

TUESDAY TALK

MARYLAND OPTOMETRY'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

News - Events - Products - Services - And More!



— *Who we are*

It's All About VISION



OUR MISSION

The Maryland Optometric Association serves as the voice of optometry in Maryland to protect doctors and their patients. We advocate, educate and connect optometrists by strong advocacy efforts, providing premier educational resources, and engaging events that bring doctors and industry partners together.

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— *MOA Partners*

Thank You for your Support!

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— *InsEyed Scoop*

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— *Presidents Council 2024 Report*

The importance of LIVE connections

Happy New Year, Everyone! I tried to escape the frigid temperature of Maryland for the desert heat of Arizona but to my dismay the weather did not cooperate. So with my winter coat in hand, I traveled to Tempe, Arizona to attend this year's Presidents Council.

The Presidents Council is where leaders of each state association meet to learn about AOA national initiatives as well as exchange and share ideas with other states affiliates. AOA reports that the Presidents Council had the largest attendance to date.

AOA takes on vision plans and provider parity

On the national level AOA continues to work with state affiliates to pass legislation to prevent abusive policies by vision plans. Texas, Nevada, Georgia, and Illinois have successfully passed vision plan laws over the last year. But the work continues to prevent these laws from being overturned. AOA is also working with members who have been subject to Aetna's down-coding claims.

Have you experienced any abusive practices by vision plans or medical insurance? Please send us an email at StopPlanAbuses@aoa.org.

AOA establishes a position on Telemedicine in Optometry and discusses how Artificial Intelligence will impact how optometrist delivers care.

The AOA supports the appropriate use of telemedicine in Optometry. They recommend:

- criteria must be met to ensure that telemedicine in optometry meets the existing standard of care and is of high quality
- contributes to care coordination
- protects and promotes the doctor-patient relationship
- complies with state licensure and other legal requirements
- maintains patient choice and transparency
- protects patient privacy

Current Maryland Telemedicine Law requires:

- telehealth providers to be licensed in Maryland to provide services to patients located in Maryland
- must verify identity of patient through government issued ID
- Document patient's date of birth and home address
- Telehealth providers must disclose name, contact information, MD License number, and medical specialty
- Notify patients of data breach
- Have the ability to securely transmit patient information
- must obtain oral or written consent from a patient or guardian
- If clinically appropriate, telehealth providers must refer a patient to an in person health care facility
- may not treat a patient or issue a prescription based solely on a state online questionnaire

continued on next page



Natalie Sukontasup, O.D.
MOA President-Elect



— *Presidents Council 2024 Report*

Presidents Council 2024 Report (continued)

AOA supports national and state legislation for increased scope of practice

The role of optometry in the Veterans Health Care Administration is back in the news again. In 2023, the VA issued a directive to establish a national standard of practice for more than 50 health care professions including optometry. Ophthalmology groups are advocating the VA to align the new practice standards for optometry with the most restrictive state scope of practice. Fortunately, the VA has countered that such action would restrict access to care for their veterans, who optometrists are delivering 2/3 of the eye care services. If the VA establishes practice standards that allow optometrists to practice at the fullest scope of their license, this will be significant and can be used to support future scope expansion legislation on the state level.

On the state level, 11 States have passed laser legislations and in 2024 with another 11 states planning to introduce laser legislation. We will be watching closely as two neighboring states, Vermont and New Hampshire, introduce their legislation.

Maryland Pac Funds are Low! Please consider DONATING!

Natalie Sukontasup, O.D.
MOA President-Elect



DONATE TO MOA PAC

or

SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW!



— *Advocacy Matters* OPTOMETRY IS A LEGISLATED PROFESSION

Maryland Optometry 2024 Advocacy Day Success

On January 30th, MOA doctor advocates met with their representatives in the Maryland Senate and House of Delegates in Annapolis. With so many new faces in Annapolis since the 2019 elections, it was imperative for us to educate key legislators about the integral role of Optometry in health care. Doctors engaged with over 40 members of the General Assembly including key policymakers like the Senate President, various committee chairs and numerous members of the House and Senate health committees. Advocacy efforts were focused on education about the primary eye care role of optometrists and the critical role ODs



play in the [detection and early prevention of cardiac disease](#). Overall, the day was a tremendous success and all participants found the experience incredibly rewarding. These in-person interactions are so important to the development of essential relationships needed to promote and defend the profession. If you missed our State Advocacy Day, please keep it in mind for next year and sign up to participate in the AOA on Capitol Hill Advocacy next month on **April 16th in Washington, D.C.**

Get Involved
REGISTER NOW!





Maryland State Board of Examiners in Optometry

Licensing Updates & Proposed Changes

Proposed NEW Background Check Requirement: This Session, the State Optometry Board requested the introduction of legislation - [HB 381](#) (SB 175) entitled, "State Board of Examiners in Optometry - Criminal History Records Checks." If passed (which seems likely), the new law would require all optometrists (new and renewal licensees) to pay \$51.25 for a State and federal criminal background check, which includes a \$20 fingerprinting fee, a \$13.25 FBI fee and \$18 fee to CJIS-CR. Four of the Maryland Health Occupation boards have this requirement in place. If the bill becomes law, the Optometry Board would be the 5th of 8 boards to adopt the requirement. The remaining boards include Acupuncture, Dietetic Practice, and Environmental Health Specialists. The timeline for implementation will be determined after passage, but could be as soon as the 2025 licensure cycle.

Proposed Licensure Reciprocity: By request of State Department of Health legislation was introduced this Session - [HB 146](#) (SB 221) Health Occupations Boards – Reciprocal Licensure and Certification - to permit Health Occupation Boards to adopt licensure reciprocity regulations. If passed, boards would be required to identify requirements (e.g. CE, experience, nat'l/State exams, etc.) for reciprocity. The intent of this legislation is increased patient care access (especially in rural areas) due to the healthcare workforce shortage.

2024 CE Renewal Requirements: As reported in our last edition of Tuesday Talk, pre-pandemic CE requirements have gone back into effect for the 2024 renewal cycle. For TPA licensees the requirements are as follows:

- 50 Total Credits - 20 In-Person (min) | 30 Virtual (max)
- In-Person credits must include 10 hrs of In-State/In-Person CE ([COMAR 10.28.02.05](#))
- Synchronous Virtual CE Meetings (Dedicated or Hybrid) may count Toward 10 hr requirement if Board Approved
- AHA CPR Certification

****For more information on CE requirements, visit the [BOE website](#) or contact Board staff directly via [email](#) or by phone at (410) 764-4711.***

— *Legislative Update*



MARYLAND LEGISLATURE BILLS OF INTEREST

In addition to the Maryland Optometry licensure legislation previously mentioned, the MOA Legislative Committee has been tracking several other bills - listed below. MOA has actively opposed HB 1292, which would have required optometrists to include a PD measurement free of charge as part of any Rx patients receive for glasses or contacts. MOA submitted written testimony and MOA President Dr. Vicky Wong delivered a compelling oral testimony at the House Hearing outlining Maryland Optometry's strong opposition to the legislation. At present, it is unlikely that either of these bills will pass this Session.

- [HB 893](#) Primary and Secondary Students - Vision and Hearing Studies and Evaluations
- [HB 1292](#) Optometrists - Prescriptions for Glasses and Contact Lenses - Pupillary Distance Measurement



WELCOME
to our community

Recognizing new members of the MOA family!

Amber Ziess, O.D.

Rossana Z. Luna, O.D.

Alexa R. Pereira, O.D.

Gregory J. Katchuck, O.D.

Dominic Brown, O.D.

MOA wants to welcome new 2024 members. Whether you seek general license information, a society networking event, a mentorship, or simply CE credits, we have you covered. Reach out to MOA staff anytime via email or by phone at (410) 486-9662. We are here to support you.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES



SUMMER FUN

Offered in-person and virtually with lectures by Drs. Greg Caldwell, Corinne Casey & Judy Hu and Tracy Offerdahl BSc, PharmD, FAAO

MAY
24-26



Perryville, MD



FALL CONVENTION

Skip the crowds and traffic and join us at the newly renovated Ashore Beach Resort for the 2024 Annual Convention the weekend after Labor Day.. Offered in-person and virtually. Schedule to come.

SEPT
6-8



Ocean City, MD



KERATOCONUS SYMPOSIUM

10 hrs of COPE CE by the most well known experts in Ophthalmology and Optometry that specialize in cornea and corneal ectatic diseases.

MAY
18-19



North Bethesda, MD

REGISTER NOW

MEMBERS RECEIVE FREE IN-PERSON REGISTRATION TO KERATOCONUS SYMPOSIUM WITH PURCHASE OF ANY MOA CONFERENCE TICKET!

For MOA Summer Fun conference details visit the [MOA website Event Page](#).

Fall Convention details coming soon.

Both MOA conferences are presented in half-day formats to encourage family fun time! COPE Approval pending for MOA Summer & Fall meetings (10 CE credits each).

For more information on the 2nd Annual Keratoconus Symposium scan the QR code or visit the [Event Website](#).

**Member code to attend Keratoconus Symposium for FREE will be emailed after completion of MOA Conference registration.*

CONFERENCE DISCOUNT OPPORTUNITIES

21
MARCH

THURS
12PM

Madness
MARCH

GROUP NAME

Maryland Optometry March
Madness

PASSWORD

MDmadness

1st Place

50% off any MOA Conf Registration

2nd Place

25% off

3rd Place

15% off

REGISTER NOW



Join the Maryland Optometry March Madness tournament team for a chance to win
50/25/15% off any Conference ticket.

Don't forget to register asap for MOA conferences to "catch the worm!"
Early Bird Deadline ends May 1.

— Local Events



Spring Young OD Meeting

Event is FREE!
Space is limited.

[REGISTER TODAY!](#)

Dr. Barbra Johnson is inviting you to the **CMOS Spring 2024 CE Event!**

Space is limited.

[REGISTER](#) today!


CMOS SPRING CE EVENT

LECTURE BY
MARIAM MATHAI, M.D.

OCT-ANGIOGRAPHY FOR THE RETINA – ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

1 HOUR CE PENDING BOE APPROVAL

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27 | 6:00 P.M.



7400 WISCONSIN AVE,
BETHESDA, MD 20814

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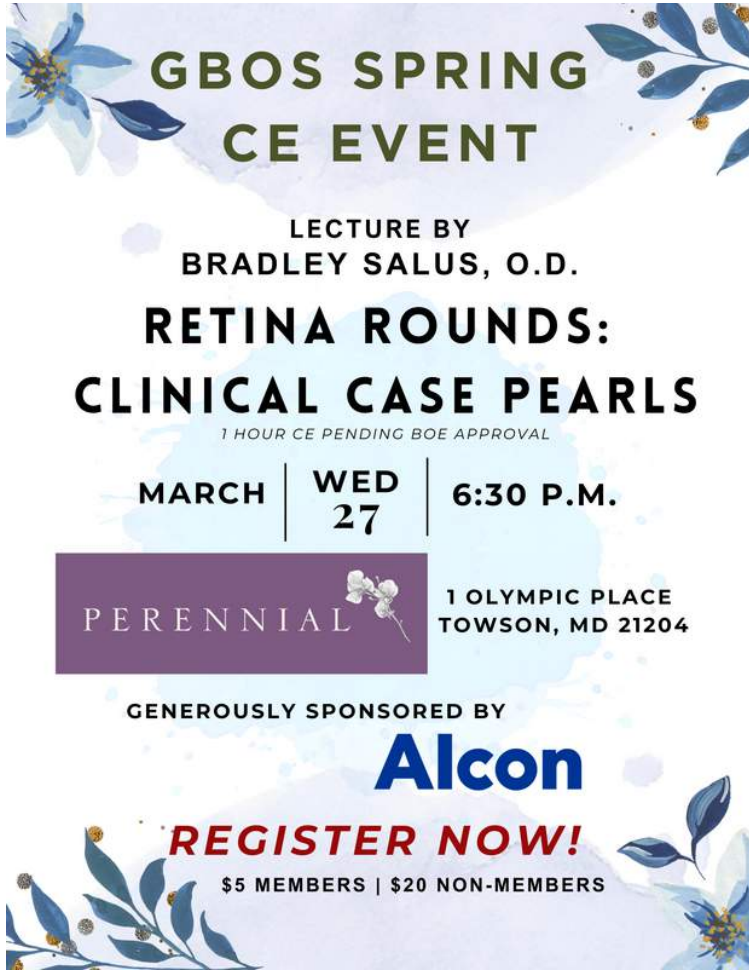
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WITH LISA GREEN, O.D.

REGISTER NOW!

\$5 MEMBERS | \$20 NON-MEMBERS

— Local Events



**GBOS SPRING
CE EVENT**

LECTURE BY
BRADLEY SALUS, O.D.

**RETINA ROUNDS:
CLINICAL CASE PEARLS**
1 HOUR CE PENDING BOE APPROVAL

MARCH | WED | 6:30 P.M.
27

PERENNIAL
1 OLYMPIC PLACE
TOWSON, MD 21204

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REGISTER NOW!
\$5 MEMBERS | \$20 NON-MEMBERS

Dr. Jenny Chan is
inviting you to the
**GBOS Spring 2024
CE Event!**

Space is limited.

[REGISTER](#) today!



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— *MOA 2024 Award Nominations!*

*Congratulations to all MOA members Nominated
for 2024 MOA Recognition Awards this year!*

We thank you for your dedication to the profession of Maryland Optometry
and for your support of Maryland citizens!

AWARD NOMINATIONS!

MOA's most prestigious Annual Awards!

Make your nominations before April 15th!



MOA
AWARD
NOMINATIONS

Do you know someone deserving of recognition?
Nominate yourself or a colleague for one of MOA's
prestigious Annual Awards!

- Optometrist of the Year
- Young Optometrist of the Year
- Mel Waxman
- V. Eugene McCrary

Visit the MOA Website for Information on Award Criteria

SUBMIT NOW

www.marylandoptometry.org

A large, ornate gold trophy with two handles sits on a white pedestal. The trophy has a black base with the MOA logo. The background is dark with gold light rays and a grid pattern.

— *Member Paraoptometric Resources*

With Americans' increasing demand for primary eye health and vision care services provided by doctors of optometry, paraoptometric staff play a vital role in the efficient and effective delivery of quality patient care. That's why the AOA is focused on equipping paraoptometric professionals with the education and resources necessary to build skillsets that can help optometrists meet this demand for care.

Enrolling your staff couldn't be easier, and it's FREE! [ENROLL TODAY](#)

AOA associate membership gains staff access to:

- ✓ CPC- and AOA-approved [CE and professional development](#), training and certification materials in [AOA EyeLearn](#).
- ✓ Member rates for AOA events, such as Optometry's Meeting.
- ✓ Volunteer and networking opportunities on a national level.
- ✓ All CPC, AOA publications and [newsletters](#).

Have questions about enrolling paraoptometric staff or associate member benefits? Contact the [AOA Education Center](#) or Member Services to get started today.

Member Services

Phone: 800.365.2219

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CHANGE HEALTHCARE HACK (UHC) PAYMENT & CLAIM ISSUES

The AOA's calls for additional support for providers contending with ongoing disruptions to claims processing and payments caused by the Change Healthcare cyberattack were met with some federal relief.

On March 9, [HHS and CMS made available Change Healthcare/Optum Payment Disruption \(CHOPD\) accelerated payments](#) to Part A providers and advance payments to Part B suppliers experiencing claims disruptions from the incident. CMS encouraged Medicare Advantage organizations to offer advance funding to providers affected by the cyberattack, but still encouraged providers to work with their liability insurers to determine whether coverage for this disruption is available.

[Learn more](#) about CHOPD accelerated payments eligibility.

On March 7, [AOA requested HHS guide physician practices on appropriate next steps](#), ensure practices are supported to continue providing care and ensure information from Change Healthcare is provided to the entire health community as the situation evolves.

Since the incident on Feb. 21, [reports suggest](#) the disruption is costing health providers as much as \$1 billion a day and affects the third-party payment systems that almost half of U.S. health care relies upon.

The AOA shares the following resources and information that may be helpful for AOA members:

- [Change Healthcare Status Updates](#)
- [Joint FBI, CISA and HHS Cybersecurity Advisory](#)

As for doctors looking for an alternative claims clearinghouse, Change Healthcare has provided some guidance on alternatives to use: [Information on the Change Healthcare Cyber Response - UnitedHealth Group](#) Novitas has also recommended some [alternative claim submissions options](#).

Included below are some additional resources that may also be useful regarding Maryland Medicaid & Medicare claims submissions and some financial support available for impacted doctors:

[MMCP Recommendations](#) (Medicaid)

[Novitas-Solutions Recommendations](#) (Medicare)

If you have experienced an issue with any vision plan, PLEASE report the matter to the AOA Third Party Center immediately at StopPlanAbuses@aoa.org.

Click on the graphic below and bookmark the link to learn about other vision plan abuses being addressed at the federal and state level by the Third Party Committee.

AOA Health and Vision Plan Action Report

**Your daily log of AOA / affiliate efforts in support of
full reimbursement and fair coverage policies.**

Partner Promotions



Optometrists: Ready
to redefine your
inspired
partnerships?



Jonathan D. Solomon, MD, Medical Director

At Solomon Eye Physician and Surgeons, we are dedicated to delivering consultative eye care solutions tailored to our patients' needs. With a team of experienced ophthalmologists, optometrists, and cutting-edge technology, we provide exceptional services ranging from routine eye exams to advanced surgical procedures.

Why collaborate with us?



Specialized Expertise:

Our ophthalmologists are experts in various subspecialties, including refractive cataract surgery, LASIK, PRK ICL, glaucoma management and ocular inflammatory diseases.



Seamless Referral Process:

Partnering with us means gaining access to a streamlined referral process, ensuring smooth transitions for your patients requiring specialized eye care.



Patient-Centric Approach:

We prioritize patient satisfaction and outcomes, working collaboratively with referring providers to ensure continuity of care and optimal results.

Collaboration opportunities



Co-Management

Explore opportunities for co-management of patients with complex eye conditions, leveraging our expertise and resources to enhance patient care.



Educational Initiatives:

Participate in educational workshops and seminars hosted by our practice to exchange knowledge and stay updated on the latest advancements in eye care.



Research Partnerships:

Join forces with our team on research projects and clinical trials aimed at advancing the field of ophthalmology and improving patient outcomes.

Contact us today to explore partnership opportunities and take your patient care to the next level.



VISIONARY



LEADERS IN THE INDUSTRY



Visionary Eye Doctors, founded by J. Alberto Martinez, MD, has been at the Forefront of eye health care for more than 25 years. We have pioneered several leading-edge procedures in the Washington, DC metro area - including Light-Adjustable Lens for cataract surgery – that have helped advance the standard of care in our region.

From our experienced, providing patient-first care means delivering the very best possible patient experience, from comfort, ease and efficiency to optimal treatment precision and outcomes. It means working hand in hand with our local optometrist to individualize attention and treatment, genuine compassion, and total commitment to your patients' best interests.

Our Doctors

J. ALBERTO MARTINEZ, MD
SANDRA LORA CREMERS, MD, FACS
ANDREW HAMMER, MD
DANIEL SAREZKY, MD
REENA GARG, MD
GEORGINA MEDINA, MD
ROBERT KAUFMAN, MD
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EDWARD TSOY, MD
ROSALIE BAIR, MD
BABAK HOSSEINI, OD
LORENA RIVEROS, OD
MALIHA SAEED, OD
ALEXA PEREIRA, OD
ROSSANA LUNA, OD

Our Services and Areas of Expertise

- Cataract Center
- Pterygium Removal
- Dry Eye Center
- LASIK Surgery
- LASIK Alternatives
- Corneal Care Center
- Glaucoma Center
- Oculofacial Plastic Surgery

If you would like to refer a patient, or need referral information, please contact

KATIA CARPIO:

kcarpio@voeyedr.com

Office: 301.896.0890, ext.149

Cell: 240.463.9026

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