MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

COS is the recognized authority on eye and vision care in Canada, and the go-to resource for government, family and emergency physicians, allied health professionals, optometrists, and patients. Annual reports provide us with an opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year.

In 2013/2014, COS undertook a strategic planning exercise to ensure careful alignment of goals and objectives with available resources. The process included extensive member consultation, a number of key informant interviews, a membership survey, a staff strategic planning session and a Board and staff retreat. The strategic plan identified six key strategic directives: Financial Resource Management; Governance; Education; Membership; Communications and Media Relations; and Advocacy. All our resources and efforts are aligned to ensure that we are meeting/exceeding expectations and deliverables within each of the strategic pillars. The effective, transparent and responsible use of resources is a top priority for COS. Using a performance management system, outputs and outcomes in each area are measured against key strategic objectives and deliverables.

FINANCIAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- COS achieved a balanced budget for the seventh year in a row, with contributions to reserves. Over the course of the last several years, COS has continued to diversify its revenue streams.
- Ties with industry were strengthened, as our partners in the pharmaceutical and medical device sectors continued to support our activities with higher levels of educational grants. In particular, co-developed accredited symposia held in conjunction with our annual scientific meetings were an important source of income for COS.
- Both print and online advertising in the Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology (CJO) increased in 2016.

GOVERNANCE

- At the June 2016 Annual Meeting, Dr. Guillermo Rocha became President.
- The Council on Advocacy was created under the leadership of Dr. Phil Hooper, Chair, Council on Advocacy. The newly formed Council was announced at the 2015 COS Annual Meeting in Victoria and has since been engaging with the provinces and subspecialty societies to become the united voice for ophthalmology in Canada on key advocacy issues.
- In 2016, COS began the process of better defining its relationship with all of its subspecialty societies. The issue is that if a subspecialty society is not incorporated or part of the umbrella organization, personal liability can attach to those serving as “directors,” meaning that personal assets are at risk. COS is working with each subspecialty society president and executive to determine if the subspecialty society wishes to be a “committee” of COS and thus protected under the COS umbrella (for example, through its insurance programs) or if they wish to incorporate, but still remain linked to COS. All wish to remain linked to COS. Terms of reference are now being drafted.

EDUCATION

- COS is committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards, following guidelines established by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC).
- The COS Annual Meeting, our flagship continuing professional development (CPD) program, continues to exceed all expectations. The 2016 Annual Meeting in Ottawa, Ontario featured 18 international speakers and brought together over 1,500 participants for four days of workshops, research presentations, plenary sessions, surgical skills transfer courses and networking activities.
- COS co-developed the highly successful Canadian Retina Society (CRS) Meeting in March 2016 in Mont-Tremblant, Quebec.
COS partnered with the Sally Letson Foundation and the University of Ottawa Eye Institute to organize the 2016 Sally Letson Symposium: Uveitis—2016, which attracted approximately 600 delegates.

COS continued to explore opportunities to work with industry partners to expand the scope and number of CPD activities based on member needs. Stand-alone co-developed accredited programs and symposia (offered in conjunction with COS-accredited meetings) offered valuable opportunities to work with industry within RCPSC accreditation guidelines. COS co-developed two accredited symposia with industry at the 2016 CRS Meeting and two at the COS Annual Meeting; the INSIGHT Cornea and Glaucoma programs (with 11 modules delivered at nine events reaching approximately 150 physicians); Retina Case Conference Canada 2016; and the Eye on the Future 2016 meetings.

As an accredited CPD Provider of the RCPSC, COS accredited 22 Section 1 Group Learning activities and five Section 3 Self-Assessment or Simulation activities under the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program.

Supported by an educational grant, COS committed to help close the current diabetic retinopathy screening and follow-up gap in Ontario by developing and providing educational tools for both patients and family physicians (FP) to assist in diagnosing, referring, and encouraging ongoing monitoring of the eyes of patients with diabetes. A multi-disciplinary Diabetic Retinopathy Project Advisory Committee was struck, composed of an ophthalmologist, endocrinologist, optometrist, diabetes nurse educator and FP. While this initiative is a pilot project in Ontario, there is work underway with a multi-disciplinary steering committee to roll out a national continuing medical education (CME) program for FPs.

COS embarked on an initiative to bring greater awareness to CanMEDS roles, to identify the educational opportunities around these roles, and to evaluate gaps or needs to address the breadth of these roles within accredited CPD programs in ophthalmology across Canada. This is the first step to prepare our members for the move toward Competency-Based CPD programs.
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The CJO celebrated its 50th anniversary. To mark the occasion, a special 50th anniversary edition on Contemporary Canadian Ophthalmology Practice and Education was produced for the June issue. At the 2016 President’s Luncheon, held during the COS Annual Meeting in June, this anniversary was celebrated. Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Phil Hooper, delivered a presentation on the history and future of the CJO, and guests included past editors, current section editors, and other individuals who have played a key role in the CJO’s success over the years.

**MEMBERSHIP**

- COS developed a number of strategies to ensure membership retention, membership conversion, membership acquisition, and membership recovery. In 2016, COS had 1,097 members, 227 of whom were residents.

- Engagement of residents and young ophthalmologists is critical to the future of the Society. COS established a strong residents’ program, and residents serve on the Annual Meeting Planning Committee. COS provided a number of benefits to residents and young ophthalmologists, including a half-day symposium at our June 2016 Annual Meeting, and a webpage, which includes information on resident events, research initiatives, fellowships, and job opportunities.

- The number of female ophthalmologists in Canada has continued to increase year over year. COS organized its 5th annual Women in Ophthalmology educational breakfast at 2016 Annual Meeting.

**ADVOCACY**

- During National Vision Health Month in May 2016, COS met with the office of the Federal Minister of Health (Hon. Jane Philpott), the office of the Federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs (Hon. Carolyn Bennett), and the office of the Federal Leader of the Official Opposition (Hon. Rona Ambrose) to discuss the key priorities of COS. National Vision Health Month aims to encourage parliamentarians, non-profit organizations, educators and stakeholders to use the month of May to inform Canadians about eye disease prevention and vision health.

- Dr. Phil Hooper, Chair, Council on Advocacy, and Rosalind O’Connell, COS Manager of Communications and Public Affairs, travelled to...
several provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Atlantic Canada) to garner support for COS advocacy initiatives. The provinces have been highly supportive of COS’s efforts, leveraging a special contribution towards a public awareness campaign for ophthalmology and our advocacy efforts.

- Over and above the advocacy campaign, COS worked with the provinces to support the development of more infrastructure in each province and to advocate for the establishment of an eye health council model in each province. This model seeks to ensure patient safety and the appropriate utilization of resources.

- COS continued to collaborate with the Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) in areas of mutual interest: COS and CAO met twice in 2016; COS executives met with key members of CAO to discuss their support for establishing eye health councils and secured their commitment of support in some initial provinces (Saskatchewan, Manitoba, New Brunswick); the two organizations are working together on the development of a Joint Clinical Practice Guideline for the Periodic Eye Examination in Canada, and are collaborating on a Joint Position Statement on Computer Screen Time in Children.

- On September 1, 2016, COS met with the Opticians Association of Canada (OAC) to discuss their support for provincial eye health councils, resulting in a formal letter of intent from the OAC to help coordinate inter-professional working groups in each province.

- As part of a national strategy for low-vision rehabilitation (LVR) (or better known as comprehensive vision rehabilitation [CVR]), Dr. Bruce Jackson is facilitating the development of a national environmental scan on the current state of CVR across Canada with input from all the leading ophthalmologists and key experts in this space. The goal of this working group is to assimilate available information about the provision of low-vision services across Canada and to develop strategic approaches to maintain or improve this service into the future. It is recognized that these approaches will involve collaboration with optometry and others who provide the bulk of this care; however these approaches should ensure that ophthalmology maintains an active presence in this space and in the interest of our patients.

**ADVOCACY SUPPORT FOR SUBSPECIALTY SOCIETIES**

- COS worked with CRS to submit an initial letter to the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) in response to their December 2015 Recommendation Report entitled Anti-vascular Endothelial Growth Factor (VEGF) Drugs for the Treatment of Retinal Conditions. Following further consultation with CRS members prior to, during, and after the CRS Annual General Meeting, a final response was submitted to CADTH on March 18, 2016, resulting in some amendments in the final report.

- COS, the Canadian Association of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus (CAPOS) and provincial associations in British Columbia, Alberta, Quebec and the Atlantic provinces were in touch with the respective provinces to consult on the evidence with regards to the recommendations put forward in the Canadian Paediatric Society Position (CPS) Statement Preventing Ophthalmia Neonatorum. As a result of these efforts, the Canadian Perinatal Coalition requested that members from the respective associations convene and work together to attempt to reach a consensus, so that work can proceed to most appropriately and safely meet the needs of infants and their families. CPS is revising its maternal screening programs in order to enhance patient safety.

**ADVOCACY SUPPORT FOR OUR PROVINCES**

- COS actively supported the Eye Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (EPSO) and physicians in Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island regarding requested changes from the local Colleges of Optometry to expand scope of practice of optometrists.
around Schedule 1 drugs, advanced certification to diagnose and treat glaucoma, and the use of ultrasound as a form of energy for diagnostic purposes. In-person meetings took place with several provinces to gain support and buy-in for COS’s overarching advocacy and communications plan.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA RELATIONS**

- Eye and vision health continued to be topics of interest for Canadian media. COS responded to hundreds of requests from the media, and several COS members were featured in prominent, top-tier media outlets.
  - Eye and vision health continued to be topics of interest for Canadian media. COS responded to hundreds of requests from the media, and several COS members were featured in prominent, top-tier media outlets, including CTV, CBC, Global, the Globe and Mail, the National Post, Best Health, AMI Media Inc. and Zoomer.
  - The 2016 COS Annual Meeting & Exhibition in Ottawa was featured in a 40-minute segment on Accessible Media Inc. (AMI), generating 14 million national media impressions.
  - During National Vision Health Month (May 2016), COS issued a national audio news release encouraging Canadians to “Get to Know Your Os—Ophthalmology, Optometry and Opticianry,” with a focus on the medical education and unique skill-set of ophthalmology. The audio news release garnered more than 2.3 million media impressions country-wide.
  - COS collaborated with CAO and OAC to issue a press release on the eye health risks posed by non-prescription cosmetic contact lenses. The press release was developed in advance of Health Canada’s legislation to classify non-prescription cosmetic contact lenses as class II medical devices becoming law in July 2017.
  - COS participated in the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) Contact Lens Health Week, August 22–26, 2016. The ultimate goal was to encourage healthy contact lens wear and care habits for all contact lens wearers.

**PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CANADIAN DERMATOLOGY ASSOCIATION**

- COS and the Canadian Dermatology Association (CDA) announced a partnership in relation to sun protection for the eyes, which will include collaborating on a public awareness campaign about the importance of sun protection for the eyes. This campaign will lay the groundwork for a COS Product Recognition Program with CDA.

**SPECIAL PROJECTS**

- **Uninsured Services in Ophthalmology.** COS released its Uninsured Services report on the valuation of 23 uninsured services in ophthalmology in Canada. The overall objective of this project was to assist both patients and physicians in understanding the costing and the need for uninsured services in a clear, educational, ethical and transparent manner that ensures optimal patient choice and informed patient decision-making. An exclusive interview with Dr. Andrew Budning, Chair of the Uninsured Services project, was also featured in the September 2016 issue of *The Medical Post.*

- **Tele-ophthalmology.** COS convened physician leaders in tele-ophthalmology from the different provinces at the COS Annual Meeting in June 2016 to learn more about the tele-ophthalmology landscape in Canada and to conduct a SWOT analysis of these programs. The main objectives of the meeting were to: gain an understanding of the programs that currently exist within the different provinces; learn about the type of equipment used; gain insights into the organization of each program with respect to patient recall and archiving; and identify if there may be an opportunity to create a national standard for these programs that could incorporate best practices from the different jurisdictions in the interest of optimizing patient care for at-risk populations.

- **Vision Bill of Rights (Diabetes).** COS worked with The Angiogenesis Foundation as part of a global
The Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology celebrates 50 years of publication!

Le Journal canadien d’ophtalmologie célèbre ses 50 ans!
alliance of more than 30 vision and patient advocacy groups in the creation of the world’s first Vision Bill of Rights for the diabetes community. This unique collaboration united vision and diabetes groups around the common focus of vision preservation within the diabetes community. The goal of the Vision Bill of Rights is to raise awareness among susceptible patient populations that diabetes-related vision loss is a serious threat, yet often preventable with proper screening, early detection, lifestyle modifications and access to effective treatments. By raising awareness of the ways to prevent and treat diabetes-related vision loss, this guiding document will help to reduce vision loss around the world.

- **Strengthening our international ties.** Internationally, we strengthened our ties with the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO), the AAO, the Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology (PAAO), and the Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology (JCAHPO).

- **WOC 2016.** COS participated in the World Ophthalmology Congress (WOC) 2016 in Guadalajara, Mexico. The COS session was entitled “Global Information and Interrelations in Ophthalmology: The Path to the Future.”

**WHAT’S AHEAD FOR COS?**

- COS is in the process of updating its Mission Statement and defining its Core Values.

- COS has a number of subspecialty societies under its umbrella. We are developing terms of reference with those who wish to become a “committee” of COS and more clearly defining our relationship with those who are incorporated. All wish to remain linked to COS.

- COS’s goal is to be the **unified voice for ophthalmology in Canada.** We are working hard to formalize our relationship with each of our subspecialty societies and to bring them into the fold. A Board of Directors strategic planning session in the spring of 2017 will allow us to discuss how we can increase our value-add and our relevance to our subspecialty societies, all while keeping in mind the limited availability of resources.

- COS will continue to move forward with the implementation of its Five-year Strategic Plan.

- COS will move forward with the implementation of its advocacy plan—supporting the development of an infrastructure and an eye health council in each province to ensure that COS is the recognized “go-to” resource for ophthalmology in Canada and the leading authority on eye and vision care.

- The COS Annual Meeting will continue to be the focal point for CPD activities.

- COS will continue to work with its partners to address key areas of advocacy including: expanding scopes of practice for optometry; Human Resources for Health (HRH), and strategies that will help enhance patient care for specific patient populations, such as seniors.

- COS will continue its work with the CAO to develop a joint Clinical Practice Guideline for the Periodic Eye Examination in Canada.

- COS will produce a patient tool for Ontarians living with diabetes to encourage diabetic retinopathy screening, as well as a national CME program for FPs around diagnosing, referring and encouraging ongoing monitoring of patients with diabetes.

- As the recognized authority on eye disease, COS will work with CDA to raise awareness of the importance of sun protection for the eyes and the risks of sun damage to the eyes. This campaign will lay the groundwork for the COS and CDA Product Recognition Program.

- COS must embrace the RCPSC’s Competence by Design by 2019. This will require widespread stakeholder engagement in the process to ensure that the ophthalmological community is fully on board with the new direction.

- The **CJO** will continue to make changes to improve the reviewer experience and to recognize the valuable work that reviewers contribute to the **CJO** every year. The **CJO** will also launch its search for a new Editor-in-Chief, striving to recruit an individual who will uphold previous editors’ strong commitment to publishing original, peer-reviewed ophthalmology and vision science articles for a uniquely Canadian audience.

- For the first time in the history of the organization, COS will be developing and executing a national patient-led public awareness campaign in 2017 to highlight the skill and innovation of ophthalmology. The campaign will include both earned and paid traditional and non-traditional media opportunities, featuring patient testimonials. A website will also be created for the campaign, supported by social media outreach.
COS could not fulfill its mandate without its dedicated staff and the tireless efforts of our many volunteers who give their valuable time to improve eye care for all Canadians and to advocate for the profession.

We look forward to continuing to work with our members and other key stakeholders to strengthen the eye care community in Canada.
The COS Five-year Strategic Plan will guide our course for the upcoming years. Our efforts and resources will be devoted to achieving identified goals in the following six areas: governance, financial resource management, education, advocacy, membership, and communications and media relations.
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Financial Statements

January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016

COS successfully balanced the budget for the seventh consecutive year with contributions to reserves year over year. Complete financial statements and the auditor’s report for the 2016 fiscal year are available to any COS member upon request.

COS gives its members access to the latest information on ophthalmology research, surgical skills through courses at the Annual Meeting and Exhibition (special rates), the Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology (free print and online subscription), and access to a special newsletter from the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) committee, which updates COS members on how to claim and maintain CPD credits (including Sections 1 through 3) and other important CPD news. COS members also benefit from quarterly updates on the Advocacy work being done by the Society. Most importantly, by being a member, you lend your voice to COS advocacy work on behalf of ophthalmologists. When we stand united, we have a more powerful voice on the issues that affect our profession and the state of eye and vision health in Canada.

For more information, please contact:

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