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To: Dispensing Optician Committee Members **Date:** September 22, 2017

From: Martha Garcia, CLD, SLD **Telephone:** (916) 575-7170
Committee Chair

Subject: **Agenda Item 5 –Update, Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the DOC Outreach Campaign; Recommendation to Full Board**

At its first meeting, the Dispensing Optician Committee (DOC) recognized the need to educate the registrant population about the Board, its registration types, how to register and renew, and the differences between a registration (issued by the Board) and a certification (issued by the American Board of Opticianry). Additional outreach included working with the California Prison Industry Authority to set reasonable expectations for those individuals learning the trade in prison.

During the August 18, 2017 DOC meeting, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Communications team sought direction feedback from the members regarding its plan to provide education and outreach to registrants and other stakeholders.

Based on feedback received, DCA Communications developed the attached Outreach Plan for DOC consideration (Attachment 1).

California State Board of Optometry Dispensing Optician - Communication Plan

Introduction

The California State Board of Optometry (Board) was created by the California Legislature in 1913 to safeguard the public's health, safety, and welfare through regulation of the practice of optometry.

Protection of the public is paramount for the Board when exercising its licensing, regulatory and disciplinary functions. The Board currently licenses approximately 7,500 practicing optometrists and dispensing opticians, the largest population of eye-care professionals in the United States.

The Board of Optometry gained authority over dispensing opticians as of January 1, 2016, pursuant to AB 684, (Alejo). The Board's Registered Dispensing Optician Program and the registrations within this program are now under the Board's authority. The Board will perform the registration process for registered dispensing opticians (RDOs), spectacle lens dispensers (SLDs), contact lens dispensers (CLDs), and non-resident contact lens sellers.

The Board recognizes there is a crucial need to educate optometrists and registered dispensing opticians and other stakeholders about the Board's role as it relates to the registration and regulation of nonresident contact lens sellers and dispensing opticians.

It is the intent of the Board to establish a communication plan to educate and bring awareness to all pertinent parties about the Board's role.

Communication Objectives

- Explain the role of the board as it relates to Registered Dispensing Opticians (RDOs), Spectacle Lens Dispensers (SLDs) and Contact Lens Dispensers (CLDs) and optometric assistants and the requirements mandated for each role (bottom to top).
- Promote that the Board of Optometry is the regulating body of optometrists and optician professionals (not MBC) to all stakeholders and current/future licensees.
- Provide an overview specifying that registration is required to do business and work in California for individuals, business owners, corporations (retail) in opticianry. Provide timing deadline for compliance 90/180 days, list sanctions for non-compliance (financial or suspension of registration).
- Explain the difference between Registration vs. Licensing.
- Clarify who they are and what they do (RDOs, SLDs and CLDs).
- Steps to working in the Opticianry field in California (e.g., ABO certification Step 1, BOP registration Step 2). Outline the board's restrictions and guidelines.
- Create education materials that explain the criteria and potential barriers to entry for a career in opticianry in the state for Prison Industry Authority (corrections staff, inmates, others...).
- Promote optical field as a career. Show a career ladder to optometry or opticianry.
- Change board website to be more user friendly, easier to find information. For example, cleaner distinction between information for optometrist applicants and opticianry applicants. Secondly, valuable real estate is not being utilized on the primary page.
- Secure the support of stakeholders (industry organizations/associations, retail, school administrators and current licensees) to assist in the distribution of messaging. Mention in their trade publications, newsletters and social media.

- Encourage licensee support of the Dispensing Optician Committee by brand awareness (currently no mention on website or social media pages). Explain who the committee is and what they do is needed on the website.
- Promote BreEZe as the preferred method for applications and renewals.

Target Audience

The Board will disseminate tailored messaging and materials to the target audience(s).

- Optician professionals (current) unregistered individuals
- Optician students - individuals
- Optician licensees – Individual proprietor, retail (brick & mortar)
- Opticianry Schools
- Industry organizations and associations

Messaging

Messaging will be fine-tuned once the primary communication objectives have been finalized by the board.

Audience	Sample Message Themes
Optician professionals unregistered/Optician students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The California Board of Optometry is the regulatory body for the Opticianry field in the state. Do you know the path to registration? • ABO certification is NOT enough to work in The Golden State • Wanna work in Cali? Get Registered with the Board of Optometry
Optician licensees (RDOs)/Industry organizations and associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The California Board of Optometry is the regulatory body for the Opticianry field in the state. Are you and your staff registered?
Opticianry schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The California Board of Optometry is the regulatory body for the Opticianry field in the state. Do you know the path to registration? • ABO certification is NOT enough to work in The Golden State • Wanna work in Cali? Get Registered with the Board of Optometry

Strategy

The Board will work with the Department of Consumer Affairs’ Communications Division to create materials and content to use for outreach.

Tactics

The following can be utilized to broadcast the messaging.

Social Media Outreach

- The Board and DCA currently have Facebook and Twitter pages.
- Specific campaigns can be developed (e.g., BRN Green Project) to disseminate pertinent information to stakeholders.
- Social media is an ideal way to promote information about committee meetings.
- Article or EO feature in The DCA Page Blog (can be shared via Facebook and Twitter)

Video Development

- OPA has the resources to develop a video or video series that outlines the path to registration for RDOs, SLDs/CLDs.

Collateral Materials

Several materials can be created for use on the Board's website, social media and for print distribution.

- Brochure- Consider a Career in the Optical Industry (Steps from A to O *instead of Z*) Explain what each level from optometric assistants to optometrist.
- Info-Graphic - Graphic outlining the levels and differences in the optical field. (Steps from A to O *instead of Z*)
- Magazine - EO Feature or Article in DCA Consumer Connection

Partnerships

- Enlist the assistance of stakeholders, industry organizations/associations, trade publications and schools to promote the boards message regarding opticianry.
- Place a write-up or article in a partner's newsletter, trade publication.
- Encourage partners to share and retweet board social media posts.

DCA Print Publications

- Article or EO Feature in Consumer Connection Magazine

Timeline

Will be determined upon confirmation of which communication objectives the board confirms.