Fall 2014

Well, here we are headed for fall, where did summer GO.

The fall planning meeting for PPA was August 23, 2014 at the Courtyard Marriott in Altoona, Pa. I am pleased to report that the board and two new committee members, Lisa Scarborough, CPOA and April Conde, ABO had a very productive meeting

PPA’S main concern is the constant struggle to get Paraoptometrics involved in attending meetings and education. Paraoptometrics are able to complete all of their education online to become certified and maintain their certification. We believe that this is one of the reasons for the low attendance at our meetings on the state and local level. If Paraoptometrics were required to have part of their certification hours mandated in classroom it would increase attendance which in turn would build more leaders to serve as board and committee members. We would like to have POA’S guidance in addressing this issue to AOA.

The AOA Board of Trustees meeting on June 16, 2014 purposed a resolution to the paraoptometric training and certification. PARAOPTOMETRIC’S PROVIDE AN INTERGAL ROLE IN DELIVERING CARE AND CREDENTIALING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ENTITIES MAY REQUEST INFORMATION ON THE TRAINING AND/OR CERTIFICATION OF THE ANCILLARY STAFF. The AOA in consultation with leaders in optometry has developed levels of certification with knowledge based on examinations administered by the Commission on Paraoptometric Certification. The AOA shall recommend that all member optometrists encourage their paraoptometric staff to become Associate Members and to obtain appropriate certification through the CPC.

The Past Presidents Incentive Award was finalized and will become effective at the meeting in May at Bedford Springs. The award specifies that the Paraoptometric has to be registered at the current education, attend the education and the general membership meeting. The Paraoptometric will receive free registration at the next education offered by PPA.

The Guide Book for board and committee members was updated and retyped by Sarah Owens, CPOC. The guide book is to help direct board and committee members perform their duties and advise them of the policies of PPA.
PPA is currently pursuing the project of updating the Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Manual. The manual was Copyright, 2000 and with all the new technology we feel it is important to provide the doctors and paraoptometric a new revision of the manual. This is going to be a challenge but not one that we cannot accomplish with the hard work of the board members.

PPA is pleased to announce the Paraoptometric of the Year, April Stewart, CPO. She is employed by Dr. David Wagner at Wagner Family Eye Care in Seneca, Pa. She will receive her award at the meeting in Hershey, Pa.

Roberta Beers, CPOT received the National Para of the Year Award in Philadelphia at the National Optometry Meeting. PPA is fortunate to have her as a leader.

We were pleased to hear that Charlie Stuckey will remain the CEO for the Pennsylvania Optometric Association.

REMINDER TO ALL DOCTORS; PARAOPTOMETRIC RECOGNITION IS THE THIRD WEEK OF SEPTEMBER. MAKE YOUR PARAOPTOMETRICS FEEL SPECIAL.

Our goal is to provide quality education to the Pennsylvania Paraoptometrics and promote optometry/paraoptometry.

Yours in paraoptometry,

Vera J Kohler CPOA

One thought: A well trained staff is an investment in the practice
Why to invest in your staff –
  • Greater staff commitment
  • Staff Retention
  • Make a greater difference in the lives of your patients
  • Boost their knowledge and build their skills

Message from the President Elect:
Sarah Owens CPOC

I have been very busy working to update and retype the Officer /Committee Guidebook. This is the back bone of our association. It was developed to answer some of our most common questions to promote efficient administration within the association.
The Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Association Mission Statement:
The mission of the Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Association is to enhance the quality of eyecare by elevating the standard of Paraoptometry as the profession, direct public opinion in regard to the important and value of optometric care, foster communication intraprofessionally and interprofessionally, and to serve as a resource for all matters pertinent to its members.

Collection of data from State and National Boards:
- Number of Active optometric Licenses in PA 4892
- Number of Certified Paraoptometrics in PA 198
- Number of JCAHP* Ophthalmic Certifications PA 820
*(typical certification used by staff in an ophthalmology office –COA, COT, COMT)

Message from the Vice President of Continuing Education:
April Marshall, CPO

The Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Association will be running 1 tract at the November 2014 Fall Education conference in Hershey, PA.

Education is Saturday, November 22, 2014

The speaker will be Dr. Harvey Richman.
Topics of education are geared toward billing and coding.

8:00 am-10:00 am Ask the Coding Experts Top 10 Questions
10:15am – 11:15am Coding the Low Vision Examination
11:30am-2:00 pm Lunch, social time, general business meeting: Games and prizes
2:15 pm-3:15 pm Special Ophthalmic Coding
3:30 pm -5:30 pm Vision vs. Medical Billing

Course Title: Ask the Coding Experts Top 10 Questions  
Total CE Hours: 2

Description: This course will evaluate the billing and coding principles with regards to the various questions ODs face around the country. Specifically, it will address ways of developing a medical model within an Optometric practice and how to bill for those encounters. It will take a look inside your medical records and utilizing proper documentation guidelines by utilizing specific case examples.

Course Title: Coding the Low Vision Examination  
Total CE Hours: 1

Description: This course will provide options for appropriately coding low vision and vision rehabilitation courses.

Course Title: Special Ophthalmic Coding  
Total CE Hours: 1

Description: This advanced billing course will provide the correct coding options for a practice looking to submit claims for the special ophthalmologic services. Topics will include gonioscopy, visual fields, fundus photography, scanning laser imaging, extended ophthalmoscopy, punctal occlusion, laboratory testing and other diagnostic testing options beyond the well vision evaluation.
Course Title: Ask the Coding Experts Vision versus Medical

Total CE Hours: 2

Description: This course will evaluate the billing and coding principles with regards to navigating vision or medical carriers. Specifically, it will address ways of developing a medical model within an Optometric practice and how to bill for those encounters. It starts with taking a look inside your medical records and utilizing proper documentation guidelines by utilizing specific case examples.

Message from Secretary/Treasurer
Cindy Whitman, CPO

Membership – 113
83 State Pins

Banking account: 1108.35
6 State T-shirts

Saving Account: 21085.06

Message from Vice President Communications and Public Relations:
Roberta Beers, CPOT

Remember next week is Paraoptometric Recognition Week September 14-20. Send me your photos of what you do in your office for the special week.

Paraoptometric Recognition Week
We would like to see how your practice is celebrating with your paraoptometrists during the week. Enter photos of your celebratory moments in our photo contest. We want to see photos of your office and staff and the ways that you recognized your staff. See the examples above. Be as creative as you can and enter as many photos as you like!

Who can participate?
This contest is open to AOA associate paraoptometric members and their AOA member optometrist.

**All photos must meet the following requirements:**
- Photos should be submitted in JPEG format
- Photos must also be an original, not previously published in other publications
- Photo will become the property of the American Optometric Association
- All individuals in the photograph must provide permission to use their photo, prior to photo entry

**Prize:**
The winner will receive one of our products FREE, up to $250 value (bundles included).

**Entry form:**
Complete the entry form by visiting https://amopt.wufoo.com/forms/2014-paraoptometric-recognition-weekphoto-Contest

**Paraoptometric Recognition Week**
**10 Low Cost/No Cost Ideas to Recognize Your Staff**

1. Purchase tubs of cookie dough for each staff member with the note attached to it – “We wanted to give you a little dough to show our appreciation. Thank you for all you do!”
2. Make pancakes for a staff breakfast with a variety of syrups. Make a sign that states, “We’re ‘pouring out’ our gratitude and hoping you have a Paraoptometric Recognition Week to ‘flip over’!”
3. Purchase bottles of 7up for each staff member and attach a note stating, “Here’s ‘seven’ reasons why you are ‘up’-preciated.” List on the note seven reasons why you appreciate your staff.
4. Bring in a big tray of cinnamon rolls for a mid-day snack for staff. Make a sign to place in front of the tray stating, “You’re on a roll...keep up the good work!”
5. Create posters and hang them around the office with pictures of the staff along with nicknames you have created that reflect their work personality. For example, Michelle: The Rockstar, Katie: The Problem Solver, Cheryl: The Busy Bee, etc.
6. At an employee meeting, surprise staff by taping gift certificates to the bottom of the chairs.
7. Give each member of your staff a Spring bulb to plant outside of your office. Attach a note that reads “We look forward to seeing you blossom.”
8. Give each member of your staff a scented candle with a note attached that reads “No one holds a candle to you!”
9. Make cupcakes or purchase gift certificates from a local bakery for your staff. Make a sign that states “You take the cake!” Have either the certificates or cupcakes for each staff person by the sign.
10. Provide beads and accessories for each staff person to make their own bracelet. Allow time throughout the day for staff to get “crafty.”

For more 36 more ideas
Contact: PRC@aoa.org
Message from Immediate Past President: Camille Sagonas

It is time to be thinking about Election of officers for the Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Board.

Consideration for Serving on the PPA Board
1. The Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Association board meets up to 3 times a year, determined by the President.
2. Board members receive up to $150.00 to help defer travel expenses per meeting.
3. Board members will report to the president during each board meeting, report to general membership, plus write a report to be included in the newsletter.
4. It is important the board has access to a computer to respond to emails.

Do you have attributes to serve on the PPA Board?
- Have served or serving on your local Society
- Served on a community organization
- Having knowledge of PPA
- Organizational skills
- Leadership abilities

Volunteering Doesn’t Take a Lot of Time, Just a Little Time to Care

Message from the AOA Liaison Report:
Roberta Beers, CPOT

What a great time we had at Optometry’s Meeting June 25-29th in Philadelphia.
Our own President, Vera Kohler, CPOA welcoming everyone at the Opening for the Paraoptometrics.

Everyone in attendance received the meeting received A T-Shirt:

A special guest, Mr. Benjamin Franklin, and as you see he wasn't shy about having his picture taken:

2014 American Optometric Association
Paraoptometric of the Year

Roberta Beers, CPOT
I would like to thank the Pennsylvania Optometric Association for recognizing me at the POA Reception and presenting me with a beautiful flower arrangement. I got to the reception, while talking to Dr. Stuckey, about my speech at the Award Ceremony, I told him it was like an outer body experience all of a sudden my speech was over. He said, I have said the same thing I have said for 20 years, educate your staff and get them certified. Guess he’s right...

**Friday Night Awards Dinner**
Roberta Beers, CPOT accepted her plaque at the AOA Paraoptometric Resource Awards Dinner sponsored by Alcon.
Color vision deficient people see color but confuse certain colors in certain conditions.
Color vision deficiency is 8 times more common in males than females
Red and green are the most commonly confused colors among color deficient people

**Trichromacy**
Normal color vision which uses all three types of light cones correctly is known as trichromacy and people with normal color vision are known as trichromats.

**Deuteranopia**
This type of color blindness is characterized by a loss of green vision and distortion of vision in the red-yellow-green part of the spectrum.

**Protanopia**
This type of color blindness is characterized by a tendency to confuse reds and greens and by a loss of sensitivity to red light.

**Tritanopia**
This type of color blindness is characterized by a lowered sensitivity to blue light resulting in an inability to distinguish blue.
**Why Patients Come to "See" US**

*The number one reason patients make an appointment in your practices is to see well. Your top priority: Providing the products and services that improve your patients’ vision and enjoyment of life. Also to perverse their vision if they have an eye health issue.*

The trend of our profession is moving toward the medical model. The future of our practice’s success will depend a great deal on your ability to provide high-quality medical care. The health of our patients’ eyes has been and always will be our primary professional obligation.

As Paraoptometric’s we need to know how to ask and answer the questions to determine if the patient is coming in for a routine exam or if the exam will be a medical exam.

Add questions to ask:
The eyes can reveal the presence of disease in the brain or other parts of the body. The eyes themselves can become diseased. Vision is one of our most important senses. Caring for your patients eyes is the best way to ensure they do not lose their vision.

Comprehensive medical eye examinations vary depending on the patient’s age, date of last exam and other factors. Some of your tests may be performed by you the Paraoptometric who assist the doctor. The eye exam will include documenting your medical history, visual acuity testing, external examination (eyelids, tear duct system, areas around the eye), eye muscle examination, visual field examination, slit lamp examination (looking closely at the outer and inner part of the eye), tonometry (measurement of your intraocular pressure) and ophthalmoscopy (using an instrument that shines a bright light into the eye to examine the retina through the pupil). Most of these tests are performed in a routine exam but will be more in-depth during a medical eye exam. When it is determined the patient has a medical condition, i.e. cataract, glaucoma, macular degeneration, or blurred vision etc. the tech needs to ask the right questions to determine if the patient will need a dilated exam.

Some of the Questions will include:
Blurred vision is the most common symptom of refractive errors. Other symptoms may include:

- Double vision
- Haziness
- Glare or halos around bright lights
- Headaches
- Squinting
- Eye strain

Asking family history of glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetes could be a red flag of conditions the patient might be subject to.

**Common Age-related Eye Diseases and Conditions:**

**Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD)**
AMD is a disease associated with aging that gradually destroys sharp, central vision. Central vision is needed for seeing objects clearly and for common daily tasks such as reading and driving.

**Cataract**
A cataract is a clouding of the lens in the eye. Vision with cataract can appear cloudy or blurry, colors may seem faded and you may notice a lot of glare.

**Diabetic Eye Disease**
Diabetic eye disease is a complication of diabetes and a leading cause of blindness. The most common form is diabetic retinopathy which occurs when diabetes damages the tiny blood vessels inside the retina.

**Glaucoma**
Glaucoma is a group of diseases that can damage the eye’s optic nerve and result in vision loss and blindness. It is usually associated with high pressure in the eye and affects side or peripheral vision.

**Dry Eye**
Dry eye occurs when the eye does not produce tears properly, or when the tears are not of the correct consistency and evaporate too quickly. Dry eye can make it more difficult to perform some activities, such as using a computer or reading for an extended period of time.
IT’s time for school to start and time for our Girl Scout Troops to start meeting, So if you have a girl in a Troop or know a Troop Leader, please pass this information on to them:

**Girl Scouting offers a variety of opportunities and challenges.**

The Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Association would like of offer the Girl Scouts the opportunity to earn a Vision Awareness Patch, which has been approved by the Girl Scout Council. PPA is an organization committed to enhancing the of eye care. We Believe the activities required for the girls to earn the patch will make them more aware of the importance of vision and good vision care. The girl’s efforts may even spark an interest in Optometry or related fields. The patches are $1.00 each. If you know a troop interested in the vision Patch please contact:

CAMILLE SEGANOS, CPOA
Email: camilivanili@yahoo.com
Phone: 814-266-7611
Fax: 814-266-3532
PPA’s Paraoptometric Reference Manual

The Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Association’s 3rd Edition of the Paraoptometric Reference Manual is available for distribution to anyone interested in a great reference tool for staff, new and previous. The manual consists of 264 pages of training and reference material, including the following:

possible duties of the optometric assistant:

- practice management
- chair side assisting
- twenty-one points exam
- status of the eye
- common diseases and injuries of the eye
- contact lenses
- vision therapy
- a page glossary

- special needs patients
- screening tests
- importance of documentation
- pharmacology (diagnostic and therapeutic)
- ocular/non-ocular emergencies
- lens materials
- optometric and medical abbreviations

As a non-profit organization, the income from the sale of these manuals is reinvested in furthering the education of Paraoptometrics throughout Pennsylvania, and the United States.

Have you own in house training manual: non-PPA member $47.00 or PPA members $32.00 that includes S/H.

- Order form is on the last page

Don’t forget to join our group on (Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Association)
It’s a great place to share ideas/photos and keep in touch with the other PPA members. Also, Pennsylvania Optometric Association, Paraoptometric Section
Quarterly ParaEyes E-News

One of the great benefits of membership is the quarterly Pennsylvania Paraoptometric newsletter, (Para-Eyes) E-News. The newsletter features a message from your Chair, information on happenings within the Association, as well as in you, CE opportunity listings, and much more. Deadlines to submit information for the newsletter will be announced two weeks before it goes to print. We are always looking for input from you and the local societies.
## Order Form

- **3rd Addition Paraoptometric Reference Manual**

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**Name________________________ Phone________________________**

**Address________________________**

Checks payable to: Pennsylvania Paraoptometric Association  
Send to: Theola Amundson, CPOT  
118 Scotland Ave.  
Punxsutawney, PA 1576