



Ensuring Improved Access to Care Through Optimization of Optometric Scope

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 15, 2026 – Ottawa, ON - The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) is working with governments across Canada to ensure that optometrists can practice to the full scope of their education and training.

Scope of practice decisions in health care should be grounded in core principles: what a profession is formally educated and assessed to do through accredited programs, and what can be delivered safely and effectively to patients.

Across Canada, provincial regulators are reviewing safe additions to optometrists' authorized procedures. CAO supports open and transparent consultation processes about these additions, including public consultations where all stakeholders can participate. However, scope of practice decisions should be guided by evidence, accredited education, and regulatory standards. While other professions may provide perspectives, they should not be the basis for determining another profession's scope.

As eye health and vision care needs grow - the result of an aging population, rising rates of chronic disease, and increasing pressure on specialist services - it is critical that regulatory frameworks align with the competencies of health professionals. Optometrists are highly trained in the diagnosis and management of eye disease, including in-office procedures that are part of their accredited education and training.

"As research, technology advances, and clinical care continue to evolve, so too do the scopes of health professions, ensuring that patients benefit from the most current evidence and approaches to care," said Dr. Allison Scott, President of the CAO. "This makes it possible for optometrists to provide more routine, in-office procedures, thereby improving access to safe, high quality, timely care for Canadians."

- 30 -

About the Canadian Association of Optometrists

The Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO) is the national voice of optometry. Optometrists are independent primary health care providers and represent the front line of vision health. Optometrists practice in a range of settings: most work in private practice, others work in clinics, hospitals, community health centres, corporate optometry, research, teaching, and administration. Recognized at home and internationally as a leading advocate for the profession, CAO is dedicated to providing leadership and support to its +8,400 members (Optometrists, Students, and Optometric Assistants) to enhance the delivery of healthy eyes and clear vision for all Canadians. For more information, visit www.opto.ca.

For media inquiries, please contact: Rhona Lahey, Communications Advisor, rlahey@opto.ca