



VERSION FRANÇAISE

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# COS 2019 *ADVOCACY IN ACTION*

Summer edition

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## Advocacy initiatives

### ***See The Possibilities* campaign**

The *See The Possibilities* campaign continues to perform well in 2019.

- Since its launch in 2017, the *See The Possibilities* campaign has produced six videos.
- Together, the videos have garnered over 7.6 million impressions, reached 4.3 million unique Canadians and has been viewed over 1.5 million times.
- Additionally, the *See The Possibilities* campaign has generated more than 31.6 million media impressions since the launch in 2017.
- This has included 32 interviews and 53 press release pick-ups, as well as 15 blog posts, 41 matte story placements, and more than 1.28 million social media impressions.

COS members can stay updated on the campaign by visiting the [See The Possibilities website](#).

### **COS reaches 94% of its fundraising target**

The COS thanks everyone who contributed to the COS Advocacy and Public Awareness Fund. With your contributions, the COS has reached 94% of its goal of raising \$250,000 and continues to successfully execute the *See The Possibilities* public awareness campaign. If you have not yet contributed to the COS Advocacy and Public Awareness

Fund, you may do so when you renew your COS membership, or by contacting Rita Afeltra at [rafeltra@cos-sco.ca](mailto:rafeltra@cos-sco.ca) or 613-729-6779 x 300.

### **Dr. Simon Holland appointed a COS observer in British Columbia**

Following a formal request, the British Columbia Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (BCSEPS) Executive Committee has agreed to appoint Dr. Simon Holland as an Observer for the Canadian Ophthalmological Society (COS) on the Provincial Health Services Authority's Joint Accountability Committee. Dr. Holland will provide input into the ongoing investigation around the incidence of glaucoma in patients treated with anti-VEGF injections. In their acceptance letter, BCSEPS wrote: "Dr. Holland's background is highly compatible with this role, and we are in full support of his participation on this important Committee."

### **Eye Physicians and Surgeons Association of Alberta higher sterilization update**

A call was held with the provincial leads for Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) from Calgary and Edmonton on June 24, 2019. During the call, it was agreed that high level disinfection with potential risks to patients and equipment is not the way to go. IPC has been looking at various options for "higher level" disinfection and there was interest to evaluate Tristel which involves wipes rather than a complex reprocessing system. This is used in parts of Europe and Australia though not approved in Canada. IPC is willing to see if Health Canada would permit a trial of Tristel.

### **COS advocates for increased coverage of intravitreal eye injections**

In June, COS wrote to the Honourable John Haggie, Minister of Health in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, concerning the need for sustained coverage of intravitreal eye injections. Minister Haggie responded that it is making "an effort to increase access to effective therapies for individuals suffering with neovascular age-related macular degeneration, the Newfoundland Labrador Provincial Drug Program (NLPDP) is investigating opportunities to provide coverage for Avastin in the future." This is a positive step and allows the eye physicians and surgeons of Newfoundland to begin discussing the issue with government. A [joint COS-CRS position paper](#) on the issue authored by Dr. Alan Berger accompanied the letter. This position statement was approved by the COS Board on June 12, 2019.

### **Drug shortages**

COS has engaged with Health Canada on the issue of persistent drug shortages and the impact it is having on ophthalmology and our patients. In response to current drug shortages, COS is in the process of compiling a list of "essential drugs" for ophthalmology that it plans to share with government and industry. The essential drugs list will be categorized by subspecialty and broken out into drugs administered orally and via drops.

### **Provincial associations**

COS continues to work with provincial associations of eye physicians and surgeons on issues of importance to our members. These include matters such as optometric scope creep, health human resources and issues surrounding the unemployment/under-

employment of new ophthalmology graduates. We will continue to provide updates on these and other matters as developments progress.

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