise** on ethical issues and/or dilemma encountered in professional practice

It is important to note that the Ombudsperson and Deputy appointed by SAOA do not have jurisdiction or any powers by law to adjudicate on any matter brought to his/her attention. His/her role is restricted to facilitation and advice



Raymond Mabaso



Nina Kriel

WHO CAN COMPLAIN OR SEEK ADVICE?

Any member of the public, optometrist or member of another health care profession may approach the Ombudsperson. The services provided by the Ombudsperson and Deputy are free to complainants.

The office may be contacted via ombudsman@saoa.co.za.

SAOA OFFICE

Telephone Etiquette : _____ **4, 2**

Ability to handle queries : _____ **3,9**

SAOA GENERAL

SAOA Value to Profession : _____ **4.4**

SAOA Value to Practice : _____ **4.1**

SAOA LEADERSHIP

Coherent Direction : _____ **4,0**

Awareness of Activities: _____ **4,3**

OVERALL SCORE : 4,1

Legend :

5 = Outstanding

4 = Very Good

3 = Adequate

2 = Poor

1 = Extremely Poor

It is encouraging to note that the overall objective has indeed been achieved , with the acknowledgment that improvement is still required in a number of areas.

FLOODS DEVASTATE OPTOMETRIC PRACTICE IN KZN

More than 80 healthcare facilities in KwaZulu-Natal have been damaged by the floods that ripped through the province in April 2022, leaving 440 people dead and another 4,400 displaced.

The extensive rain damaged the roofs, floors and fencing at a number of facilities.



TRIBUTES TO THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED



EDWARD MACHUBA:
1974 – 2021



DAVID CROUSE (DOVI):
1943 – 2022



LUCKY NKOSI:
1970 - 2022



MARIET VAN DER MERWE:
1955 – 2022

TELE-OPTOMETRY

Telehealth is the application of electronic telecommunications, information technology or other electronic means to administer healthcare services in two geographically separated locations for the purpose of facilitating, improving, and enhancing clinical, educational and research, particularly to the under serviced areas in the Republic of South Africa.

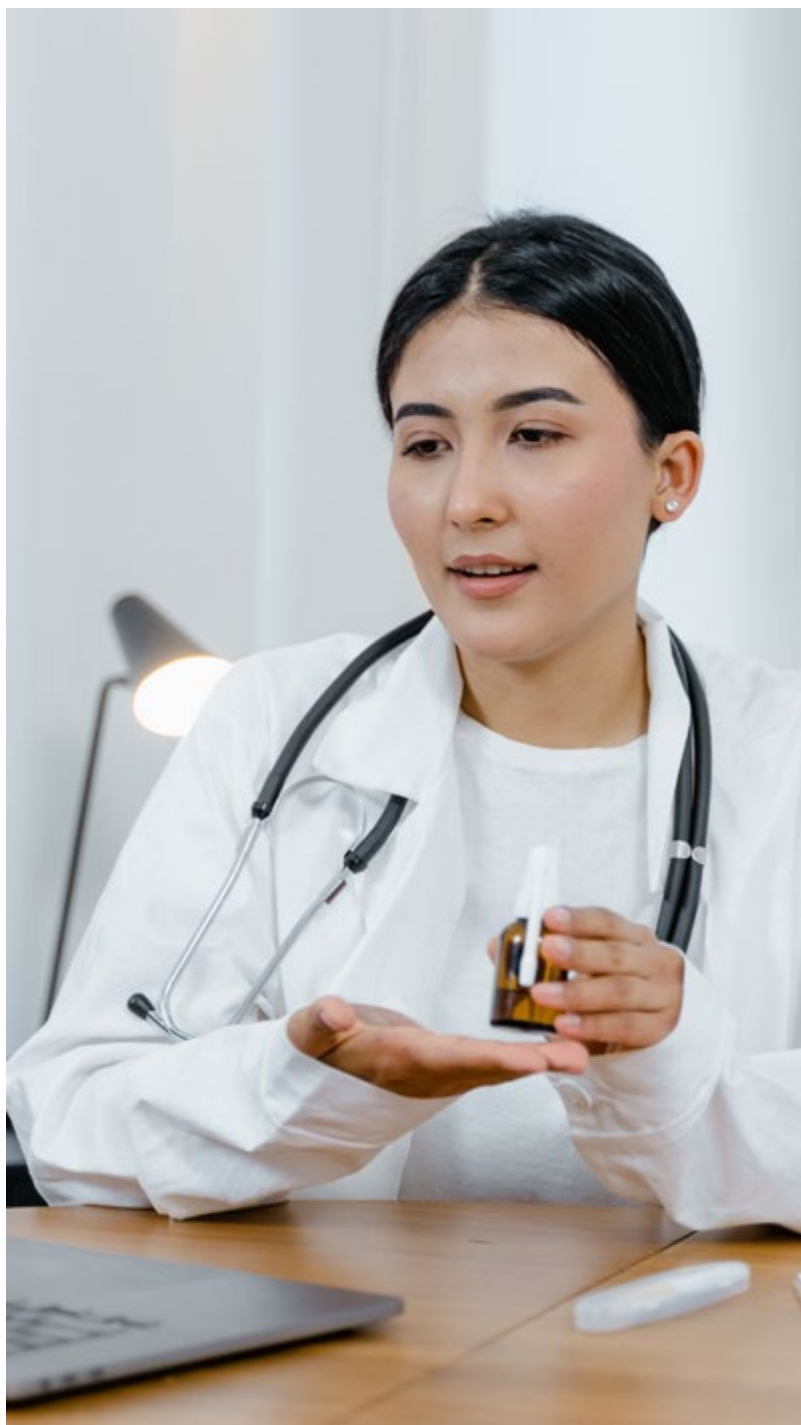
Telehealth is a blanket term that covers all components and activities of healthcare and the healthcare system that are conducted through telecommunications technology.

SAOA SUPPORT OF TELEMEDICINE IN OPTOMETRY

The SAOA supports the appropriate use of telemedicine in optometry to access high-value, high-quality eye, health and vision care. Telemedicine in optometry can serve to expand patient access to care, improve coordination of care, and enhance communication among all health care practitioners involved in the care of a patient. The SAOA supports coverage of and fair and equitable reimbursement for Telemedicine in optometry.

Important criteria must be met to ensure that telemedicine in optometry meets the existing standards of care, is of high-quality, contributes to care coordination, protects and promotes the doctor-patient relationship, complies with state licensure and other legal requirements, maintains patient choice and transparency, and protects patient privacy

The usage of social media platforms for the purpose of Telehealth is not desirable. Health practitioners are advised not to interact with patients via social media platforms as a failure to maintain strictly professional relationships with patients could result in ethical dilemmas.



Existing legislation outlaws the acquisition of data about an individual's personal information, including health, outside a healthcare setting. By having access to patients' social media profiles, health care practitioners may find themselves privy to personal patient information that has not been shared in the healthcare setting. To read more, [click here](#).

LOVE YOUR EYES: CONTINUED

The theme adopted for World Sight Day 2021 '**LOVE YOUR EYES**', is to be repeated in 2022. In essence this embraces the '**4P Good Eye Health Guide**', namely:

- **Prevent:** Many eye diseases can be prevented by adopting a healthy lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle is all about eating healthy and adopting healthy habits.
- **Protect:** While leading a healthy lifestyle can help you prevent several eye diseases it is equally important to protect and take care of your eyes. The risk ranges from severe sunlight, workplace accidents to prolonged exposure to screens at homes. So, what can you do to protect your eyes?
- **Preserve:** Plan for—and get—a regular comprehensive eye examination. A comprehensive eye examination will ensure that your optometrist obtains a detailed medical history and family history to understand your risk factors, followed by checking your vision, eye power, and eye health by instilling dilating eye drops
- **Prioritise:** Ensure that eye examinations are a part of your routine medical examination. Prioritize your eye health and consider "Love your eyes" as a life's mission and also educate your family, loved ones and community regarding the importance of eyes and vision.

Eye Care Awareness Month takes place from 21 September to 18 October 2022, with World Sight Day falling on 13 October

THE LIMITED ADMINISTRATION ACCREDITATION FRAMEWORK

The Optometry Networks such as Iso Leso and PPN, have been defined by the Council of Medical Schemes as Optometry Benefit Management Organisations, appointed to provide administrative services by medical schemes. The networks have impacted significantly on the lives of optometrists for many years and continue to do so. The impact, as referenced, is the result of interventions and rules imposed on practitioners by the optometric benefit management organisations, without recourse or accountability. It is noted that a number of the services provided by these entities fall within the (e.g.) "claims management" section of "**accreditable**" administration within the framework.

The SAOA is fully supportive of the Limited Administrator Accreditation Framework, as drafted by the CMS, whereby the optometric benefit management organisations will be accredited by, and registered with, the CMS, primarily in accordance with Section 58 of the Medical Schemes Act (MSA) and Regulations 17 (1), 17 (2), 17(2)(f) and 17(4)(a). It is noted that those entities which provide services which fall outside the boundaries of the limited administrator Accreditation Framework will be requested to fall in line (e.g., managed care services). To read more, [click here](#).

SCATHING RULING AGAINST STATE'S BID TO CONTROL WHERE HEALTH PROVIDERS WORK

The Department of Health's plans to control where healthcare providers practice have been dealt a blow by the Gauteng High Court (Pretoria) which has declared unconstitutional and invalid the National Health Act's provisions for issuing health establishments with a "certificate of need".

Health Department spokesperson Foster Mohale said the ruling has "serious implications" for the implementation of National Health Insurance (NHI), and the department would seek a rescission of the judgment and challenge the matter in the Constitutional Court. To read more, [click here](#).

LESSONS FROM THE PANDEMIC: VACCINES PREVENT DEATHS, AND 'LISTEN TO SCIENTISTS'

As South Africa joined the ranks of a growing number of countries which have recently dropped COVID-19 restrictions, bringing to an end a fraught few years, one of the resounding successes during the period was the role played by vaccines in preventing deaths. To read more, [click here](#).

SAOA ENCOURAGES MEMBERS TO CONTINUE TO OBSERVE COVID RELATED SAFETY PRECAUTIONS IN PRACTICES

The South African South Optometric Association (SAOA) notes the repeal of the Covid related regulations by the Minister of Health as of Thursday 23 June 2022, with particular reference to wearing of masks, gatherings and country entry limitations. It is also noted that the repeal is based on apparent reduced number of Covid infections, hospitalisation, deaths etc. Nevertheless, while the rules around masks have now dropped, the government has cautioned against employers who 'adopt a cavalier attitude towards health and safety in their workplaces'

In a clinical setting and within the context of optometric practice, having consulted widely, the SAOA is of the view that COVID-19, amongst other infections, continues to pose a significant medical and public health risk particularly where practitioners work in close proximity to patients. Under the circumstances, in accordance with ***The Code of Practice on the Management of Exposure to Sars-Cov-2 in the Workplace***, as published on 24 June 2022, the SAOA strongly recommends that members continue to observe safety precautions as previously published, with particular emphasis on the following:

1. Wearing of masks by practitioners and staff
2. Sanitisation of hands and equipment

Furthermore, the SAOA supports vaccination as essential in the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To read more, [click here](#).

CODE OF PRACTICE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF EXPOSURE TO SARS-COV-2 IN THE WORKPLACE

As stated by Employment and Labour minister Thulas Nxesi, ***The Code of Practice on the Management of Exposure to Sars-Cov-2 in the Workplace***, published on 24 June 2022, remains the guiding principle on matters of health and safety in the workplace, and is still the responsibility of all leaders to design an inclusive environment that promotes safety and makes workers comfortable in the workplace.

In essence, this code places a statutory obligation on employers to conduct a risk assessment to determine measures to limit infection and, transmission and mitigate the risk of serious illness or death of an employee or other persons who may be directly affected by the activities of the workplace, such as visitors, patients, and contractors. To view the **The Code of Practice on the Management of Exposure to Sars-Cov-2 in the Workplace**, [click here](#).

SAOA WEBINAR SERIES: 2022



In accordance with the theme for 2022 which places emphasis on Optometry and Dispensing Opticianry as **THE Primary Eye Care Professions**, a webinar programme has been introduced primarily for SAOA Members.

The series encompasses a wide range of topics presented by highly experienced and knowledgeable local and international speakers - experts in their field. SAOA Webinars this year have been designed to focus on the clinical and practical aspects of each topic.

The SAOA always ensures that our Members DO NOT MISS out on these opportunities. Therefore, recordings are available in accordance with predetermined protocols. To view the protocols, [click here](#).

For those members who are unable to attend the webinars and require a recording, please send an email to Webinars2021@saoa.co.za and indicate the date of the Webinar.

WHY BECOME A MEMBER ?

WE PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS TO PRACTICE - AS A PRIMARY CARE PRACTITIONER

On your behalf, and on a daily basis, we engage with all key stakeholders which include Government, regulatory authorities, medical schemes, administrators, other professions, the SA police, prosecutors, amongst others. The adoption of Optometry and Dispensing Opticianry as Essential Services by Government, the recognition of the expanded scope for optometry by the Council of Medical Schemes, pharmacy, medical schemes and administrators, opposition to frame mark- up controls by schemes, opposition to adjustable reader promotions and the withdrawal of the sale of contact lenses by Takealot are just a few examples of recent results of our actions. Importantly, the SAOA is the recognised custodian of the SAOA codes to facilitate reimbursement from medical schemes for professional services rendered.

MEMBER HOTLINE

Our members have access to SAOA Office Bearers and staff 24 hours per day and 7 days per week, throughout the year.

Members receive advice and/or assistance pertaining to practice/profession related matters on a personalised basis which includes labour related matters, challenges experienced with medical schemes, ethics-based guidance, practice management queries, amongst others.

NEGOTIATED VALUE

The SAOA makes available a host of benefits for members based on extensive negotiations, which include comprehensive indemnity insurance, access to low-cost patient-friendly pamphlets, amongst others. In addition, SAOA members enjoy concessions which include attendance at virtual CPD events free of charge as well as access to various materials, either produced or sourced by the SAOA, at significantly reduced costs.

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WE ONLY HAVE ONE MANDATE

i.e., to look after your professional interests and needs, collectively and personally. To accommodate this responsibility in a changing eye care environment, and within the context of what is now referred to as 'new norms', there are seven Board members, nine committees, just under 40 committee members, 10 Regional Representatives and eight full-time staff members. In addition, there is an advocacy team and a pool of experts. All deployed to dedicate time and effort to ensure that your interests are effectively and efficiently addressed.

WE KEEP YOU UPDATED AND PROVIDE LEADERSHIP, GUIDANCE AND ASSISTANCE

This pertains to all matters which impact or have the potential to impact on optometric practice and includes legislative change, clinical standards, developments of a commercial nature, ethics-related matters, etc. For example, the SAOA provided guidance and assistance throughout the various stages of Covid related lockdown, we guided and provided assistance regarding the implementation of the POPI Act to ensure practice compliance, we were in the forefront to ensure vaccination of optometrists, dispensing opticians and practice staff in the earliest phases of the vaccination roll-out, we were also in the forefront of deliberations at the highest levels to ensure relief for those optometrists who were affected by the vandalism and looting which took place earlier in the year.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We embrace the principle of CPD within the intended spirit, not only to ensure that members have access to high standard local and international CPD to accommodate HPCSA requirements but to ensure that our members are generally kept abreast of global trends and technological advances. To this end, alliances have been formed with reputable organisations such as SECO; in addition, the SAOA is an active member of the World Council of Optometry (WCO), the African Council of Optometry (AFCO) and the International Opticians Association (IOA).

OUR VOICE IS PROPORTIONAL TO OUR STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

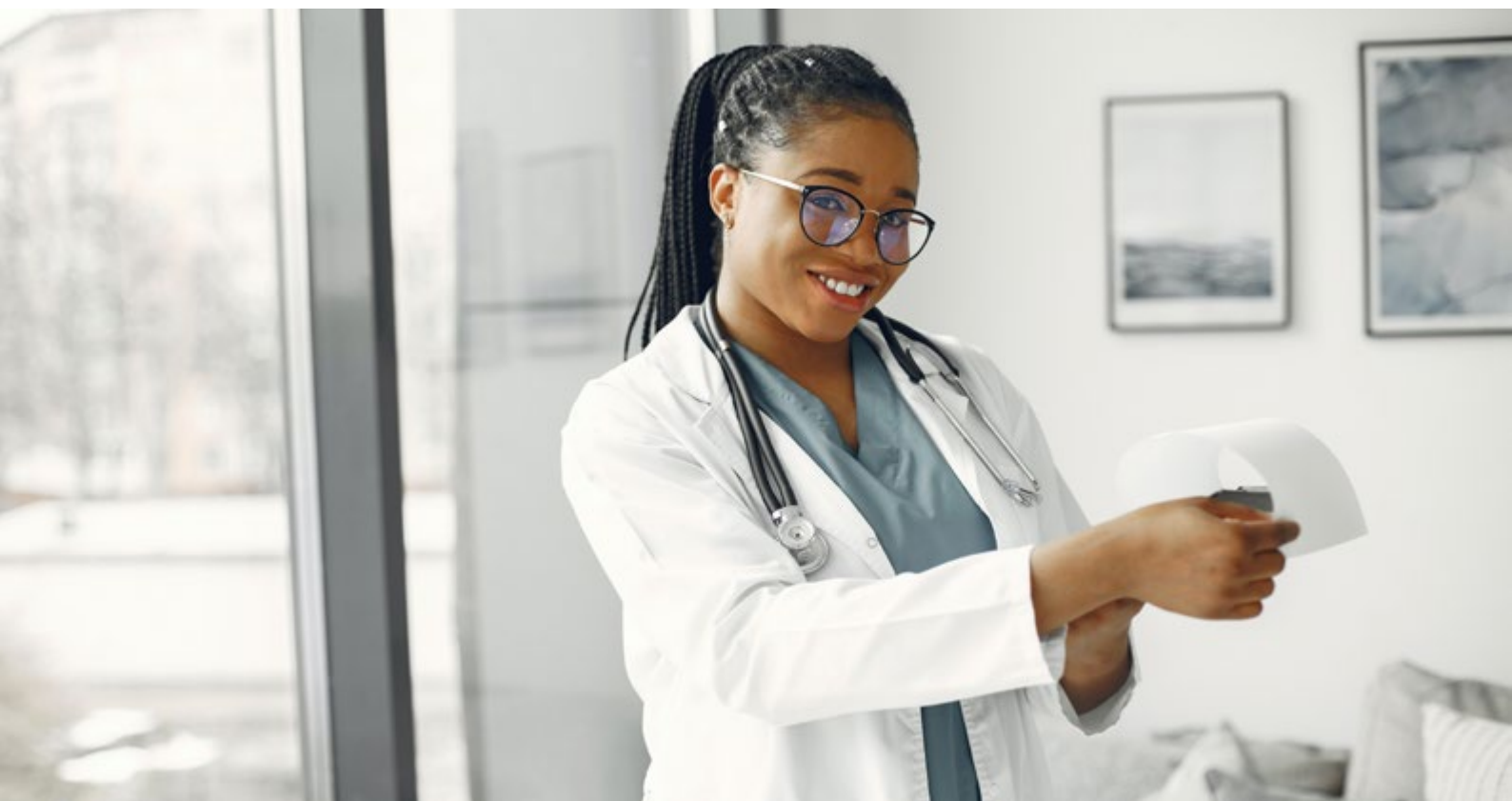
Your membership is really important to us! Not only to strengthen our voice and position in all matters that are of relevance to optometry and dispensing opticianry but, as a voting member of the SAOA, an opportunity is created for you to make a difference.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE INSURANCE FOR SAOA MEMBERS THROUGH CFP BROKERS (PTY) LTD

Paid-up members of the SAOA (Members in Good Standing) have exclusive access to CFP Brokers' bespoke and competitively priced Medical Malpractice Insurance Policy through the SAOA Medical Malpractice Scheme Policy | Cover4Profs. Having this cover in place, enables members to get on with the business of practicing your profession, knowing that you have solid, dependable, fuss-free medical malpractice insurance in place. In addition, you have the reassurance of knowing that your cover is provided by a tried and trusted Insurer, long-term.

Below are benefits of the cover provided by CFP Brokers:

- The policy automatically includes:
 - Access to iTOO's Legal Helpline 24/7- this facility alone can save you thousands of Rands annually, as you have access to legal assistance for reviews of your contracts and practice-related queries, including employment-related matters.
 - R500,000 cover per year to rectify incidents arising out of Business Identity Theft.
- Cover which extends to include public liability (this is commonly known as your "slip-and-trip" cover)
- Offering of some of the highest sub-limits in the market on our cover extensions.
- 25,000 cover under the policy for medical scheme audits and investigations. This extension of cover is already included in the annual premiums - you don't pay anything extra for it.
- The Run-off cover is of benefit relative to many other Insurers, with the commitment that:
 - If you've registered an incident which may lead to a claim during your policy period, and it falls within the policy contract, you can rest assured, that even if a claim only arises from that incident many years later, you're covered (even if you've since moved insurers).



- If you retire or permanently cease to practice, our policy provides you with up to 6 years' run-off cover, depending on how long you've had cover in place through CFP Brokers/iTOO.
- iTOO Special Risks (who are the Underwriters of the policy on behalf of Hollard Insurance Company Ltd) have specific experience in underwriting medical malpractice insurance and handling medical malpractice claims. They currently provide medical malpractice insurance to around 40,000 healthcare practitioners. They have been involved in underwriting medical malpractice insurance, since 2009. iTOO also use a diverse panel of attorneys in various regions of South Africa with extensive experience in Medical Malpractice Law.
- Hollard is South Africa's largest privately-owned insurance company, and they are AA rated by GCR. What does this mean to you? The rating provides you with the comfort of knowing that an independent third party has reviewed your Insurer's business (shareholders/systems, etc) as well as their financial stability (and hence the credit risk on claims' paying ability) and their ability to settle claims.

NB. It is important is to notify CFP Brokers of any circumstances that may lead to a claim. The policy works on a claims-made basis, where a notification of a claim or circumstances that could give rise to a claim, is considered a claim-made – the sooner the Broker knows, the better! Don't wait for the actual summons before contacting CFP Brokers to register the circumstance/claim.

Haven't bought your cover yet? No problem – visit the CFP Brokers website and apply for cover in a few easy steps -
SAOA Medical Malpractice Scheme Policy | Cover4Profs - CFP Brokers

OUR PARTNERS



CREATIVITY EVOKES CONSTRUCTIVE CHANGE



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- DIGITAL TRACKING, TESTING, MONITORING, AND REPORTING
- WEBSITE DESIGN, CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND UX DESIGN
- PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY
- SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING
- MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLICITY
- DESIGN AND PRINTING

EXPERIENCE OUR PROCESS

ETHICS CORNER

INFORMED CONSENT: THE BASIC STEPS

Informed consent is both a legal and ethical requirement.

Taking the time to obtain proper informed consent is one of the most effective ways to avoid medico-legal challenges. Other than building the practitioner-patient relationship, it ensures that patients do not encounter unpleasant surprises on their care journey, which may result in unnecessary anger and blame.

Informed consent is a process where you provide information sufficient to enable the patient to make an informed decision relating to their healthcare. Although the signature of a consent form often constitutes completion of the consent process, without a balanced discussion it does not constitute informed consent.

To read more, [click here](#).

THE HUMAN RESOURCE 'DEPARTMENT'

OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT - KNOW THE RISKS

A question we have been asked on a number of occasions recently, is: **Can an offer of employment be withdrawn by the employer after it had been accepted by the job applicant?**

Generally, no. This would, in most instances amount to a dismissal, unless it has been a conditional offer and the conditions were not met. From a contractual perspective, an employment relationship comes into being as soon as the essentials of an employment contract have been agreed upon. To read more, [click here](#).

SPECIALIST SUPPORT FOR SAOA MEMBERS TO ENSURE PRACTICE PROTECTION

Business protection can help you mitigate business risks to ensure the security and sustainability of your business. Start with the end in mind by asking yourself the following:

- If a disaster happens, for example, a fire, do I have insurance to cover the loss of income related to the closing of my practice facility?
- What would I do if my equipment was damaged by a storm or the result of theft?
- How can I ensure that my practice becomes a family legacy for my children?
- Do I truly understand the impact of not being insured or underinsured?



Need help answering these questions? PPS provides specialist support for all practice owners to help you ensure that your practice is protected. To claim your obligation- free consultation, [click here](#).

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

SECO

SECO, as a SAOA partner, remains an asset for the SAOA to be nurtured. Access to world class international CPD for SAOA members at no charge is an incredible membership benefit and continues in 2022. A number of SAOA Members attended the SECO 2022 Congress, which took place from 9 – 13 March 2022, in New Orleans.

SECO have also entered into an alliance with the National Academy of Opticianry and have offered free live CPD on the following dates:

- **10 September**
- **27 September**
- **25 October**
- **12 November**
- **3 December**



CONCLUSIONS

A demanding performance challenge tends to create a Team. In any situation requiring a combination of multiple skills, experiences and judgements gets better results than simply a collection of individuals. Teams provide the kind of responsiveness, speed, customisation and quality that is beyond the reach of individual performance.

As stated in the introductory paragraphs of this publication, through the various levels of turmoil and disruptiveness that have characterised the first half of 2022, the SAOA TEAM has remained strong and steadfast. We have continued to operate, in general, in accordance with our plans, address key issues and have advocated for change, where applicable.

Thanks, and appreciation are extended to our members, partners and stakeholders for their continued support with best wishes for the remaining half of 2022, and beyond.

*"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act,
but a habit " **Aristotle***



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"It's not about the years in your life,
it's about the life in your years."

- Adlai Stevenson

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Select **"Login to Your Account"** or **"Register a New Account"**. Read the T's & C's. Update your profile by clicking on the **"Edit"** button, providing your details and then saving.



REGISTER A NEW ACCOUNT

Note: please make sure you use an active email address as this is how we will send you your invoice and contact you in future

Step 4

Now it's time to get your Insurance. Click on the **Apply/Renew/Increase Cover** button and go through each question and tick every box where required, then click on **save**.

Apply/Renew/Increase Cover

Step 5

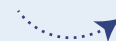
You will receive a **confirmation email** with your Invoice attached.



Step 6

Pay your Insurance using the CORRECT 6 digit Invoice number as your payment reference – it appears on the invoice as follows:

Payment Beneficiary
Reference for this Invoice



Step 7

Your payment will be allocated within a few days and you will **receive an email confirming** that you can download your policy documents.



Step 8

Log back into the system once you have received the confirmation email and **download your policy documents**.



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Office hours: 8am – 4pm Monday -Friday

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Hoya Vision Care Myopia

Sharing the results of the longest myopia control spectacle lens study: MiYOSMART six-year follow-up clinical study.



HOYA
FOR THE VISIONARIES



HOYA Vision Care Releases Results of First of its Kind Six-Year MiYOSMART Spectacle Lens Follow-up Clinical Study

Strong evidence shows continued long-term lens effectiveness in slowing myopia progression in children

BANGKOK – May 2022 – HOYA Vision Care, a leader in optical technology innovation, shared the results of a six-year follow-up clinical study on its award winning MiYOSMART spectacle lens with Defocus Incorporated Multiple Segments (D.I.M.S.) Technology at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) 2022 conference in Denver, Colorado in the U.S. The findings, of the longest study on a myopia management spectacle lens, were shared by Professor Carly Lam from the Centre for Myopia Research at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University who conducted the research.

The results of the six-year clinical study conducted on 90 children in Asia looked at the progression of myopia in children who wore the HOYA Vision Care's MiYOSMART spectacle lens. The results enhanced a previous three-year follow-up study¹, a continuation of a two-year randomized control trial (RCT)², which was published in the British Journal of Ophthalmology, demonstrating strong evidence of the lenses' effectiveness in slowing down the progression of myopia in children ages 8-13. The findings of the six-year, long-term follow-up study proved the MiYOSMART spectacle lens myopia control effect is sustained over time for children wearing the lens. It also confirmed that patients who stop wearing the MiYOSMART spectacle lens show no rebound effects when compared to the initial myopia rates of progression during the two-year randomized control trial or with the general population.

"This six-year follow-up clinical study on the MiYOSMART spectacle lens, the longest study conducted on a myopia management spectacle lens ever, shows the myopia control effects are sustainable over time which is very exciting news," said Natalia Vlasak, Global head of Medical and Scientific Affairs at HOYA Vision Care. "This study also answered another key question from eye care professionals which was about the rebound effect of the lens - we are very pleased that this clinical study proves that there is no rebound effect if lens use is stopped." "HOYA Vision Care is dedicated to being a leader in developing a safe, effective way to manage the growing problem of myopia in children," she added.

Launched in 2018, the MiYOSMART spectacle lens was developed in cooperation with The Hong Kong Polytechnic University to address myopia, or near sightedness which is a growing global health concern with industry experts predicting nearly 50% of the world's population to be impacted by 2050.³ The lens uses D.I.M.S. Technology that provides children with sharp vision, can be placed in any children's eyeglass frame and appears as a standard spectacle lens. Since 2018, one million patients in more than 30 countries have benefited from wearing the MiYOSMART spectacle lens.⁴

The findings of the six-year, long-term follow-up study proved the **MiYOSMART spectacle lens myopia control effect is sustained** over time for children wearing the lens⁵.

Patients who stop wearing MiYOSMART spectacle lens show **no rebound effects** when compared to the initial myopia rates of progression during the two-year randomized control trial or with the general population⁵.



1 Lam CS, Tang WC, Lee PH, et al. Myopia control effect of defocus incorporated multiple segments (DIMS) spectacle lens in Chinese children: results of a 3-year follow-up study. British Journal of Ophthalmology Published Online First: 17 March 2021. doi: 10.1136/bjophthalmol-2020-317664

2 Lam CSY, Tang WC, Tse DY, Lee RPK, Chun RKM, Hasegawa K, Qi H, Hatanaka T, To CH. Defocus Incorporated Multiple Segments (DIMS) spectacle lenses slow myopia progression: a 2-year randomized clinical trial. British Journal of Ophthalmology. Published Online First: 29 May 2019. doi: 10.1136/bjophthalmol-2018-313739

3 Holden B.A., Fricke T.R., Wilson D.A., Jong M., Naidoo K.S., Sankaridurg P., Wong T.Y., Naduvilath T.J., Resniko S. Global Prevalence of Myopia and High Myopia and Temporal Trends from 2000 through 2050. American Academy of Ophthalmology. 05/2016, vol.123, no. 5, p.1036–1042.

4 Based on # lenses sold per Hoya sales data on file as of February 2022. Individual wearer results may vary.

5 Lam CS, et al. Myopia control in children wearing DIMS spectacle lens: 6 years results. Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci. 63;2022:ARVO E-Abstract 4247



Learn more about how MiYOSMART can provide children better vision now and into the future.

Yes, I am interested in MiyoSmart

For more information please contact your local Hoya representative

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North & Western Gauteng
083 737 8060

Mariette Barnett

Cape Town & N/Cape
071 604 4505

Natalie Suttie

Kwa-Zulu Natal
071 438 0765

Garth Harcombe

Eastern Cape
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Vaal & Gauteng West
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Rajen Naidoo

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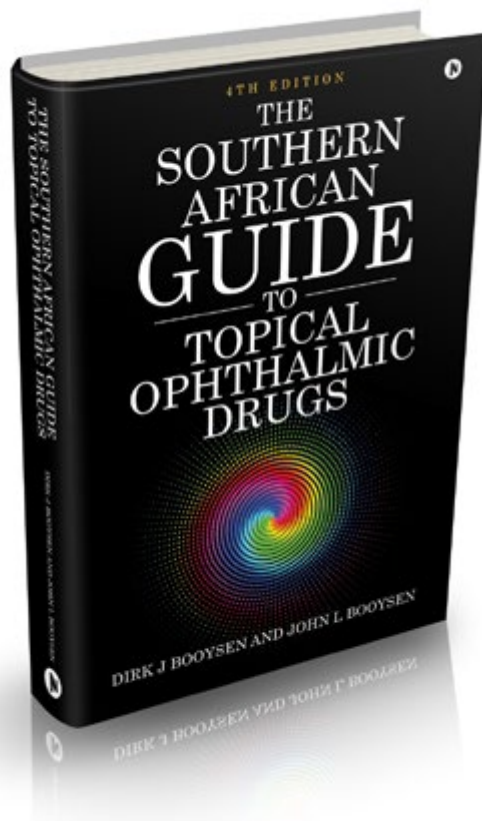
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