



CANADIAN OPHTHALMOLOGICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL
REPORT
2020

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CEO

Ophthalmologists looked to 2020 with a twinkle in their eyes, expecting this to be a special year, given the visual significance of the date. However, no one expected or could have been prepared for the way in which this year was “special.” It was a year of enormous challenges personally and professionally for ophthalmologists and for all Canadians. However, it was also a year in which the ophthalmology community showed resilience, innovation, and agility. The Canadian Ophthalmological Society is proud to be the voice for this community, and we believe the organization also exhibited those qualities exemplified by our members.

As we look back, we would like to thank the COS Board of Directors, the many volunteers who donated their time and expertise to the Society, and the COS staff team who ably and enthusiastically responded to the challenges of the new virtual reality.

The pandemic has taught us that, together, we can achieve great things, even or perhaps especially, in the face of adversity, and we are pleased to provide you with this Annual Report that provides an overview of some of the work of your Society. We look forward to continuing the journey together in 2021.



Colin Mann, MD, FRCSC

President, COS Board of Directors



Elisabeth Fowler, MBA

Executive Director/CEO



COS IS THE
RECOGNIZED,
UNIFIED VOICE FOR
OPHTHALMOLOGY
IN CANADA AND THE
GO-TO RESOURCE
FOR **"ALL THINGS
OPHTHALMOLOGY"**



COS 2020 MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

COS exists because of and for its members, and retaining and attracting members is fundamental to its ability to be the unified voice of ophthalmology in Canada. In 2020, COS had 1149 members, 220 of whom were residents – the future of ophthalmology in Canada.

Fiscal Accountability to Our Members

Over the course of the last several years, COS has worked to diversify its revenue streams. Despite these efforts, COS was challenged in 2020 with the advent of the pandemic and used a small portion of its reserves for the first time in 10 years. The Board of Directors felt that this was appropriate as it allowed COS to continue to support its membership through this difficult year. Complete financial statements and the auditors' report for the 2020 fiscal year are available to any COS member upon request.

1,149

Members

220

Residents
in Canada

29

International
Members

SUPPORTING MEMBERS IN TIMES OF COVID-19



Throughout the pandemic,
COS supported our members by:



Ensuring members' ability to adapt their practice to the realities of the pandemic through the creation, endorsement and distribution of daily updates, as well as 13 guidelines and recommendations.



Creating a sense of community via the "[Path to a New Vision](#)" webinar series. With the financial support of Bayer, this series of five webinars met the pressing education need, but also created a sense of connection and engagement among members across the country.



Providing needed personal protective equipment (PPE). Thanks to grants from Bayer and MD Financial, COS was able to create, produce, and distribute 1,000 slit lamp breath shields to 500 members for free.



Expanding the practice resource centre (PRC, www.cosprc.ca), to become the "one-stop hub" for COVID-19 news, guidance and information for ophthalmologists in Canada and around the world with over 50 COVID-19-related postings.



Ensuring access to continuing professional development (CPD) to all members by providing free access for all members to the 2020 COS Annual Meeting and Exhibition.



1,000 free slit lamp breath shields to 500 members



650 free Annual Meeting and Exhibition registrations



Over 50 COVID-19 related postings



5 "Path to a New Vision" webinars



Daily updates and 13 guidelines



2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Annual reports provide us with an opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year. We are guided by our strategic plan, which encompasses overall Organizational Excellence and metric-driven excellence within the following strategic pillars: Advocacy, Education, Communications and Brand Strategy, and Strategic Relationships.

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ADVOCACY

COS is the voice for ophthalmologists, united around the values of cost-effective, patient-centered, evidence-based care. 2020 was a year focused on strengthening our foundations in advocacy and paving the road for a clear, targeted and effective advocacy strategy for the organization.

OUR PROUD MOMENTS

Three clearly defined and actionable strategic priorities

The COS Board approved a clear set of Advocacy Goals and Objectives as proposed by the COS Council on Advocacy following an extensive internal and external review:



Increase access to eye care for all Canadians;



Increase access to drugs and technology; and



Maintain a high standard of eye-health care.

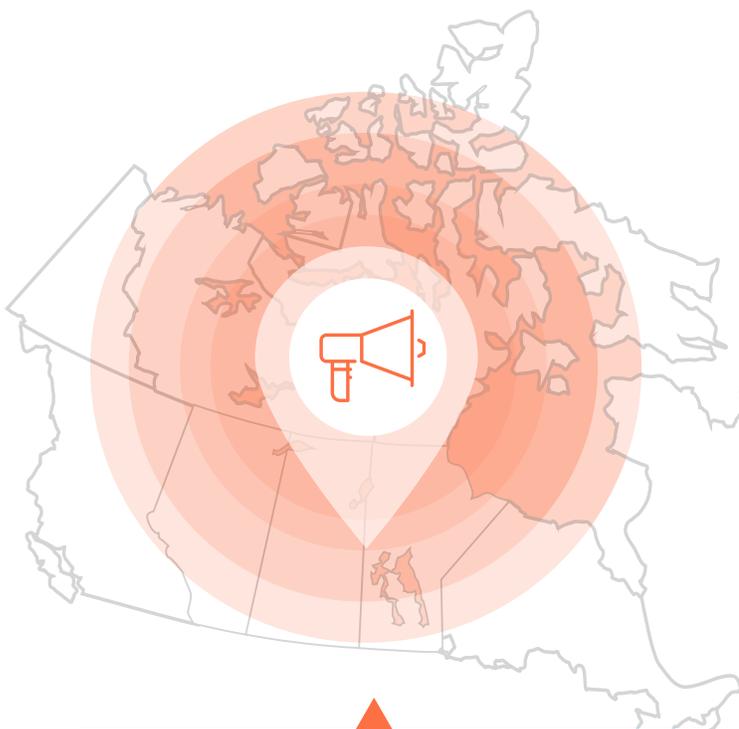
In 2021, COS will create supporting products and documents for members that detail our position and provide information for members' direct advocacy.

Ophthalmic interventions save \$1.6 billion in healthcare costs

COS and the Conference Board of Canada developed a [report](#) that highlights the value of ophthalmology and estimates that ophthalmic interventions save \$1.6 billion in direct healthcare costs. This report will guide advocacy efforts in 2021 and beyond.

14 million impressions reached through World Sight Day and our “Don’t Gamble with your Vision” campaign

COS launched a targeted media campaign and contest entitled “Don’t Gamble with your Vision” that educated Canadians about the four major eye diseases and encouraged the public to take a quiz to determine their eye-health risk.



This campaign generated:

14,000,000 Impressions

Which is the equivalent to a value of \$196,000 in earned media.

COS spokespeople were featured in 31 traditional media segments, including [CTV Morning Live Ottawa](#) and [Vancouver, Global News Morning Montreal, The Tonic show on Zoomer Radio](#) and [Reader's Digest](#).

Strengthened relationships

COS continues to work with provincial and federal stakeholders based on common advocacy goals. Together, we share social media activity, cross-organizational input on advocacy campaigns, and endorsement on policy recommendations to government.

Thank you to our members for supporting COS's advocacy efforts

In 2020, COS reached 94% of its target Advocacy Fund goal. The voluntary contributions to the Fund, along with additional investments from COS, are used to support advocacy and public awareness projects to empower the provincial partners, subspecialty societies and academic community with advocacy tools, training and resources to help raise the profile of the profession.

Working to diminish drug shortages

COS continues to be actively engaged with Health Canada's Tier Assignment Committee (TAC) to represent member and patient interests on ophthalmic drug shortage issues. Separately, COS also tracks ophthalmic drug shortages through multidata input from the Drug Shortages Canada database and our industry partners, who voluntarily share with us anticipated shortages and backlogs. Moving forward, members will be able to access the tracking sheet on the COS website in the Members Only section.

Prioritizing medically necessary time-sensitive (MeNTS) ophthalmic surgery

COS Board members Drs. Colin Mann, Yvonne Buys and Phil Hooper worked with Drs. Salina Teja and Vivian Yin to develop a modified [MeNTS Surgical Prioritization document](#) to provide a tool for ophthalmologists to help prioritize ophthalmology surgeries once the first wave of COVID-19 had passed.

Surgical backlog

COS acted as a key informant for the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) report entitled *Clearing the Backlog: The Cost to Return Wait Times to Pre-Pandemic Levels*, which quantifies the backlog of six surgeries resulting from the first wave of COVID-19. Cataract surgery was highlighted in the document.



EDUCATION

COS represents the gold standard in the accreditation and development of innovative continuing professional development (CPD) resources and activities to support the breadth of our membership.

Accredited CPD Provider

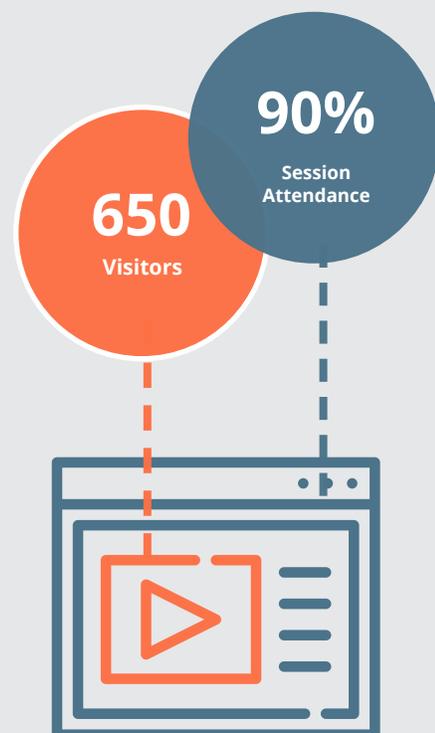
In 2020, COS fulfilled year two of its eight-year accreditation period as an Accredited CPD Provider of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC).

2020 COS Annual Meeting & Exhibition

The 2020 COS Annual Meeting & Exhibition, held from June 26 to 28, 2020, provided 15 sessions over three days, and welcomed 85 speakers, including 16 international keynote speakers. The virtual meeting included an interactive exhibition hall, ePosters, surgical videos, live and recorded paper presentations. Due to the virtual nature of the meeting, many presentations were transitioned to on-demand content for those who were unable to attend. The virtual meeting boasted the highest session attendance in the meeting's 83-year history.

We hosted our first virtual Annual Meeting!

The COS team had eight weeks to take the largest educational gathering of ophthalmic professionals in Canada and make it virtual and free for members.



COS accredited:	16	4
	Section 1 Group Learning Activities	Section 3 Online Self-Assessment Programs

CPD Activities



Delivered the module “[Diabetes and the Eye for Primary Care Providers](#)”, certified through the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) (Mainpro+) and reached 151 participants.



Launched an innovative online module “[Glaucoma OCT Interpretation 101](#)”, co-developed with EyeCarePD and accredited under Section 3.



Launched the Section 3 accredited, online module “Unusual Cataract and IOL Complications”, co-developed with the Canadian Cataract Institute.



Co-developed a one-hour webinar “Pharmaceutical Management of Glaucoma”, with Aequus, which was delivered by Dr. Paul Harasymowycz to 243 participants.



Co-developed and delivered an online game “[Private Eye: Connecting the Dots in Dry Eye Disease](#)” with Novartis that engaged 29 participants.



Delivered two Section 3 accredited online modules from the co-developed symposia hosted at the 2020 COS Virtual Meeting: <http://www.cos2020symposia.com/>.

CPD rapid response

In order to become more nimble in providing co-developed options for partners, the CPD team initiated a rapid response review of potential CPD offerings. This initiative has allowed a faster turnaround from proposal review stage to project inception and delivery, providing more CPD opportunities to COS members.

COS Practice Resource Centre

In May 2019, COS launched the PRC (www.cosprc.ca), an online space that provides Canadian ophthalmologists with access to a variety of CPD resources, including CPD opportunities and events, accredited and unaccredited activities, position statements, and information about CPD for program planners and learners. The PRC aims to be the “go-to” website for Canadian ophthalmologists and trainees to find CPD and ophthalmology-related resources.

The PRC Committee embarked on a strategic evaluation of the website in 2020, engaging with members on

The PRC has seen tremendous growth over the past year with increasing content and visitors.

23,000+

Visitors to our website in 2020

72,000+

Page views in 2020



functionality, look and feel, and content. The feedback from a SWOT analysis and key informant interviews will provide strategic directions for the PRC committee and website into 2021 to ensure that this resource continues to provide value to COS members.



COS Physician Wellness initiatives

COS was a recipient of targeted funding from MD Financial Management, Scotiabank and CMA as part of an Affinity Agreement. This funding is directed towards physician wellness initiatives and COS will receive \$200,000 from 2019 to 2021. This year, our initiatives included:

Two webinars that reached close to 400 participants: “Turning Burnout into Joy”, hosted by Dr. Mamta Gautam and designed to help physicians recognize the symptoms of burnout and to prevent burnout in themselves and their

colleagues; and “Navigating the Road to Retirement” through which Canadian ophthalmologists shared their experience with retirement planning and engaged with experts around the financial, medicolegal and psychosocial aspects related to retiring from an ophthalmology practice.

A [Wellness Supplement](#) to *CJO* that featured editorials, articles, letters and resources that focused on a wide range of topics related to physician wellness.

Canadian Medical Association (CMA) consultation

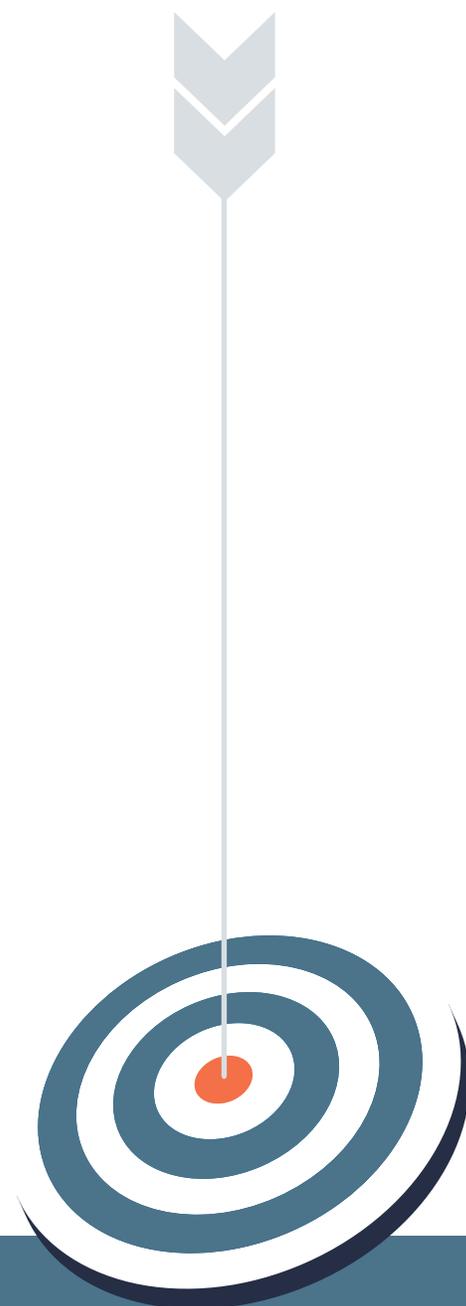
COS surveyed members and worked with the COS Board of Directors and the Maintenance of Certification Committee to respond to the CMA’s revised Guidelines for Physicians in Interactions with Industry.

Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology

The *CJO* continued to make important strides toward Editor-in-Chief Dr. Chaudhary’s goal of making the journal a global leader in ophthalmology.

2020 was a year of notable improvements in key CJO outcome metrics

- 1 Breaking all previous submissions records with a 48.4% increase from 2019, for a total of 1574 submissions.
- 2 Reducing time from submission to first decision to 2.4 weeks (a 40% decrease), one of the best times globally for ophthalmology journals.
- 3 Maintaining a competitive acceptance rate of 13% a rejection rate of 87%.
- 4 Seeing a 5% increase in the Impact Factor, which now sits at 1.369.
- 5 Receiving more than 2000 citations, over 120 of which were from articles published in 2020.



**28%
Increase**

CJO's social media presence continued to expand throughout 2020, with a 28% increase in Twitter followers and a 150% increase in Instagram followers from 2019.



**150%
Increase**



27,000+ Downloads

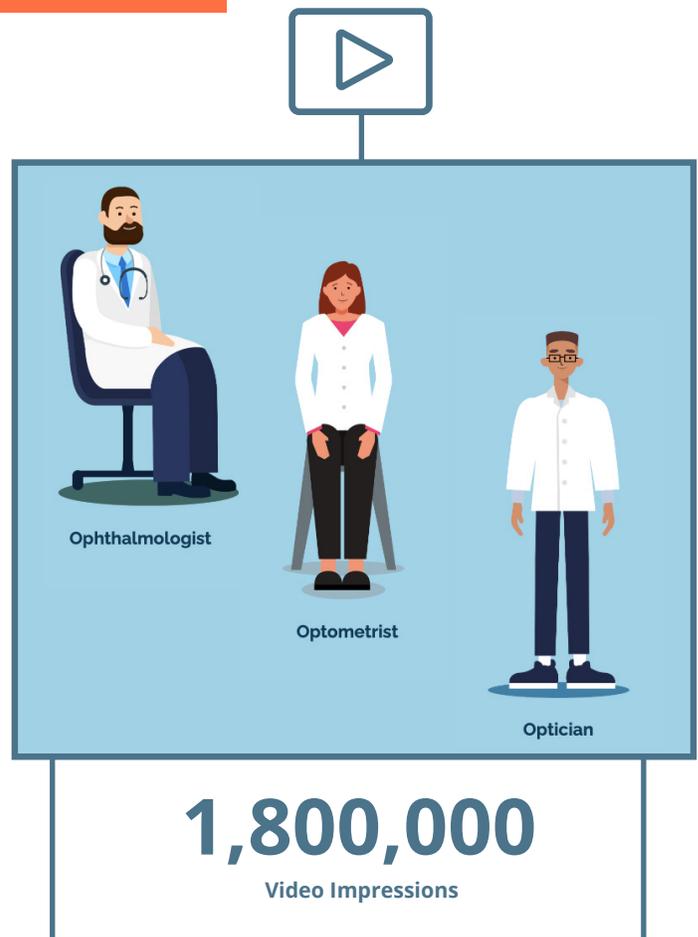
On average, there were 27,315 monthly downloads (a 28% increase from 2019) and 327,784 annual full text downloads (a 25% increase from 2019).

COMMUNICATIONS AND BRAND STRATEGY

COS advances the leadership, skill and innovation of ophthalmologists. In 2019, COS leadership approved the plan to revitalize the COS brand with a new brand strategy, new corporate website and internal database. In the current age of digital communications, COS has risen to the challenge.

See The Possibilities (STP) campaign

With a robust new social media strategy we increased activity on social media, and grew our social following across all platforms. We released the first of five interactive animation videos on the top four eye diseases and the role of the three “O’s”. More videos will be released throughout 2021. Videos hosted on the COS website and shared over COS’s social media platforms have boosted COS social media activity and website traffic by over 25%.



Partnering on disease awareness

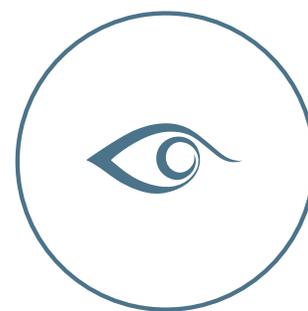
COS and Diabetes Canada partnered in November to raise awareness about diabetic retinopathy and the management of diabetes during Diabetes Awareness Month. Dr. Phil Hooper was featured in an article about diabetic retinopathy in the [Montréal en Santé](#). This article was released in Quebec in both French and English with a readership of 27,000 people. This information was published in the October edition, which had a focus on diabetes.

Fresh new COS website is more accessible than ever before

COS's new public-facing website was launched in the summer of 2020. Its new interface is both user-friendly and accessible. In addition to the public-facing website, COS also has a completely upgraded Members Only section that will house important information related to advocacy and drug shortages.

COS launches the first-ever EyeCan podcast

Thanks to a grant from MD Financial, COS launched a podcast entitled "EyeCan: A Canadian Lens on Ophthalmology" co-hosted by Dr. Setareh Ziai and Dr. Guillermo Rocha. Episodes are available on Spotify and Apple and directly from the COS website. Sixteen episodes are planned, including discussions about innovative treatments in glaucoma, navigating retirement, and new drugs for inherited retinal diseases.



STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

COS is relevant, innovative and creative, and develops strong partnerships with other organizations to advance eye health. We support and empower our partners, encourage members to action, and engage and recognize our volunteers.

Working with our partners

COS continues to work closely with all of its subspecialty societies, the provinces and the academic community on major issues to position the expertise and skill of ophthalmology to government, the media, the public and other medical and eye healthcare providers. COS's communications team has also redoubled efforts to work with other partners to help highlight vision-related issues through cross-promotional campaigns (e.g., Diabetes Canada, Canadian Paediatric Society, Fighting Blindness Canada).

In 2020, COS collaborated with the organizations listed to the right.



MAJOR INITIATIVES FOR 2021

Building on the successes of the virtual 2020 Annual Meeting, we will deliver the 2021 COS Annual Meeting and Exhibition as a virtual meeting. We are working diligently to develop the high-quality scientific program expected from the COS Annual Meeting and Exhibition. We will continue to host subspecialty sessions and showcase innovative research through papers, ePosters and Surgical Videos.

The 2021 COS Annual Meeting and Exhibition will once again be a fully virtual event. It will run over four days from Thursday, June 24 to Sunday, June 27, 2021. Subspecialty sessions will be hosted and, in order to increase content, we will offer concurrent sessions. ePosters and Surgical Videos will be available for on-demand viewing with discussion, and paper oral presentations will be delivered during the subspecialty sessions. We will host a fully interactive exhibition hall to provide ophthalmologists with an opportunity to explore the new technology, devices and advances in treatment options offered by our partners in the industry.

We will host a special Awards Session on Thursday, June 24 to recognize the Lifetime Achievement Award recipient and COS Awards of Excellence in Ophthalmic Research.

Following the virtual exhibition hall kick-off on Thursday, June 24, registrants can participate in our first-ever Game Show hosted by COS President, Dr. Colin Mann. The evening promises to be engaging, interactive and, most of all, fun.

New in 2021



In addition to the Advocacy Toolkit found in the Members Only section of the COS website, we will be releasing “Advocacy Song Sheets” that are issue specific. Advocacy Song Sheets will contain relevant information and speaking points on the three major advocacy priorities of the organization.



COS has implemented a new database for registration and e-communications throughout the organization and to its members. We will be moving towards full functionality in 2021.



COS will continue to develop and populate a robust Members Only section on the COS website.



Strategic planning around the PRC will continue with key informant interviews and a strategic planning session of the PRC Committee.



Workshops and webinars will be delivered to address different areas of physician wellness, including mindfulness and how to deal with complaints.

THE BOARD, STAFF, AND PARTNERS

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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019/2020

Colin Mann, MD, President

Yvonne Buys, MD, Immediate Past-president

Ravi Dookeran, MD, Treasurer

Mona Harissi-Dagher, MD, Chair, Annual Meeting

Phil Hooper, MD, Chair, Council on Advocacy

Hady Saheb, MD, Chair, Council on Continuing Professional Development & Maintenance of Certification Committee

Jamie Taylor, MD, Secretary

Setareh Ziai, MD, Board Liaison, Residents and Young Ophthalmologists

COUNCILS, COMMITTEES AND THEIR CHAIRS 2019/2020

Annual Meeting Planning Committee: Mona Harissi-Dagher, MD

CJO Editorial Board: Varun Chaudhary, MD, Editor-in-Chief

Council on Advocacy: Phil Hooper, MD

Council on Continuing Professional Development: Hady Saheb, MD

COS Awards of Excellence: Cindy Hutnik, MD

Skills Transfer Courses: Patrick Gooi, MD

Eye Bank Committee: Stephen Brodovsky, MD

Investment Committee: Ravi Dookeran, MD

Maintenance of Certification: Hady Saheb, MD

Nominating Committee: Yvonne Buys, MD

Practice Resource Centre: Christine Law, MD

Residents and Young Ophthalmologists (Board Liaison): Setareh Ziai, MD

STAFF TEAM

Elisabeth Fowler, Executive Director/CEO

Rita Afeltra, Manager, Membership & Meeting Logistics

Christine Bruce, Project Lead, Meeting Logistics & Exhibits

Kate Cooke, Governance Coordinator

Fetun Delessa, Coordinator, Continuing Professional Development

Colleen Drake, Coordinator, Continuing Professional Development

Eric Johnson, Manager of Communications and Advocacy

Suzanne Purkis, Managing Editor, *Canadian Journal of Ophthalmology*

Cheryl Ripley, Director, Continuing Professional Development

Courtny Vaz, Coordinator, Communications and Public Affairs

KEY PARTNERS/LIAISONS

American Academy of Ophthalmology: Andrew Budning, MD

Association of Canadian University Professors in Ophthalmology (including chairs and program directors): Karim Damji, MD, Chair

International Council of Ophthalmology: Vivian Yin, MD

Pan-American Association of Ophthalmology: Guillermo Rocha, MD

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons Specialty Committee in Ophthalmology: Lorne Bellan, MD

AFFILIATED SOCIETIES AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Canadian Association for Public Health & Global Ophthalmology

Canadian Association of Paediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus

Canadian Cornea, External Disease & Refractive Surgery Society

Canadian Glaucoma Society

Canadian Neuro-ophthalmology Society

Canadian Ocular Regenerative Medicine Society

Canadian Ophthalmic Pathology Society

Canadian Retina Society

Canadian Society of Oculoplastic Surgery

Canadian Uveitis Society

Canadian Vision Rehabilitation Society

Cataract Surgery

Council of Canadian Ophthalmology Residents

ALLIED HEALTH

Canadian Orthoptic Council

Canadian Society of Ophthalmic Medical Personnel

Canadian Society of Ophthalmic Registered Nurses

The Canadian Orthoptic Society

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mariem Abidar, MD (Quebec)

Ali Ahadian, MD (Ontario)

William Best, MD (Prince Edward Island)

Maria Gabriela Campos-Baniak, MD
(Saskatchewan)

Ghislain Boudreault, MD
(Newfoundland & Labrador)

Jonathan Bush, MD (British Columbia)

Crystal Cheung, MD (USA)

Jérémy Claes, MD (Quebec)

Patrick Daigle, MD (Ontario)

Christelle Doyon, MD (Quebec)

Georges Durr, MD (Quebec)

Kaisra Esmail, MD (Alberta)

Paul Freund, MD (Nova Scotia)

Jennifer Gao, MD (Nova Scotia)

Thomas Haldimann, MD (Switzerland)

Mostafa Hanout, MD (Newfoundland)

Benjamin Jastrzembski, MD (USA)

Imran Jivraj, MD (Alberta)

Alexander Kaplan, MD (Ontario)

Oscar Kasner, MD (Quebec)

Michèle Leclerc, MD (Quebec)

Monique Munro, MD (Alberta)

Victor Penner, MD (British Columbia)

Faye Pesenti, MD (British Columbia)

Roberto Piemontesi, MD
(British Columbia)

Marie-Eve Poirier, MD (Quebec)

Michael Richard, MD (Manitoba)

Debra-Meghan Sanft, MD (Quebec)

Ashraf Shalaby, MD (Alberta)

Joelle Tremblay, MD (Quebec)

Étienne Vachon-Joannette, MD (Quebec)

Julie Vadboncoeur, MD (Quebec)

Susan Wakil, MD (Quebec)

Bruce Wietharn (USA)

Mark Xu, MD (Ontario)

THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 COS ANNUAL MEETING & EXHIBITION SPONSORS

DIAMOND



PLATINUM



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



AMBASSADOR



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