



Bridge

This Newsletter aims to promote communication between schools and the Student Health Service of the Department of Health

Sep 2014 Issue No. 64

Publish by the Student Health Service, Department of Health

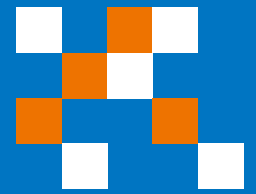


Editorial

Nowadays, more people require optical care than the past. With widespread habit of surfing the Internet and using electronic screen products, people focus more on near objects that would strain the eyes. It is believed that there is a correlation in the time spent with the internet and electronic screen products with visual acuity. With aging population, chronic diseases also increase the risk of optical health. There is a group of professionals who safeguard our optical health. Do you recognize them? They are called the 3 "O" team who have the professional knowledge to safeguard our optical health.

Editorial Board Members : Dr. HO Chun-luen, David, Ms. CHAN Shuk-yi, Karindi, Ms. CHOI Choi-fung, Ms. WONG Kwai-kwan, Betty, Ms. CHAN Hoi-yan
Tel : 2349 4212 / 3163 4600 Fax : 2348 3968
Website : www.studenthealth.gov.hk





Introduction:



Optometrist : Miss TONG Kam-man, Teresa



The opposite situation is very common around us. Our eyes take a leading role in our daily life such as learning, sports, entertainment and other social activities.

Today, electronic appliances with multiple applications are very popular. Our daily life and learning become more convenient and easier. At the same time, such devices have varying degree of impacts on our eyes.

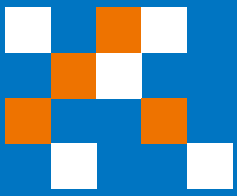
Eyes are the windows between ourselves and the surrounding environment. It is very important to protect them. There is a group of eye care professionals who help us to maintain the health of our eyes. In Hong Kong, the 3“O” are the professionals that have the responsibilities to examine, maintain and treat our eyes.

Who are 3 “O”?



They are the optometrist, ophthalmic dispenser and ophthalmologist.

First of all, let us understand the structure of primary health care system which is divided into three levels. They are primary, secondary level and tertiary level. The secondary and tertiary levels are the specialists and hospital services. The primary level is the first point of contact between the patients and the health care professionals. This includes family doctors, Chinese medicine practitioners and dentists. Primary health care services provide preventive care and diseases treatment services to citizens. Ophthalmologists, optometrists and ophthalmic dispenser are eye care practitioners. What are their responsibilities and professional skills?



Optometrist



The World Council of Optometry defines the concept of Optometry as follows:

"Optometry is a health care profession that is autonomous, educated and regulated (licensed/registered), and optometrists are the primary health care practitioners of the eye and visual system who provide comprehensive eye and vision care, which includes refraction and dispensing, detection/diagnosis and management of disease in the eye, and the rehabilitation of conditions of the visual system."

In the past, most people believe that the role of optometrist is only to check our eyesight before prescribing spectacles. In fact, optometrist provides extensive services; e.g. vision assessment, prescribe spectacles, contact lenses and other visual aids; screen, examine and manage eye problems such as color vision, ocular pressure, visual field, binocular coordination and visual training.

Optometrist belongs to the primary health care professionals. Citizens can come across optometrist in optical shop, optometric clinic, Maternal and Child Health clinic of Department of Health (services provided for children between 0-5 years old), Student Health Services of Department of Health (it provides services for students between primary one to secondary six; it conducts visual acuity screening service and those failed will be further examined by in-house optometrists or those in private sector). Child Assessment Center of Department of Health (it provides services to children with developmental and behavioral problems under 12 years old); the general eye and low vision center of the Hong Kong Society for the Blind[#], the optometry clinic of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University^{##}, the special eye clinic of the Hospital Authority or private hospital.

In Hong Kong, optometrists must be registered with the Optometrists Board before they can practice. At present, there are around 2000 registered optometrists. They are classified into four different Parts. Optometrists belong to different Parts have different practice restrictions and hence the services provided by them are different.

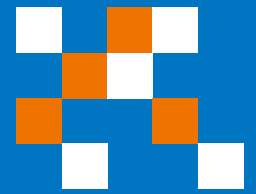
- Part One There is around 800 Part One optometrists. They graduate from Hong Kong or oversea universities with professional diploma or degree in optometry. They provide comprehensive eye examination services; are allow to use diagnostic drugs during eye and visual examination; can prescribe all kinds of optical aids include spectacles and contact lenses.
- Part Two There are around 200 Part Two optometrists. They provide eye examination and prescribe all kinds of optical aids. However, they are not allowed to use diagnostic drugs.
- Part Three There are around 50 Part Three optometrists. They provide eye examination and prescribe spectacles only, not contact lenses.
- Part Four There are around 1000 Part Four optometrists. They are provisional registration optometrists who provide eye examination and prescribe spectacles, some of them can prescribe contact lenses.

Registered optometrists are regulated by the optometry board and need to renew their licenses annually.

[#] The target group of Hong Kong Society for Blind (general eye and low vision centre): people of different ages (children, students, adults) are provided with comprehensive ophthalmological and optometrical services (including general eye or low vision and visually impairment).


^{##} The Hong Kong Polytechnic University provides optometry services to all age groups which include infants of 6 months old. It also provides high myopia examination to adults, ocular pressure and visual field examination, low vision and visual repairment services.





Ophthalmic dispenser



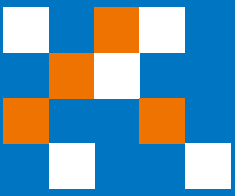
There are different styles and types of spectacles in the market. Most people choose fashionable spectacles. However, everyone has their own visual needs and skills are required in order to choose the most suitable spectacle. Ophthalmic dispenser is the one with comprehensive dispensing and selling techniques, they provide professional spectacle dispensing services to the customers. When providing service to customers, qualified dispensers have the duty to provide professional dispensing advices to customers. For examples, everyone has unique facial features and everyone's outline, shape and proportion of their face is unique. Thus, when choosing a frame you need to consider the facial features of the customer. Generally speaking, rectangular shaped frame is more suitable for round shaped face, while round shaped frame matches with rectangular shaped face better. Besides, dispensers need to consider the habits of customers such as the reading distance of the elderly. With such skills, dispensers can help the customers to choose a pair of spectacle which is most suitable for them. 

In Hong Kong, ophthalmic dispenser are graduated from the Institute of Vocational Education (IVE) or other oversea colleges. They work in eye care industries such as optometry clinic, ophthalmology clinic, optical shop, spectacle workshop, optical trading company and frame manufacturer. They give advices to customers when choosing a frame and different types of lenses. Besides, they also provide frame fitting and repairing services.

The IVE provides a two years higher diploma in dispensing studies. The Program is recognized by The Association of British Dispensing Opticians (ABDO). Graduates are eligible to obtain exemption from the three-year theoretical papers of the ABDO and can obtain the Fellowship Diploma by taking only the final practical examination.

Registration is not necessary for ophthalmic dispenser and they are not regulated by the Department of Health.





Ophthalmologist

The duties of ophthalmologist include eye examination, eye surgery (for examples: cornea transplant, LASIK, squinting eye correction and retinal detachment), diagnostic and treatment of eye diseases (for examples: hypertension, diabetes retinopathy, cataract and glaucoma). Ophthalmologist will provide the best treatment plan to patient. Besides, they will organize talks and seminars, participate in scientific research and training. Citizens will see ophthalmologist in eye clinic hospital or the general eye and low vision center of the Hong Kong Society for the Blind.

At present, there are about 200 ophthalmologists. In order to become an ophthalmologist, qualified doctor needs to finish a 6 years professional training in the Hong Kong College of Ophthalmologists which include 2 years basic training and 4 years higher training. They will be granted the titles of FCOphth HK and FHKAM (ophthalmologist) after passing the examinations.

Registered doctors are regulated by the Hong Kong Medical Council and need to renew their licenses annually.

The divisions of eye examination and treatment are very detail. Outpatient eye clinic are divided into integrated eye clinic and a sub-specialty eye clinic. Integrated eye clinic provides services such as general eye examination, fundus photography, refraction correction, supersonic examination and laser treatment.

Sub-specialty eye clinic provides more complicated treatment such as:

- 1) disease of cornea and anterior chamber of eye;
- 2) disease of retina and posterior chamber of eye;
- 3) retinopathy and vitreous disorders;
- 4) glaucoma and floaters.



Conclusion

In Hong Kong, different eye care professionals have different roles and duties in protecting the eyes of citizens. Just like in a football team, there are goalkeeper, defender, midfield and forward. Players have different duties in various positions. Similarly, eye care professionals can work with each other, use their knowledge plus skill to serve the citizens and improve the health of our eyes.



Bridge Blog

My views on Hong Kong Eye Care Professionals

Check my eyes for short-sightedness and long-sightedness

Provide eye care and information on improving our vision

Examine my eyesight and help me to choose my spectacles

A professional on eye care to assess our eye conditions

They have received training to be a professional

They prescribe lenses to improve our vision

They are caring and patient to teach us about eye care

Help us to protect our eyes

Bridge Chat

Ting : Recently, I cannot see distant objects very well. Do I have myopia? 😞

Yan : You may approach an optometrist to check. 😊

Ting : No need to see a doctor ? 😟

Yan : You may seek advice from doctor if you have eye disease. For vision problem, you can have a check-up by an optometrist. 😊

Ting : Where can I find an optometrist ? 😟

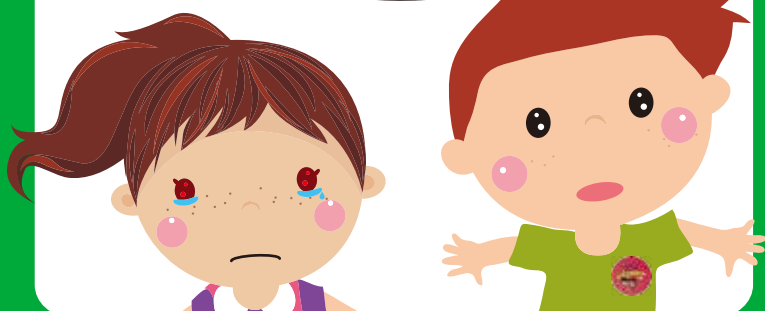
Yan : Most optical shops have qualified optometrists to provide vision screening and prescribe spectacles. 😊

Ting : OK. I shall go to an optical shop now. 😄

Junior Health Pioneer

Junior Health Pioneer saw Jingjing with red eyes. He asked Jingjing.

Why are your eyes so red and watery?



I have been wearing cosmetic contact lens for a few hours. They were bought from a cosmetic shop.



Oh! No! You should get the prescription from a registered optometrist. Stop wearing the contact lens at once and seek medical advice if you have any discomfort.



Sure! I won't do it again just for convenience.



For enquiries of student's health problem, please send email to "Health Box".
Email Address: shsbridge@dh.gov.hk

