

## Extending the Role of Community Based Eyecare

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### Peter Frampton is awarded 'Fellowship' of the College of Optometry

In November 2011 Peter Frampton was awarded 'Fellowship' of the College of Optometrists.

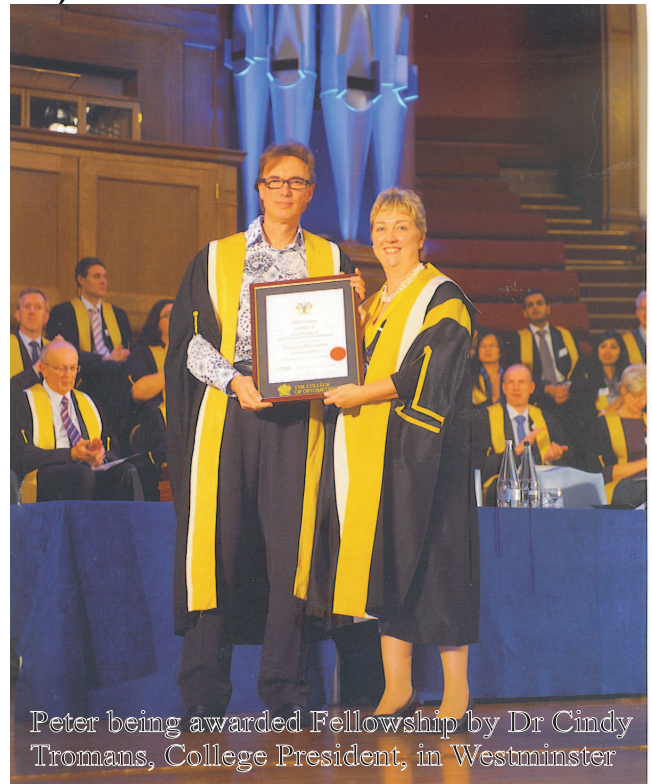
A Fellowship is the highest honour awarded by the college and the award citation reads :

*In recognition of his commitment  
to clinical excellence*

To be acknowledged by your peers is a great honour. We certainly do strive to give a clinically excellent service under extremely difficult financial constraints.

It must be stressed that this award reflects the achievements of the entire team. Clinical excellence is always a team effort and the Aaron's group is going from strength to strength. 2011 saw Andrew Watson become a fully qualified Optometrist; Sonia Dixon qualified as a Contact Lens Practitioner; Karen Winlow passed her Dispensing Optician qualification; Gayle Purvis is continuing her business management degree; and Claire Appleby became our most recent clinical receptionist to pass the Optical Assistant course with flying colours.

All held together by Andrea Carroll, our tireless and scrupulous practice manager.



Peter being awarded Fellowship by Dr Cindy Tromans, College President, in Westminster

Peter had already achieved a Masters Degree with Distinction from Bradford University, and then gained Additional Supply, Supplementary Prescribing rights in 2009. While these were important the potentially huge political change came with the legal recognition of Independent Prescribing Optometrists.

Optometrist independent prescribers are able to prescribe any licensed medicine for the eye, including glaucoma. Peter Frampton was one of the first 30 optometrists to achieve this status November 2009.

# INFOCUS

The newsletter for the College of Optometrists

Spring 2010

## Achievements celebrated at College Ceremony

Over 200 diplomates joined together on Tuesday 9 February to celebrate their entry to the profession and membership of the College of Optometrists. The Diploma Presentation Ceremony is one of the highlights of the College year; around 800 guests attended the Ceremony, held at Central Hall Westminster, London.

The Ceremony was a historic occasion, marking the award of the first ever Diploma in Therapeutics, Independent Prescribing. 16 of the 30 candidates who qualified as Independent Prescribers, following the first sitting of the exam last November, were recognised at the Ceremony.

This group are qualified to prescribe any licensed medicine for ocular conditions affecting the

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eye and adnexa, within their recognised area of expertise and competence.

Dr Rob Hogan, President of

offered his congratulations to the group, telling them that they were at the leading edge of the development of optometry in the UK.

Opening the Ceremony, Dr Hogan reminded new members that each of them was an ambassador for the profession. He went on to say; "Life is about relationships, and it is the quality of the relationships you forge with each and every one of your patients that will make them return, asking to see you each and every future time. Involve them during the short time you spend together, help patients to understand the importance of our care and your role in

### Awarding of the Diploma in Therapeutics – Independent Prescribing

Presented by the President, Dr Rob Hogan to Pradeep Kumar Bahri, Susan Bowers, David Burghardt, Peter Frampton, Clare Green, Dr Robert Harper, Samara Hodi, Joanne Mackenzie, Cora Macleod, Gary Orriss, Kate Powell, Dr Paul Spry, Margaret Timlin, Dr Cindy Tromans, Geoffrey Wayte and Angela Whitaker

### Awarding of the Diploma in Therapeutics – Additional Supply and the Diploma in Therapeutics – Additional Supply and Supplementary Prescribing

Presented by the President, Dr Rob Hogan to Peter Frampton, Joanne Mackenzie and Naomi Stringer



THE CEREMONY CELEBRATED THE GROUNDBREAKING ACHIEVEMENT OF OPTOMETRY'S FIRST INDEPENDENT PRESCRIBERS

# The impact of Independent Prescribing on Optometry Practice

## Prescribing Optometrists and the Primary Care Trust

While there are several Independent Prescriber Optometrists in Newcastle, Aarons remains the only Independent Prescribing practice in Northumberland.

Unfortunately the Primary Care Trust has not, as yet, considered a budget for the service. Until prescription pads and funding are available we are forced to charge privately; although most people value the locally available scheme.

Fortunately GPs are very keen to pursue alternative service models that promise to enhance patient care. Optometrists, specialising in the eye and possessing the appropriate equipment and educational standards, can assess and treat eye conditions while releasing GPs to concentrate on other health issues.

However, like all revolutionary services, especially when there are very few qualified practitioners, there will be delay in achieving funded support. But that must not stop us striving for improvements, even if we must charge.

## So why haven't more optometrists pursued these qualifications?

It is sad but true that a common reason for not pursuing extra skills is simply financial. Why go through a tough, time consuming and expensive process that will not necessarily be remunerated? Until the Care Trust guarantees payment, these optometrists will not consider tackling the new skills.

Regardless of the current lack of official NHS funding patients should be allowed choice. You should not have to face a drive to the RVI if this can be avoided. Our goal, regardless of funding difficulties, is to be able to supply a total service.

## Immediate Impact on Contact Lens Practice

With deregulation of contact lens sales we have, for years now, separated professional fees from the actual contact lens costs. The most important item purchased as part of the professional service, as opposed to purchasing the contact lenses only, is 'Access to Care'. Our policy ensures that a professional member of staff is always on the premises during opening times and if you present as an emergency you WILL be seen.

It is always good to know that if you have a red or irritable eye you can present for a 'Contact Lens Check' without charge. These services carry private charges if the lenses only are purchased. So we would always recommend purchasing the FULL professional service.



The ability to treat complications immediately and without referral to hospitals means that our contact lens patients can be looked after even more promptly and efficiently. We believe the moral obligation to be better able to look after our contact lens patients transcends any purely financial consideration.

When prescribing becomes mainstream contact lens practitioners may well be considered negligent if they do not possess prescribing rights.



## Masters Degree with Distinction in Therapeutics. 2001 to 2005

### The need for change

The need to change the way optometry works has been evident for many years. As early as 2001 Peter Frampton commenced his Masters Degree in Ocular Therapeutics at Bradford University. He achieved an MSc with Distinction in 2005. While continuing education may not bring immediate returns, it helps enormously in day-to-day clinical practice.

### Masters Research

The research title was 'Sleep Induced Peaks in Intraocular Pressure and Possible Implications with the use of Prostaglandin Analogue Drugs in the Management of Chronic Open Angle Glaucoma'.

This research could not have been achieved without the help of Ashington Scouts, who volunteered to be subjects over a camping weekend. I would like to thank them once more.

### Ashington Scouts, parents and particularly Grant and Arlene Watson.

Grant and Arlene's enthusiasm, organisational and management skills, made the data collection weekend flow. The promptness with which all the scouts, parents and leaders agreed to help demonstrates the community spirit with which the organisation is credited. I enjoyed my weekend with them.



In October 2011 Peter commenced his Doctoral studies via Aston University in Birmingham.

Many PhDs are very theoretical and don't often impact on day-to-day work. The Ophthalmic Doctorate is designed for clinical optometrists. It is aimed at encouraging in-practice research rather than being totally university based. This allows a much more practical way of gaining knowledge and has immediate impact on our clinical practice.

The proposed research topic is:

'The Investigation of Corneal Shape and Corneal Hysteresis, considered Variables Inter-dependent with Corneal Thickness, as Potential Confounders to the Accurate Estimation of Intraocular Pressure with Conventional Tonometers.

A fundamental reappraisal of tonometry for the 21<sup>st</sup> century identifying the urgent need for a new reference standard'.

Taking up to four years to complete the process itself is satisfying and so far all is going to plan!