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Vision Now magazine

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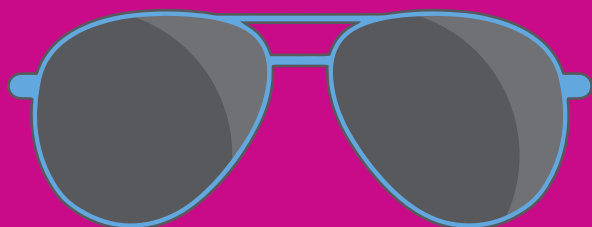
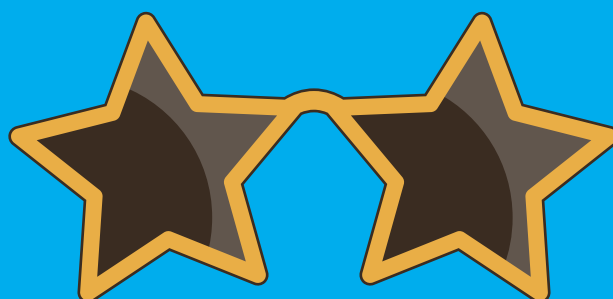
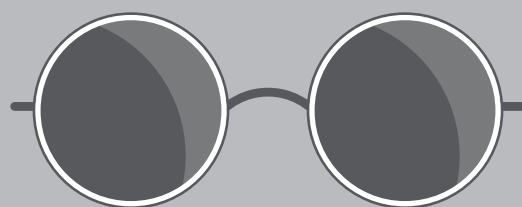


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Vision Now magazine is published by Peekay Publishing Ltd for The PK National Eyecare Group Ltd, the UK's largest purchasing group for independent opticians.



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## Editor's comment



If you haven't yet reserved your complimentary NEG member place at the group's 40th anniversary Building for Success conference, then head straight to [www.negconference.co.uk](http://www.negconference.co.uk) and book yourself in today. With the education programme now finalised, offering a total of 14 CET points, this will be a fantastic opportunity to catch up with colleagues to share best practice and hear from leading experts working in, and supporting, the independent optical sector.

The conference, centrally located at the East Midlands Conference Centre, will also include an exhibition of NEG's key preferred suppliers. A special anniversary dinner with entertainment will take place on the Sunday evening, so don't forget to take advantage of the reduced accommodation cost that NEG has negotiated on behalf of members. For a closer look at what the conference and exhibition have in store, turn to page 21.

If you are indeed attending the conference, you will be among the first to hear about the brand new NEG Business Club, being introduced by the group in partnership with Andy Clark and his team at Practice Building. The club, launching on 1 July, will offer NEG members a mix of business training, including live tutorials, quarterly strategic planning, a KPI toolkit, marketing packs, a social media channel and bespoke marketing through the Practice Building Studio. So, do make sure you visit Practice Building during the conference to find out more.

The teams from NEG and Optinet look forward to giving you a warm welcome.

**Nicky Collinson**  
Editor

The Editor welcomes letters, articles and other contributions for publication in the magazine and reserves the right to amend them. Any such contribution, whether it bears the author's name, initials or pseudonym, is accepted on the understanding that its author is responsible for the opinions expressed in it and that its publication does not imply that such opinions are those of The PK National Eyecare Group Ltd. Articles submitted for publication should be original, unpublished work and are accepted on the basis that they will not be published in any other journal. Acceptance of material for publication is not a guarantee that it will be included in any particular issue. Copyright © 2019 for Peekay Publishing Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying and recording, without the written permission of the publishers. Such written permission should also be obtained before any part of this publication is stored in a retrieval system of any nature.



## 1 Heidelberg Engineering



Low vision service boost

Heidelberg Engineering has provided a Spectralis OCT to the low vision service at the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) in London on permanent loan. Dr Louise Gow, RNIB specialist lead for eye health, said: "Patients that attend the low vision service are often discharged by the hospital, but we frequently have to refer them back to the hospital when there is a change to their vision. Having an OCT means that we can more accurately assess the causes of reduction in vision and avoid the distress to the patient and the cost of unnecessary referrals.

"We are so very grateful to Heidelberg Engineering for the opportunity to use Spectralis," continued Dr Gow, "and we hope that we are able to improve not only the experience of individuals within our service, but to provide evidence of the importance of OCT imaging beyond screening in primary care and diagnosis in hospital settings." Our photograph show Dr Zahra Jessa, RNIB clinical lead optometrist, low vision and learning disability services (sitting) with Dr Gow.

## 4 Positive Impact

TearLab Corporation and Positive Impact (PI) have initiated a partnership in the UK and Ireland markets for the promotion and market development of TearLab's award winning diagnostic platform.

Nick Atkins, PI director of marketing and professional services, said: "We look forward to

## 2 General Optical Council

The General Optical Council (GOC) has now discussed the findings from its Education Strategic Review consultation, and provided steers on its key elements. The consultation drew 539 responses, which the regulator said showed general support for "more flexibility for providers to allow for innovation and earlier clinical experience". However, there were concerns raised regarding the drafting and suitability of the standards and learning outcomes (including requests for more detail), funding and the timeline for implementation.

The GOC explained that there was more work to do and that the consultation had "helpfully highlighted a number of new concerns, which would be considered in more detail in the anticipated consultation response document". It was now planning to hold workshops with stakeholders to "explore the risks and benefits of key elements and co-create solutions that safeguard public health".

## 3 Go Eyewear



Bulget Occhiali models BG1624T and BG1605UT

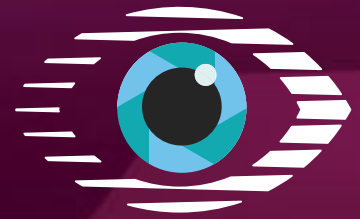
Born in the 21st century and inspired by modern city life, Bulget Occhiali offers a classy and fashionable range of frames to appeal to men and women who appreciate style, comfort, elegance and excellent value. Available from Go Eyewear, 2019 is a milestone in the history of the brand that over the years has presented itself in a classic segment – but has now been reinvented. The main key design references of the latest collection are the retro styles reinvented with modern features and the introduction of beta titanium for the first time.

this new partnership with TearLab and believe the company's point-of-care technology will complement well our portfolio of products for management of the ocular surface."

TearLab provides objective and quantitative testing for disease markers in tears at the point-of-care (POC). The TearLab Osmolarity

System allows clinicians to measure the osmolarity of human tears, helping to diagnose and manage patients suspected of having dry eye disease. With more than 6,000 devices installed around the world and over 14 million tests conducted to date, TearLab is said to be the global leader in POC testing for the eyecare market.





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Ends: Wednesday **19th June** at 16:30pm

Building on the success of last year's Innovation in Practice, this 2-day event will discuss current and future changes in the retail landscape, how your patients now perceive loyalty to your business and the importance of building a high-performance culture within your business. With a range of expert speakers offering valuable insights "Innovation in Practice 2019" promises an excellent opportunity to share and discuss experiences with colleagues from across the industry.

**97% of 2018 delegates  
would recommend  
"Innovation in Practice"  
to a peer or colleague**

*"The event was excellent, the speakers and facilitators were pertinent to our varied business needs as well as being engaging to keep us interested and entertained. Well done. I would love to attend future events."*  
Julian Williams - CR Williams Opticians

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## 5 Essilor



Campaign to drive footfall

Essilor has launched a new national marketing campaign for its Varilux brand, which can be personalised by independent practices to drive local footfall. The 'See more do more' campaign will reach a total of 48.1 million people and run until the end of 2019, said the company. The brand has also become sponsor of Channel 4's All4 Escapism series providing 500 hours of programming to promote the consumer message.

All Essilor customers will be allocated a consultant to work with them to create a personalised local campaign with co-branded marketing support materials. Essilor head of marketing, Jason Williams, said: "We have carefully combined a national and local element into this campaign to ensure high impact consumer messaging. We always strive to be the independent's best business partner and our commitment includes helping businesses expand their sales and driving independent footfall through these campaigns."

## 8 Dunelm Optical



New Paul Costelloe models 5223 and 5221

## 6 Eyespace



Signature style, Capri

Aspinal of London sunglasses, launched by Eyespace earlier this year, are designed to highlight the best of luxury British design. Signature style Capri (*pictured*) is a classic cat-eye sunglass with a metal hinge in a bespoke shape of the Aspinal shield. The refined metal hinge complements the highly polished tortoiseshell acetate with its subtle Aspinal of London branding. This elegant women's style comes in perennial black, as well as timeless dark tortoiseshell with delicate amber highlights. Capri is available in size 57-19-140 and is suitable for prescription glazing.

## 7 ABDO College

ABDO College has opened online applications for courses starting this September, including the new Optical Assistant course. Based in Godmersham, Kent, ABDO College is the only UK college devoted solely to the teaching of the theoretical and practical aspects of ophthalmic dispensing and related specialist areas and is recognised as a centre of excellence for optical education.

ABDO College head of operations, Steve Hertz, said: "We are excited to be able to offer online applications for the first time. Potential students can start the application process, save progress and return to their applications, making applying to ABDO College easier than ever before." ABDO College principal, Jo Underwood, added: "ABDO College strives to maintain the highest possible standards and to increase the standing of ophthalmic dispensing in the eyes of the professional, to raise public confidence and increase public understanding of the level of training achieved." *Turn to page 30 to discover more about what ABDO College offers.*

Celebrating its 50th year in business, Dunelm Optical's latest eyewear and prescription sun collection features 200 new styles with something for men, women, teens and children, covering all price points.

Oliver Beaumont, product development director for Dunelm Optical, said: "From thoroughly modern classics to original eclectic designs, this year's portfolio includes a superb array of quality created frames. Our experienced designers have used outstanding craftsmanship and fashion flair to suit a diverse audience."

There are 200 new styles across the optical and prescription sun ranges including top designer collections such as Dunelm's new luxury designer brand, Joseph.

The company's popular house brands also hit the fashion spot by keeping up-to-date with the latest trends and styles. Free glazing and prescription single vision lenses are available across selected ranges and free display material, including bespoke branded posters, are also available on request.



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## 9 Silhouette



Walter & Wassily sunglasses

Neubau Eyewear is celebrating 100 years of Bauhaus with its new Walter & Wassily sunglasses collection. The range pays homage to the German art school's founder, Walter Gropius, and key painter of the era, Wassily Kandinsky. The titanium frame references the steel tube features within Bauhaus furniture, while the rounded finish is the renowned shape of the period – the circle.

The ethically-sourced frames' distinctive tinted mirrored lenses symbolise Walter Gropius' famous school where Bauhaus was born. These contrast the 3D printed design accents at the front of the frame, adding dramatic detail to the model. The unisex design is available in three different colour combinations: snow white and black matte, black coal and eclectic silver and black coal with brass matte.

## 10 Louis Stone

Students members of Cardiff Optometry Society raised more than £1,800 for Guide Dogs UK and Maggie's Club in one evening, thanks to support from Louis Stone. The company donated prizes for a raffle as well as table decorations for the society's annual EyeBall, held in Cardiff's City Hall and attended by more than 260 guests.

The raffle winner was first-year student Isobel Adams (*pictured centre*), who said:



"I just want to thank Louis Stone for sponsoring our EyeBall once again this year. Thank you also very much for the donation of the indirect slit lamp lens; I can't wait to start using it in clinics in the future."

## 12 Fight for Sight

Fight for Sight has awarded £100,000 to support a three-year project to develop an 'organ-on-chip' that for the first time will be used to help investigate glaucoma. Dr Darryl Overby and Dr Sam Au from Imperial College London, in collaboration with Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Duke University, will build on the latest bioengineering technology to develop a

new device that mimics the flow of fluid as it drains from the eye.

The matchbox sized chip is made from a special gel that contains channels the width of a match that are surrounded by human eye cells. An entire laboratory can fit on the device, running several experiments in parallel. Researchers will use the device to

## 11 Positive Impact



Eco-supporter, PI's Ellie Jarman

Positive Impact is building on its green mission with a charity campaign for Glasklar, which starts on World Environmental Day (5 June). A tree will be planted for every order made for the spectacles lens cleaner, starting on the campaign day, and running until the end of the year. The main focus for this year's World Environmental Day is Beat Plastic Pollution, which ties in with Glasklar's #RefillNotLandfill message of reusing the lens cleaner bottles rather than wasting plastic.

The trees will be planted by the Earth Day Network in support of the Canopy Project, which is aiming to plant 7.8 billion trees, one for every person on earth, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day in 2020. The trees are being planted across the world, including the UK, to highlight that more than 15 billion trees on earth are lost each year. PI's digital marketing coordinator, Ellie Jarman, said: "We know that patients return to the practice to refill their Glasklar bottles and this gives practitioners another reason to encourage them to do so."

better understand how eye pressure is controlled and will design drugs to target the pressure-controlling mechanisms in the eye. Dr Neil Ebenezer, Fight for Sight director of research, policy and innovation, said: "This opens the door to testing aspects of glaucoma and other eye disease that have previously been difficult to investigate and could offer solutions for this leading cause of sight loss."



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ESPRIT



## 13 Essilor



Kjell Nolke demonstrating the device

Essilor and OrCam Technologies have signed a partnership with Essilor enabling independent opticians to provide OrCam's low vision technology to patients. The OrCam MyEye 2 is said to be the world's

most advanced low vision device; it uses AI technology to read any printed text, as well as recognise faces, products, colours, and currency notes. Essilor will be providing the OrCam MyEye 2 device to its independent optician partners across the UK and Ireland.

Kjell Nolke, optometrist and founder of Nolke Opticians in Waterford, Ireland, has been demonstrating the OrCam MyEye 2 for the past year. He said: "It's so important that customers are able to see and try out this kind of technology for themselves, so after I have assessed whether a customer might be suitable for the OrCam device, I do a demo in the practice and then lend the device out. OrCam's technology has the potential to really make a difference to people who have lost their sight, so it is very exciting to have it available in my practice."

## 14 BCLA

As *Vision Now* went to press, the British Contact Lens Association (BCLA) had revealed the finalists for its 2019 awards: Dr Saleel Jivraj and Iain Johnson for the Dry Eye Practitioner of the Year award; and Luke Allen and Eleanor Hill for Young Contact Lens Practitioner of the Year. The BCLA Industry Award nominees were: Dr Erich Bauman and Dr John Pruitt from Alcon; John Phillips, Stuart Cockerill and Paul Chamberlain from CooperVision; Steve Newman from Menicon; Dr Kurt Moody and John Meyler from Johnson & Johnson Vision – with further submissions for Dr Zohra Fadli, Leilani Sonoda and Dr John Buch. Dr Rick Weisbarth was also individually nominated.



2017 Dry Eye Practitioner of the Year, Nick Dash

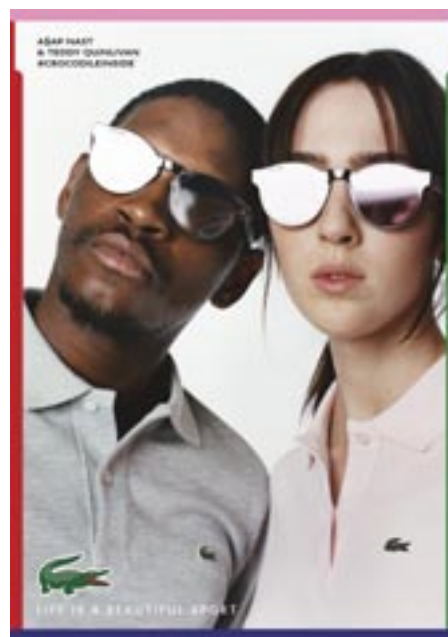
BCLA president, Professor Sunil Shah, said: "Recognition from your peers is arguably the ultimate accolade and the BCLA Awards are held in incredibly high esteem across the profession. Having received an incredibly high standard of nominations and submissions, the competition is extremely strong and all those shortlisted are worthy winners. We look forward to celebrating their success on the night." The winners were due to be announced at the BCLA's dinner on Saturday 1 June in Manchester.

## 16 ABDO

A speed dating style discussion session formed part of a business event held last month at the Association of British Dispensing Opticians' (ABDO) National Resource Centre in Birmingham. Attended by practitioners keen to start their own independent business, the event was supported by the Association of Independent Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians, SightCare/Storm, NEG, Eyeplan and the Specs Network.

The meeting included a session where delegates heard first hand experiences of being an independent practitioner from Clive Marchant, MD of Colin Lee Opticians and current ABDO president, and John Stevenson, owner of Stevenson Jones Opticians in Newcastle-under-Lyme. "These sessions offered great insight into the challenging, but rewarding, life of an independent – with Clive sharing experiences of their growth over 40 years including the successful purchase and conversion of a house practice into a High

## 15 Marchon



New style reflects rich brand heritage

Lacoste has introduced a new 'L.12.12 one lens' sunglass mixing heritage, style and premium design. The new unisex style features a single nylon lens that is precisely cut and shaped to create a bold, shield mask offered in timeless colours and vivid hues, such as blue and pink, with a cool mirror finishing.

The lightweight structure combines a singular front design with tapered temples enhanced with two of Lacoste's most notable emblems: the signature Petit Piqué texture and the Lacoste logo in a smooth textile finishing. Both elements evoke the details of the L.12.12 polo shirt, created in 1933 by René Lacoste as a sporty-chic uniform to wear on and off the tennis courts. The L.12.12 branded metal plaque is placed upon each of the end pieces, reflecting Lacoste's unique mix of technical precision and casual elegance.

Street practice," commented Nick Walsh, ABDO sector skills development officer.



Business 'speed dating' session



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17 Vision Care for Homeless People



Summer fundraising challenge

Vision Care for Homeless People (VCHP) is urging every business to get involved in a fundraising event this summer, whether it be bungee jumping, tough mudders, 10k runs, sportives and endurance cycles. "Encouraging work mates and pushing your boundaries bring a great sense of camaraderie and pulling together," said VCHP chair, Elaine Styles. "We are encouraging all optical businesses to explore this idea. Through sponsorship the adventures can be a great awareness and fund raiser for the charity."

Elaine herself has raised thousands of pounds for VCHP through some of the toughest cycles in Europe, including the 920 trek from Land's End to John O'Groats, and the Trans Pyrenean Raid from Biarritz to Perpignan. She added: "I love cycling and the thought that I was raising money for Vision Care for Homeless People really spurred me on through some of the long days and big hills. Not everyone has to aim for this – a 5km run could be a great achievement for many." Sign up at [www.visioncarecharity.org](http://www.visioncarecharity.org)

19 Dunelm Optical

Amongst the latest designs in Dunelm Optical's collection of spectacle cases is the eye-catching design, Metal Britannia (pictured), available in medium or large. All Dunelm cases are sourced within the UK using the latest British designed cotton prints and fabrics, and the majority are manufactured at the company's case factory in Leeds.

Dunelm also offers a choice of accessories from link, loop, pearl and beaded chains to sports bands and children's cords, lens cleaners and cleaning kits. Personalised branding is also offered with cases and cloths.

Dunelm Optical's product development director, Oliver Beaumont, said: "Our commitment in supporting manufacturers of British made fabrics and brands remains important and enables us to create



desirable eyewear, cases and accessories year on year. We are proud to be the only case

manufacturer in the UK and continue to lead the way in design, not only for our frames but for our cases and accessories too."

20 Optometry Scotland

Optometry Scotland (OS) recently claimed that Scottish optometry has saved the NHS more than £70m in a single year – preventing hundreds of thousands of hospital visits annually. The OS GOS Works report looked at the health and financial impact since landmark legislation was approved by the

Scottish government in 2006, revolutionising how community eyecare is delivered today. Holyrood's revised GOS regulations pledged to make better use of community-based optometry resources by shifting the balance of care away from GPs, A&E, pharmacy and hospital eye clinics.

OS's report analysed the impact of this shift and concluded it had successfully alleviated

service pressures and brought considerable benefits to the public, NHS and government, with the £71m savings being achieved across 2017. Samantha Watson, OS chair, said: "The GOS Works report is proof positive that empowering optometrists to take on more responsibility in the management of all eye conditions has not only been widely beneficial, but has also realised significant vital savings."

18 Menicon



New management system for myopia control

Menicon is set to launch its first myopia management contact lens – Menicon Bloom Night. The orthokeratology lens is manufactured in the company's hyper oxygen-permeable, Menicon Z rigid material, and is indicated for the correction of refractive myopia and for the control of myopia when prescribed and managed by a qualified eyecare professional.

Fitting is optimised by the use of Menicon's Easyfit software, and a mobile phone app, Menicon's Virtual Dr, has also been developed to enhance the monitoring and communication process between practitioners and patients. Following initial launch in the Netherlands, the lens will be rolled out in other European markets.

## 21 SynergEyes UK



Having their cake and eating it

sent to customers contains patient leaflets and point-of-sale materials, plus a box of eight French Fancies for the practice team to enjoy.

SynergEyes UK sales manager, Hans Sunassee, said: "This makes now the perfect time to fit those astigmats and astigmatic presbyopes who haven't yet found their perfect contact lens. With our guaranteed fit, practitioners and patients get the peace of mind of three exchanges and a full credit in the unlikely event they can't get on with the lenses." A patient educational leaflet and a SynergEyes Guarantee Card can be provided with the lenses to reassure patients, with care instructions and a renewal reminder.

## 22 College of Optometrists

The College of Optometrists has announced the programme for Optometry Tomorrow Bitesize 2019 on Sunday 6 October at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Milton Keynes. The programme showcases the best-rated sessions from the College's annual conference, Optometry Tomorrow, and gives delegates the opportunity to earn up to nine interactive CET points in one day.

College president, Professor Edward Mallen, said: "Originally intended for those who couldn't attend the two day annual conference, Optometry Tomorrow Bitesize is now a key event in the College's calendar. It has gained a reputation for high quality CET sessions and draws some of the most respected practitioners from the eye health sector as speakers and presenters." The full programme can be viewed on the College's website.

## 23 Association of British Dispensing Opticians



Association website revamped

clear, concise and easily accessible information, we hope that it is now easier to find what you are looking for, whether it be advice and guidelines, business tips, member benefits, CET events or the latest news."

A highlight of the new site is a stand-alone section, DO Online, providing news and features, with additional content exclusive to ABDO members only, an online jobs vacancies section and advertising opportunities. There is also an extended international section to the new site, outlining what ABDO can offer to members and trainee DOs worldwide. The new website offers members the chance to 'Live chat' with ABDO staff during the hours of 9-5pm, and is mobile friendly.

## AN INDEPENDENT VIEW

### A unique event

The 2019 AIO conference, being run in association with the British Association of Behavioural Optometrists (BABO) will bring together all the main representative bodies in the world of optics for a panel session. The General Optical Council, Association of Optometrists, Federation of Ophthalmic and Dispensing Opticians, Association of British Dispensing Opticians, the College of Optometrists, the Local Optical Committee Support Unit (LOCSU) and British Contact Lens Association (BCLA) will all be represented alongside the chairs of the AIO and BABO in what will be a unique event.

The panel session will provide a great opportunity for audience participation through the use of the interactive SLIDO tool, which allows for voting and asking questions from the floor. It also allows the respective bodies to state their positions on various issues, and in particular the future of independent practice.

The AIO last hosted a similar panel session at its 2015 conference in Nottingham and it proved a very popular part of the agenda with a packed conference hall. The 2019 session has been expanded to include LOCSU, the BCLA and BABO and will be the last item of a packed agenda on Saturday 5 October. With the representatives of the various bodies also coming to the gala dinner in the evening at the stunning Palm Court Room at the Bristol Marriott Hotel, there will be an opportunity for delegates to continue the conversation over a splendid dinner.

The conference will include a wide range of CET events with more than 30 points available, as well as a main lecture programme and extensive exhibition. There are still spaces available at the conference and dinner, so anyone interested in attending should email [lin@aiovision.org](mailto:lin@aiovision.org) or call 0800 1300 486 and ask for Lin.

Association for  
**AIO**  
Independent Optometrists  
and Dispensing Opticians



# Taking OCT to new heights

***VISION NOW TALKS TO OPTOMETRIST AND PRACTICE OWNER, BRAD RAISON, ABOUT HIS PASSION FOR THE SPECTRALIS – HEIDELBERG ENGINEERING'S UPGRADEABLE, MULTIMODAL IMAGING PLATFORM THAT TAKES PATIENT CARE TO A NEW LEVEL***



Brad and Libby Raison

**VN: Why did you decide to invest in an optical coherence tomographer (OCT)?**

**BR:** Prior to opening our practice, Raison Opticians in Helston, Cornwall, my business partner and wife, Libby Raison, and I locumed at a lovely practice in Penzance, Reynolds Opticians, which was owned at that time by Alison Williams. The practice had an OCT, so we were introduced to the tool there and quickly recognised how useful it was. Libby and I agreed that having an OCT would help us to differentiate from other practices and it would provide our patients with an extra layer of care. Times have changed: I remember in my third year at Cardiff University we had a really early OCT device. However, it was so expensive that students were not allowed within 12 feet of it.

**VN: Why did you choose the Heidelberg Engineering Spectralis?**

**BR:** We took our time thinking about the right option for us because it involved spending a lot of money on a single piece of kit. We wanted to make sure the practice could support OCT financially before we went ahead. Our decision-making process involved three steps: we talked to various people to find out what they used and why; we considered how each company supported the customer; and we looked at what each machine could do, including how repeatable the results were.



Performing OCT with the Spectralis



The couple's practice in Helston, Cornwall

What we realised was that Heidelberg Engineering's Spectralis always seemed to be regarded as the 'gold standard' by the practitioners we spoke to. A clincher for us was a conversation that Libby, as secretary of our local optical committee, had with a hospital macular consultant. When asked which OCT he would choose, he name-checked the Spectralis. You can't get a better recommendation than that.

**VN: What are the standout features of your Spectralis?**

**BR:** We have had OCT for six months. In that time, what stands out is the clarity of the images; I have been really surprised by how brilliant the resolution is. The Spectralis offers a range of different scans because it is focused manually, rather than being automated. This means that it can take longer for practitioners to get good at taking images, but it is worth it because we can go further than other machines and we can take images that are more specific with a Spectralis.

The repeatability of the images we capture is so important, and with Spectralis the repeatability is incredible. As a practitioner, you are always looking out for conditions such as glaucoma in every patient

you see. With the Spectralis, I can measure the thickness of the retinal nerve fibre layer around the optic nerve head and repeat the scan during follow-up to within one micron of where I was before. This means that the thickness values I am capturing are extremely close, and a subtle difference can be viewed as a reliable result. If your device doesn't have good repeatability and you end up measuring within 20-30 microns of the last position, your tolerance levels are going to be far worse.

The qualities of the Spectralis absolutely help when providing good patient care. We have a large proportion of elderly patients who find glare difficult; fundus photography and Volk examinations are really uncomfortable for them. However, they have very little issue with OCT and infrared fundus imaging, despite the extra chair time as there is no bright flash and no need for pupil dilation. If you are doing a posterior pole volume scan that takes about 30 seconds or so, they remain comfortable for the duration and can sit there happily for two or more scans.

The modular functionality of Spectralis has also been helpful to us as a business, giving us the ability to bolt on new technology, such as advanced glaucoma monitoring or OCT angiography. Being able to do this without having to buy an entirely new scanner is a nice position to be in. We don't have to learn how to use a new tool or worry about transferring databases and losing full comparison data.

**VN: What would you say to a practitioner who is thinking about purchasing an OCT, and how has Spectralis improved patient care in your practice?**

**BR:** I can think of a couple of striking examples where our OCT has proven its worth for us in primary practice. The first example was my very first patient in our Helston practice. He came in with symptoms of distortion and reduced vision. Using the Spectralis, I discovered that he had a full-thickness macular hole. I was able to email the scan to the consultant, which is a far more streamlined process than sending the patient to eye casualty to hang around and wait to be seen.

The second example was a patient with late-onset Stargardt retinal dystrophy. She came in with a subtle reduction in vision and we decided to do a routine OCT as a baseline. The OCT scan showed that the patient had early macular degeneration. I went back and looked at the fundus photography and the Volk exam on record. Despite knowing exactly what I was looking for, I still could not see any sign of macular degeneration. I am convinced that the only way I spotted the patient's condition that early was because I had an OCT.

**VN: How do you market and discuss OCT with your patients?**

**BR:** We do actively tell the majority of patients that we can capture OCT retinal images. To keep it simple, we talk in terms of having 'a new laser scanner'. When we first got the OCT, we focused on explaining to patients that we were able to take detailed measurements of the

eye using the OCT. We added that having this data on file enabled us to see changes over time and spot if anything was deteriorating. This in turn helps our clinical decision-making improve. I think patients appreciate that.

Six months on, we now also talk about risk factors with patients. In Helston, we see a lot of ocular pathology due to the older demographic of our patients. For example, if they are diabetic, have a family history of glaucoma, or are at risk of certain conditions, we explain that OCT can pick up signs of these diseases earlier.

**VN: Do you charge patients for OCT scans?**

**BR:** We charge £25 to have an OCT scan. The decision was based on conversations with colleagues and peers, checking other websites and thinking about the region we operate in. We do not see OCT as a major revenue stream. Our intention was to set the fee to cover the cost of the machine. This means that we can perform the scans on as many people as we can. We have found that £25 does not seem to worry most of our patients. I would estimate 60-70 per cent of our patients opt to have a scan. In our first six months, we had a slow start, but to date we have carried out more than 900 scans. We offer an 'Eyeplan' – like a dental plan – which includes OCT at no extra cost. That's been working very well for the practice. We like to give the patients choice.

**VN: How do you educate yourselves and your team when interpreting the images captured by your OCT?**

**BR:** To be brutally honest, there are times when we do not know what we are looking at on the screen. Crucially, once we had ordered our Spectralis, Heidelberg Engineering provided support straight away, including text books and online facilities. We had a one-to-one session with Heidelberg Engineering's director of clinical services, Christopher Mody; I think he is the Jedi Master of OCT. What he does not know about the back of the eye does not seem worth knowing.

We have also had a couple of sessions in practice with Heidelberg Engineering's Ken Binns. He is brilliant at teaching us how to capture and interpret the images. The educational support from Heidelberg Engineering is also ongoing. Its online academy is useful for learning tools, as well as clinical posters. The company also provides information that we can share with our patients.

**VN: Why do you love your OCT?**

**BR:** As an optometrist in community practice, every scan provides an extra level of reassurance that only OCT can give. By looking at a fundus photograph I may not notice a significant difference, but I know if the patient's eye is in good condition with an OCT scan. And having the same machine that NASA put on the International Space Station is a very cool feeling.

*Contact Heidelberg Engineering on 01442 502 330 or [Info-UK@HeidelbergEngineering.com](mailto:Info-UK@HeidelbergEngineering.com) to find out how you can join the legions of Spectralis fans who love their OCT.*



A large, stylized maroon letter 'A' is positioned on the left side of the page, extending from the top to the bottom. The letter is solid and has a slight shadow effect. The text 'Eyes on Aspinal' is centered within the upper part of the 'A'.

# Eyes on Aspinal

FOR MANY YEARS, ASPINAL OF LONDON WAS A CLOSELY GUARDED SECRET, SHARED ONLY WITH THE CAPITAL CITY'S FASHIONISTAS, ROYALTY, SOCIAL ELITE AND JET-SETTERS. FAST FORWARD TO TODAY AND THE ASPINAL SUCCESS STORY SEES THE BRAND IN THE ARMOURY OF A-LISTERS OF EVERY KIND AROUND THE WORLD. THIS SPRING, ASPINAL EXTENDED ITS OFFERING WITH A BOUTIQUE COLLECTION OF DESIGNER SUNGLASSES FOR MEN AND WOMEN, DESIGNED, DEVELOPED AND DISTRIBUTED GLOBALLY BY ACCLAIMED FRAME SUPPLIER, EYESPACE.

Promoted to Aspinal's army of fans on social media, independent opticians were the first to receive the Aspinal of London capsule collection of sunglasses, which launched in spring 2019.



Pictured: Amalfi COL.02 and Riviera COL.01





**A**spinal of London is the quintessential English luxury lifestyle brand offering designer handbags and luxury leather accessories that bear a unique level of artistic detail. Founded on the fundamental premise of offering consumers affordable luxury, their designs are beautifully refined and of the finest quality so they can be enjoyed for a lifetime. Looking to branch into new territory within the accessories segment Aspal ventured into the world of designer eyewear earlier this spring via a naturally-aligned partnership with award-winning British frame supplier, Eyespace. Launched at a lavish London Fashion Week event in February at their beautifully appointed flagship store in the prestigious destination of St James's, Regent Street, celebrity guests, including David Gandy, Daisy Lowe, Lady Frederick Windsor,



global fashion authority Olivia Palermo and Vogue's Editor-in-Chief, Edward Enninful, had the first glimpse at the brand new designs. Comprising 14 pieces over 7 models that will carry through all seasons, the premiere capsule collection instantly guaranteed its popularity amongst the fashion set, showcased in all the leading glossy magazines, including *Harpers Bazaar*, *Vogue*, *Tatler*, *Marie Claire* and *Grazia*.

With the summer months upon us, the Aspal sunglasses collection is perfectly placed for the forthcoming holiday season. Drawing from the style archives of designs worn by celebrities, glitterati and fashion icons from the 1950's through to today, each piece takes inspiration from the refinement and glamour of Italian ports and jet-set destinations such as Amalfi, Portofino, Verona and the Italian Riviera. The carefully considered and cleverly developed shapes means there is a frame to suit every face shape or taste, while the meticulously selected colour palettes and superior lens selections means Aspal's extensive fan-base of social media fashion influencers and tech-savvy millennials will never miss an opportunity to upload the perfect selfie to Instagram.



**THIS PAGE:**

Amalfi COL.01 and Small Lion Lansdowne Bag  
The Duchess of Cambridge is a known fan of the brand

Lady Frederick Windsor with Aspal of London owner Mariya Dykalo, at the sunglasses launch in February 2019

Vogue Editor-in-Chief, Edward Enninful with Aspal's Creative Director Giles Deacon, at the sunglasses launch in February 2019

Navigator COL.01 and Classic Travel Collection  
Luxurious Aspal of London product merchandising

**OPPOSITE PAGE:**

Aspal of London ambassador David Gandy with British model and actress Lady Clara Paget

Aspal flagship store, Regent Street St. James

Milano COL.02 and Connaught Document Case

Luxurious in every sense, each sunglass in the collection offers 100% UVA and UVB protection. Featuring subtle Aspal branding, along with the latest bespoke componentry, the sunglasses wholly embody the Aspal of London philosophy of providing the ultimate in contemporary styling, fine craftsmanship and classic design.

Materials used in the collection, which features 4 pieces for men and 10 for women, include bespoke metallic cast elements, such as the stunning shield-shaped sculpted hinges and – channelling its Italian inspiration – the finest Mazzucchelli acetates, which are light, flexible and strong and have been polished to the highest grade possible. Every frame also features a metal cutwork shield design in the tip, making the frames instantly recognisable as a part of the Aspal of London brand.

Flagship pieces in the collection include **Verona**, which incorporates a genuine leather inset to echo the brand's leather goods heritage, while show-stopping oversized piece, **Amalfi**, is developed in perennial super-high gloss black (COL.01) or a signature glass-like crystal (COL.02) that reveals a beautiful



stitched-effect core wire running through the temple. The finishing touch to this flamboyant piece is Aspinal's – and Great Britain's – iconic Lion's head motif, which takes pride of place on the temple front.

For the throng of Aspinal's male fans, two sartorial designs that are always popular with the fashion crowd epitomise the chic masculinity of the brand: **Navigator**, a refined aviator in either black or gold provides a study in Aspinal's signature styling, while D-shaped **Milano** – an acetate piece that is elegance personified – adds fashionable flair and design progression to the traditional wayfarer shape. As with the women's pieces, these cult frames benefit from superb build quality that will put them at the top of high-summer wish lists.

This collection isn't just designed to whet the appetite for style throughout the summer though. As is the Eyespace design trademark, sunglasses are viewed as a seasonless essential so every piece is carefully developed to be perfectly and easily glazed. Possibly the most retro of the designs, 1950's inspired **Riviera** is nothing short of a supreme style statement. A deceptively petite 50-eyesize is surrounded by an oversized-looking eyefront and is offered in a flattering, bang-on-trend nude (COL.01) or a rich honeyed tortoiseshell (COL.02). A complementary hand-cast gold trim in the form of Aspinal's shield is inserted through the temple, adding ultra-luxurious finesse.

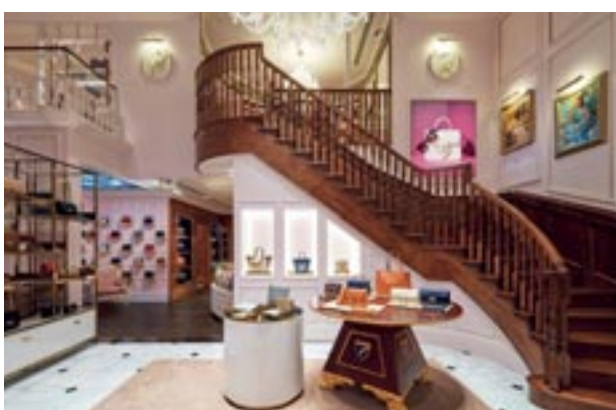
As is befitting of such a premium brand, famed for its exquisite gift wrapping services, each sunglass piece is offered to the consumer in a microfibre pouch, luxury hard case, premium slip-lid box that could easily double as a keepsake box, and with a branded microfibre cloth, all in the luxurious Aspinal navy blue tone which is then sealed with a gold foiled logo.



Looking to future roll-outs, a 44-piece optical collection is in the late stages of development, which will be launched in Autumn 2019, completing Eyespace's designer portfolio alongside the Range Rover and Land Rover offerings. A sneak preview revealed a beautifully-balanced selection of pieces for men and women, with shapes and sizes that perfectly punctuate the spectrum of tastes that come with the Aspinal customer. As with the sunglass collection, retro style infuses perfectly with iconic celebrity-loved looks to create a highly commercial selection that can be depended on to sell-through time and time again. The impeccable Aspinal of London iconography is again present, with metal cutwork found in the tips and hints of the shield also showing in temple contours, hinges and pins. Working perfectly with the new-season trends, Aspinal's colour palette of navy blue, red and gold seamlessly and harmoniously weave their way through the offerings, giving practices a portfolio addition that is irrefutably fit for a Queen (and a King!)

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ASPINAL OF LONDON SUNGLASSES ARE AVAILABLE TO ORDER NOW. FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT TO VIEW THE COLLECTIONS, CALL EYESPACE ON 01527 870550.





# 40 years of building for success



With the return of NEG's Building for Success Conference on Sunday 30 June and Monday 1 July, NEG members can share in the group's 40th anniversary celebrations whilst gaining CET and business and product insights

"This year's event promises to be our most fun packed yet," said NEG head of operations, Phil Mullins. "We have assembled a challenging programme with something for everyone to take back to practice to start making a real difference. In addition to a great programme, we have an exhibition of our leading preferred suppliers, including a couple of new suppliers, then on the Sunday evening we have a celebration dinner marking 40 years of NEG."

The following is a short summary of what delegates can expect from the conference and exhibition, being held at the East Midlands Conference Centre in Nottingham. For more information and to book a complimentary NEG member place, visit [www.negconference.co.uk](http://www.negconference.co.uk)

## DAY 1: SUNDAY 30 JUNE

### 2-3pm: Love your OCT: tips for success (one CET point)

Three optometrists from different practices, Mark Holloway, Jane Grey and Paul Adler, will share their OCT stories and experiences. There'll be practical tips for implementing OCT into practice including advice on charging, communicating the technology to patients and clinical case studies.

### 3:30-4:30pm: OCT live: retinal disease and referral refinement (one CET point)

OCT clinical evaluation will be brought to life during OCT Live with Peter Cikatricis and Christopher Mody. You will be guided through the patient journey, from scanning real patients live using the Spectralis OCT in HD on the big screen, to interpreting the images and deciding on patient management. This interactive session challenges the classic case study book format and demonstrates how a



Event venue, the East Midlands Conference Centre

multimodal imaging approach can be used in real life to assess the eye.

### 4:30-5:30pm: Lifting the lid on glaucoma (two CET points)



Heidelberg's Tim Cole will lift the lid on glaucoma

Learn with Tim Cole how to use OCT parameters to assess a patient's risk of glaucoma in conjunction with your existing arsenal of diagnostic tests. Discover how OCT can be used to spot the early signs of glaucoma and monitor progression of the disease and referral protocol. Work through a series of glaucoma case studies in groups with interactive discussions.

## DAY 2: MONDAY 1 JULY

### 9-10am: Understanding DEWSII approach to dry eye disease identification (three CET points)

This peer discussion, led by Jonathan Bench, will use the DEWSII report and its defined process for identifying and managing dry eye disease as the framework for the discussion. It will look at the process up to the point of stage one management, use of education and non-prescription approaches.



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Aftercare will be the focus of CooperVision's workshop

### 10-11am: Love at first light or lights out all out (one CET point)

Our lives are full of light, we need it to survive and no-one likes being in the dark. This presentation by Andy Sanders looks at both the visible spectrum and its darker sides. Examining the propagation of light in our everyday lives and its effect on ocular health/wellbeing, this session looks at lens options available to enhance visual comfort and protection.

### 11:30am-12:30pm: Contact lens aftercare: the missed opportunity (three CET points)

This discussion workshop by CooperVision will explore pre-prepared cases of patients attending for aftercare or eye examination.

Each case will highlight a different problem with communication or record keeping that can lead to misunderstanding between patient and practitioner and may lead to complications or the patient dropping out of contact lens wear. Delegates will discuss how communication and record keeping could be improved for each case through sharing best practice approaches and understanding how to best utilise the latest evidence-based research on the topic.

### 2-3pm: Understanding patient needs and regulatory requirements (three CET points)

This discussion workshop, led by Peter Reeve, asks delegates to consider the principal

features of well-planned practice frame selection, taking into account different types of patients and their differing needs and the features, benefits and disadvantages of various frame designs and materials. Topics will include how to choose (buy) frames to ensure patients' needs are met, and how to offer frames so that patients are not pre-judged or subjected to 'forced selling' – but are offered an informed choice to properly consent to the purchase of spectacles.

### 3-3:40pm: Celebrating 40 years, but what next for NEG?

Following a quick look back at what NEG has achieved over the past 40 years, this session with Phil Mullins will look at the new services that are being introduced. It will also give delegates the opportunity to have their say on what they would like to see from the group in the future.

### 4-5pm: Welcoming new patients via accessibility (CET applied for)

Dispensing optician Jayshree Vasani has travelled the length and breadth of England and Scotland with the 'Seeing beyond the eyes' team and has learned a lot about the challenges that people with visual impairment face on a regular basis. She has seen that once empowered with knowledge, eyecare professionals do want to make their practice more accessible and provide a more inclusive practice for anyone with a disability. Jayshree will look at how this can be achieved. Delegates will discuss what can be done to create a more inclusive environment, providing a better service and leveraging the 'purple pound'.

## EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

### COOPERVISION (TITLE SPONSOR)



Celebrating contact lens heroes

CooperVision will celebrate the difference ECPs make every day, under the theme of 'Celebrating incredible contact lens heroes'. There will be a focus on how, together, CooperVision and ECPs are taking on some of the biggest contact lens challenges – from tackling myopia with a soft lens proven to reduce the progression of myopia in children, to taking on hypoxia through silicone hydrogel one-day options. The challenge of overcoming contact lens wearer dropout will also be a key topic.

### HEIDELBERG ENGINEERING (TITLE SPONSOR)

Meet the Spectralis imaging platform and enjoy a comprehensive schedule of CET-accredited education. On Sunday 30 June, the Heidelberg Engineering Academy will deliver interactive lectures and clinical workshops

on retinal disease and glaucoma alongside three optometrists who will share practical tips for implementing OCT technology into an independent optometry practice (*see earlier*). The presenters will highlight how OCT technology transforms patient care and adds an exciting new dimension to the working day of staff. Practical tips will include advice on charging models for OCT, patient education, and clinical case studies.

## EXHIBITING

### BAUSCH + LOMB

At the Forefront of Visionary Innovations in eyecare since 1853, Bausch + Lomb was established in Rochester, New York, as a small optical shop that grew to become a large healthcare company with over 10,000 employees in 100 plus countries around the

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world. Since its establishment, Bausch + Lomb has been at the forefront of visionary innovations in eyecare dedicated to perfecting vision and enhancing life.

Vision Care works in partnership with ECPs and retailers to provide real-world technological advancements in contact lenses, lens care solutions and OTC eye health products. Its products are designed to help eyecare patients live a modern lifestyle with greater comfort and improved vision.

#### BONDEYE

Bondeye will join in the 40th anniversary celebrations by offering all practices attending a free £10 voucher to spend on its stand. This is in addition to members' special NEG pricing and paid management fees; simply spend £10 and get £10 extra free. This offer is only valid at the conference, so don't forget to visit the stand and choose from more than 3,000 products. With summer in full swing, there are new sunglass collections for both adults and children to view, including the world thinnest folding frame, Roav eyewear.

#### CENTROSTYLE

A first-time NEG conference exhibitor, CentroStyle will be showcasing its children's and adult frames, bespoke cloths, sprays and cases, accessories, ready readers and workshop equipment and consumables. The company's children's frame range has further been extended with Active Colours and Active Memory, together with a new one-piece soft rubber, Active One. Alongside all CentroStyle products is a new brand –



Airport – offering distinctive and unique designs of accessories including chains, cases, sunglasses and readers.



New Esprit model from Charmant

#### CHARMANT

Passionate creators of superbly crafted products, Charmant was founded in Japan in 1956 and its drive for perfection and uncompromising high-quality products has made it world leaders and innovators in titanium frames. "We continuously strive to ensure our flagship titanium frames are the best in the world and are proud owners of several patents," said a spokesperson. "Our designs take into account our Japanese heritage, comfort and durability incorporating current and future global trends, all of which is supported by exceptional customer care wherever you purchase our products."

#### DOCMAIL

Visit DocMail to find out how it can provide the perfect solution for any practice owner looking to save both time and money on their patient communications. DocMail is ideal for bulk mailings, ad-hoc letters, SMS messaging and postcards – all designed to boost practice uptake whilst minimising the admin burden

on staff. In addition, Docmail is fully integrated with Optinet Flex for complete mailing automation of patient communications.

#### EYEPLAN

Visit the team on the Eyeplan stand to discover why Eyeplan is a business model – not just a debit collection service. It is a proven value exchange between practice and patient in which both parties benefit. Eyeplan believes its success comes from two key elements: managing the fee collection and supporting the fee generation. Its tailor-made eyecare schemes are supplemented by a dedicated marketing team providing free support to associates.

#### HOYA (HEADLINE SPONSOR)

"At Hoya, our mission is to help you build and protect your brand," a spokesperson commented. "We believe that you should decide what is best for your business. Hoya is interested in long-term relationships not short-term deals. We support you to differentiate your business with innovative technology solutions. As a leading innovative manufacturer, you can always rely on our products and you can be confident in telling your patients that their vision will be optimised in the best possible way. Hoya offers lenses to fit every need and lifestyle, providing your patients with superior lenses that perform no matter where life takes them."

#### LENSTEC

The Lenstec team will be on hand to discuss the latest spectacle lens solutions available – new and existing own label digital progressives. The company will also be discussing its expanded material range to meet dispensing challenges. Julbo and VerSport, dedicated sports Rx ranges, offer impact and sun protection, and there are new styles to suit all desires. The 2019 prescription programme for Invu, now available in a fit over option, and the Henshaw ultra-polarised Rx range benefits from a number of new frame models complete with great polarised lens types driven by NuPolar technology across all indices including CR39, Trivex, polycarbonate. From Pennine Optical there will be new and exclusive collections from Pier Martino and Mazzimo Black Label.

#### LUNEAU TECHNOLOGY

A pioneer in wavefront technology for the optical industry, Luneau Technology manufactures and distributes products under Visionix brands. The Luneau Technology Group is a global company consisting of 10 wholly owned subsidiaries

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and over 170 distributors worldwide with state-of-the-art production facilities based in France and Israel. Visit the UK team at the conference to see its seven in one VX120+ pre/post screening diagnostic system – fully loaded with wavefront ARK, tonometry, pachymetry, topography, aberometry and ortho K fitting features. Also on show will be the VX40 Lens Analyser – its fully automated lens meter measuring all types of lenses with one push of a button.

### MARCHON

Visit the Marchon UK team to hear about the latest eyewear innovations from the company's prestigious brand names. Marchon Eyewear distributes its products through a global network of subsidiaries and distributors, serving over 80,000 accounts in more than 100 countries. Marchon Eyewear is a VSP Global company, connecting its 88 million members to affordable, accessible high-quality eyecare and eyewear. Its businesses combine to bring quality eyecare insurance, high-fashion frames, customised lenses, ophthalmic technology and connected experiences to increase access to eyecare around the world.



Style from Marchon's new NYC Admired collection

### NO 7 CONTACT LENSES

Join No7 on its stand to learn how to get started with EyeDream, the company's advanced ortho-k programme, in a three-step plan. "EyeDream has had a profound and positive effect on thousands of lives," said a spokesperson. "We regularly hear of patients crying with joy when they remove their lenses for the first time. With a tireless commitment to education and support, we have built a network of over 350 EyeDream centres. For every independent practice we partner with, EyeDream offers an exciting opportunity to develop a new and reliable revenue stream." Also on the stand will be the Medmont E300 corneal topographer – with an exclusive offer for NEG members.

### OPTINET

Optinet is the IT services division of NEG and suppliers of Optinet Flex, an advanced practice management system for independent optical business of all sizes. "As a specialist optical software



Discover Thea's range for dry eye and blepharitis

development company, we believe software needs to move with the times to allow the practice to benefit from the latest cost and time saving product enhancements," said Chris Smith, Optinet business development manager. The latest Flex update includes: contact lens electronic ordering with CooperVision; Xero accounts integration (MTD); and online appointment booking. Future developments include: a stock-taking mobile phone app and eGOS submissions.

### SEIKO OPTICAL UK

Visit the Seiko stand for information about its new programme which includes: a unique second pair offer, to support a return to practice strategy; Accidental Damage Assistance with every Seiko lens, to add value to your lens offer; and Specs Network, a collaborative online marketing platform with hundreds of independent opticians throughout the UK. Visitors will also be in with the chance to win a Practice Media Package, including a practice video.

### STEPPER (HEADLINE SPONSOR)

For Stepper, every frame tells a story. The company believes there are three key reasons opticians worldwide stock Stepper frames: 1) value for money; 2) range; and 3) saleability. Peter Reeve, Stepper UK managing director, explained more: "Few people buy on price, preferring value for money. We have a range of price points and, because we do not pay royalties, our prices are not over-inflated. We also offer frames from the traditional to the fashionable. As a reliable supplier of plastic, titanium, rimless and half eyes, Stepper has something to meet your needs. Finally, customers love how our frames look and feel. We make frames that 'sell through' quickly so you are never 'stuck with a Stepper.'" With new frames being added almost every month, there's a very good reason to visit the Stepper stand at the conference.

### SUNWISE

Founded in 1996 after high demand for affordable performance sports eyewear,

Sunwise is located in Oxford and is a proud British brand. "Since the beginning, Sunwise has received overwhelming support from the press," said a spokesperson. "Reviews, product features and editorials can be found in a wide variety of publications. We are now fully committed to NEG with our sports Rx system exclusive to opticians. We offer an inexpensive, value added and manageable set of advanced sports vision models that will really expand your sports patient base, without compromising either frame or lens technology."

### THEA PHARMACEUTICALS

Visit the Thea Pharmaceuticals team at the conference to find out more about its unique product ranges for dry eye and blepharitis. The range is said to form a complete two-step eye health routine, to ensure patients leave the practice feeling confident in the products they have been provided with. Visitors can also discuss its free Eye Health Training packages and receive exclusive access to an offer only available to NEG conference delegates: order a minimum of £150 of goods and receive a 15 per cent discount and a choice of one of the following books – Demodex in Ophthalmology or OCT and Retina.

### THOMSEN EYEWEAR

The Thomsen Denmark brand was founded by Morten Thomsen, who has more than a decade of experience in retail, wholesale and design within the eyewear industry. With roots in the Danish and Scandinavian design tradition, Morten Thomsen values good craftsmanship and is inspired by shape, functionality, aesthetics and simplicity. He said: "We combine classic styles with interpretations of the contemporary look to create expressive frames with clean and simple lines and subtle colour combinations." The brand is exclusive to NEG and the team looks forward to working with members, new and existing.

**Don't forget to register for your place at the conference via [www.negconference.co.uk](http://www.negconference.co.uk)**

# What are you building: job or cash cow?



*Success is about escaping the job trap and building a cash cow, writes Andy Clark*

**If you had a choice, what would you be building – a job or a cash cow? If you build a job, you will probably end up:**

- Spending most of every work day serving your patients
- Trying to catch up on admin and paperwork in the evenings
- Feeling like you are the only one who does things right
- Hiding from the numbers that quantify your efforts
- Being reluctant to take time off, because if you're not working the till isn't filling

**If you build a cash cow you will probably end up:**

- Having other people who look after your customers when you don't want to
- Having somebody else who does the admin and paperwork
- Systematising your business so that everyone does things just right
- Enjoying managing the numbers that show you just how well you are doing and
- Happily taking time off because you are confident that your team is doing the job in your absence

It's a daft question isn't it? Who would deliberately build such a hard job and give up so much when they could have a cash cow instead? No-one starts their own business with the intention of creating more work and stress with fewer rewards, but plenty end up like this by accident.

As professionals, we are both trained and required to do a job very well. This means that we feel most comfortable when we are in complete control, when we know exactly what is going on and what to do about it, and we really don't like it when things take us out of our comfort zones.



Why would you choose not to build a cash cow?

Consequently, when we become practice owners we tend to fill our time with the things that are familiar and safe and inadvertently build ourselves a job. When you are busy doing your job:

- You don't have time to promote your practice professionally so almost anyone with some special offers can tempt your patients away from you
- You don't have time to train and develop your staff so they are expected to learn osmotically with 'on the job training'
- You don't have time to systematise your dream of an outstanding customer experience, so your staff do their job the way they feel like doing it (quickest, easiest, least effort)
- You don't have time to teach your team how to facilitate the sale of your goods and services so the practice only makes money when you are working
- Worst of all, you don't have time to scientifically manage your business with the levels of professionalism and rigour that you would naturally apply if you were managing a patient's glaucoma risk or MGD

And it's exhausting, it's depressing, it's overwhelming and it's just plain wrong that you have to work so hard and earn less than if you were a locum.

## FOUR ESSENTIAL ROLES

So, what do people who build cash cows know that you don't? They know that in a business with five people, or in a business with 5,000 people, there are four essential roles: team member, manager, leader and owner. They also know that building a cash cow requires that they become masters of two of them, and to step away from the other two.

### Role 1: team member

Team members create customer experience and sales. The team role includes all of the jobs that you could pay someone else to do. In the early days of an enterprise while there's no shortage of team jobs, there is often a shortage of the cash needed to pay people to do them, so the new owner attempts to do everything and (usually) fails. Getting stuck in a team is a big risk for cash cow builders, and they avoid it by focusing on generating cash and then using



The four essential roles in business





Leaders create security

it to pay others to do their team role as soon as possible; leaving them free to invest their time in the next role.

**Role 2: manager**

Managers create control. They are masters of systems and standards; they ensure that the team are doing what they should be doing, when they should be doing it, and that they achieve the required results. There are two types of manager. You might be a 'Manager' (noun) with a capital 'M' – a person responsible for controlling or administering an organisation or group of staff; or you might be a 'manager' (verb) with a lower case 'm' – someone who copes, survives or gets by through adversity.

Capital 'M' managers have two things that lower case managers don't: they know what constitutes management best practice and they have the confidence to apply it to ensure that the business achieves its objectives. Cash cow builders always Manage with a capital M; they automate

systems, train and motivate their teams and then ensure efficiency and profitability as soon as they can. They pay someone else to replace them, leaving them free to master the two remaining roles.

**Role 3: leader**

Leaders create security. Leaders make sure that the business is headed in the right direction. They make sure that it is safe and that it will arrive on time, and by dint of who they are and how they behave, they create the culture of the team that relies on them.

**Role 4: owner**

Owners create prosperity. The owner's job is to provide both investment and re-investment in order to ensure the profitability of the enterprise. The owner also, of course, enjoys the returns on this investment.

**BREAKING OUT OF THE JOB TRAP**

So, what stops people moving out of the team and building a cash cow? You don't



Planning is essential for breaking out of the job trap

have enough time to work on your business... so you don't have enough money to pay someone to do your job...so you don't have enough time to work on your business...so you don't have enough money to pay someone to do your job...so – and on it goes, forever climbing but getting nowhere.

Breaking out of the job trap requires three things:

1. Confidence to invest in someone to do your day job for some time every week (start with half a day) which comes from having;
2. Knowledge, so you know what to do and how to do it; and
3. A plan, that details what you must do first.

Cash cow business owners know that there are seven systems that must be constantly managed:

1. The New Patient System
2. The Recall System
3. The Database Marketing System
4. The Customer Experience System
5. The Sales System
6. The Gross Profit System
7. The Net Profit System

They have found that their time spent properly Managing (with a capital 'M') these seven systems produces far more financial security and reward than when they are spending time in the job role. And even though they become financially secure, for cash cow owners success is hardly ever about the money, it's all about what the money does. It's peace of mind instead of sleepless nights, it's time for loved ones instead of having to work, and it's about enthusiastically arriving in the practice instead of dreading another day with too much to do and no time to do it.

*Andy Clark is an optometrist and founder of Practice Building, a firm specialising in the development of independent optical practices.*



Building a cash cow leaves more time for 'you'



# Training in optics

## *A modern-day necessity*

Training is a key way to grow your business, retain happy staff and improve customer satisfaction, writes Nick Walsh

If you are weighing up how best to use a limited budget to develop your practice, you may be asking yourself whether you need to pay for training courses for team members. But training for all practice staff is key because, like it or not, current and future developments in our sector are driving the need for additional training to support changing roles in practice – including adaptation to newer technologies. I believe that the necessity for practices to have dispensing opticians (DOs), contact lens opticians (CLOs) and well trained support teams will grow in the future.

The amount of change happening in optics is no doubt driven by factors such as the ageing population – leading to increased prevalence of conditions that can cause visual impairment. According to figures from the United Nations<sup>1</sup>, in 2017 there were an estimated 962 million people aged 60 or over in the world, comprising 13 per cent of the global population. The population aged 60 or above is growing at a rate of about three per cent per year; the number of older persons in the world is projected to be 1.4 billion in 2030 and 2.1 billion in 2050. It is estimated that this figure could rise to 3.1 billion in 2100.

United Nations figures also show that, globally, the number of persons aged 80 or over is projected to triple by 2050 – from 137 million in 2017 to 425 million in 2050. By 2100, this figure is expected to increase to 909 million, nearly seven times its value in 2017. Over the next few decades, a further increase in the population of older persons is almost inevitable, given the size of the cohorts born in recent decades.

In the UK, link that to pressure on NHS services and it is clear that there is a need for the growth of minor eye conditions services (MECS) and enhanced services in the High Street optical practice. Technology is developing and changing how we work in practice so that, in the future, we will

need specialists in operating new technology to support the clinical teams. All of these changes will, without doubt, lead to changes to the traditional roles of the optometrist, CLO, DO and support teams to embrace the specialisms that will be required moving forwards.

### TRAINING FOR STAFF RETENTION

The CIPD Employee Outlook Spring 2017<sup>2</sup> showed that: 48 per cent of employees strongly agreed or agreed that their organisation provided them with opportunities to learn and grow; however, 24 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed. The report also showed that 47 per cent of employees were satisfied with the opportunity to develop their skills in their job, while 22 per cent were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

We can look at this as a good result, or we can consider what will happen to the 50 per cent plus who believe that their employer does not give them the opportunity to learn and grow, or who are not satisfied with the opportunity to develop their skills. Can we assume that these less happy team members will move on? I'm sure a good proportion will. Investing in your teams through training is essential – not only for your businesses but also for the personal satisfaction of team members. It shows that you value them and are willing to invest in them personally for the future.

According to Shaw<sup>3</sup>, *“Job satisfaction generally increases and self-esteem improves when employees better understand the workings of the company. Training can also enhance morale on the job and loyalty to the company. Workers who believe their company offers excellent training opportunities are generally less likely to leave their companies within a year of training than employees with poor training opportunities.”*

Poor staff retention carries with it many hidden costs for the practice owner:

- Costs to cover the position on a



Investing in teams through training is essential

- temporary basis – be that overtime or use of locum staff
- Cost of advertising for a replacement
- Your time in considering applications and interviewing
- The cost of an agency should you follow this route
- The cost of taking someone through all of that basic induction and training again
- Your competitor gains a great individual... the list could go on

Is training a guarantee that people won't leave eventually? Probably not. But what will happen is that for the period of their training, and the time thereafter, you will gain someone who can deliver much more for you and your business. The key to sustainable growth for optical practices in this changing environment is having the right people with the right skillsets offering the support and services that your patients will come to expect. Currently, we can only speculate on what the various optical roles may look like in the future, and what training will be needed.

We also must not forget the desire of many of your team members to develop themselves and how this can help you plan for the future needs of the business. If your business plan shows that you need an additional DO in the future, why not look to develop the 'rising star' in your team towards this role. The 'grow your own' route is much more cost-effective than trying to recruit into those roles and, of course, you will have

someone who has worked with you for many years and who already understands your business and patients. This leaves more time to develop your staff training plan.

### HOW TO INTEGRATE TRAINING

Learning and development should be a key part of any business plan. It ensures that future business plans are supported by a team ready and able to deliver them. All individuals should have a personal development plan (PDP). The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education describes the principles of PDPs well: *"PDP supports the idea that learning is a lifelong and life-wide activity. The process of PDP can strengthen the capacity of learners to reflect upon their own learning and achievement and to plan for their own personal, educational and career development. This is a core learning process, required throughout many employment and continuing professional development contexts"*.

PDPs can help individuals – including the practice owner:

- Become aware of the skills they have
- Identify and develop the skills they need
- Work out what they want to achieve and how to achieve it
- Focus on potential study, career and personal development goals

The aim of individual PDPs is that ongoing learning and development will support the overall goal of your business plan. Well trained and engaged teams can bring value to organisations, patients and small businesses. This can help provide the High Street independent practice with a competitive advantage.

Staff development is vital for business growth, but at the same time it can be limited by the time and money available to invest in it. Few members of staff want to give up work to study full-time and acquire debt, so courses which offer blended learning and distance learning are ideal. They ensure time away from the practice is minimal, that staff can 'earn while they learn', and that the practice benefits from their growing knowledge base. There is minimal disruption of normal routines and rotas and less need to cover absences and the inherent costs of that. What's more, investing in sending one member of staff on a training course can bring wider benefits. That staff member can then help train others in practice and pass on their new-found knowledge, supporting long-term growth.

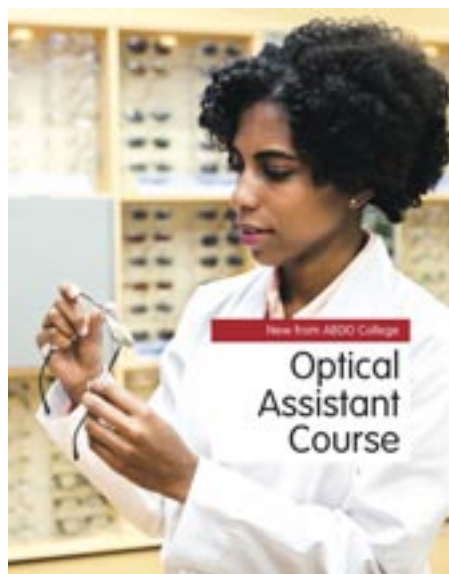
### COLLEGE COURSES FOR ALL

ABDO College offers great courses to

support qualifications for lab technicians, DOs (through the FBDO route or the degree route), CLOs as well as a low vision honours course, contact lens honours course and a degree top-up for holders of the FBDO qualification. The College also run access courses and revision courses – all with a great deal of support. The range of qualifications and courses means there is something to offer almost everyone in the practice. Students may do a single qualification at a particular level and that may be their aspiration fulfilled, or they may use their first and subsequent qualifications to move along their career path to an ultimate goal.

It is important to offer courses and qualifications to as many members of the practice team as possible to ensure your business has the right people with the right skill sets for sustainable growth into the future. To this end, ABDO College has launched its new Optical Assistant course, developed in response to student and employer feedback. The course is a flexible way to train your support team, giving them a vital induction to the world of optics.

Designed for staff who've just started working in optics as well as those who have been in practice for some time and want to formalise what they have learnt, the Optical Assistant course enables staff to study online. This is cost-effective for your practice as team members don't need to take regular time away from the practice. The only time away from the practice is two optional workshops that are included in the course. These are run at the ABDO National Resource Centre in Birmingham and cover the more hands-on areas of optical screening, and adjustments and repairs.



By studying the Optical Assistant course, staff

will uncover just how much there is to working in eyecare. Their knowledge of frames and lenses will grow, allowing them to develop how they can support patients and professional staff with growing confidence and knowledge. End-of-year exams can be a significant barrier to a student's desire to pursue further education: with this in mind, this introductory course allows people to study and learn without this anxiety. Students must achieve an average of 70 per cent in each module in order to gain a completion certificate from ABDO College.

Modules covered are:

- Legal requirements in optics (including roles and responsibilities)
- Introduction to the eye
- Introduction to Contact Lenses
- The Provision of Spectacle Lenses in Optics
- The Provision of Spectacle Frames in Optics
- Introduction to Mathematics
- Optional Optical Screening Workshop
- Optional Spectacle Repair and Adjustment Workshop

Successful completion of the ABDO College Optical Assistant course, studying subjects directly applicable to everyday practice, will allow the learner direct entry into Year 1 of the FBDO Diploma without the need for prerequisite GCSEs or A Levels. For those not looking to progress onto the DO course but moving into a role that is more supervisory or senior, they can pursue the Senior Optical Assistant course. Find out more about the courses offered by ABDO College at <http://abdocollege.org.uk/courses>

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*Nick Walsh FBDO is sector skills development officer at ABDO.*



# Sight2Save

## The power of flight and sight

By Joan Grady

Childhood surroundings and experiences can lead from childhood dreams to the realisation of adult goals. Such imagination is mirrored in today's reality for James Moon. "I've always loved planes, and grew up around airports and aircraft," says the British founder of Sight2Save. This passion intensified through the years, and the aviation advocate's enthusiasm resulted in a private pilot's licence while still a teenager. His devotion for planes and the aviation world was deepened even further during a visit to Morocco several years ago.

"It was during this trip to Morocco that I became aware of the number of people who were not able to see properly because they did not have glasses," explains James. "I did research and discovered that nearly two billion people throughout the world, and particularly in developing countries, have sight problems. This meant, of course, that these people were not able to learn correctly, or get jobs because of their sight problems. So in 2016, I started Sight2Save, when I realised the impact that eyecare



James Moon Founder of Sight2Save

health and glasses could have, which combined my love of flying and wanting to help people."

James discovered in his travels that many people in developing countries were living in poverty; unable to attend school, and then as adults, not having the qualifications to work and make a living, let alone develop their personal skills. The causes of visual impairment ranges from childhood blindness to cataracts. The latest report from the World Health Organisation



Close inspection during the eye test process

estimates that, globally, approximately 80 per cent of all vision impairment is considered avoidable, i.e. is the result of refractive error. In developing countries, up to 90 per cent of treatable eye diseases frequently go undiagnosed.

### CUSTOMISED AIRCRAFT

James has visited isolated areas of Tanzania, Fiji and other areas of the Pacific and Botswana. Next on his wish list of destinations is Chile and Uganda where many people do not have access to professional eye health care, necessary tests, frames and corrective lenses. James and optician volunteers fly in light aircraft to deliver used frames and donations from eyewear companies.

James and his team soon came to realise that they could make a greater impact and impression if they created a state-of-the-art plane with modern, tech savvy machines and equipment. British aviation and yacht designer, Alexander McDiarmid, has created a stunning aircraft design that would be fitted with a specialist ophthalmic interior.



Youngsters becoming aware of eye health care



Distributing frames after a mission by Sight2Save



Happiness is: "I can see!"

"The plane is really Flying Eye Hope," says James, "and we want to be able to offer surgery and quality eyecare in the countries that so need this service." The projected plane for this venture is a Boeing B747 aircraft. The concept is amazing with an upper deck that includes a lounge, dining space, and a rest area for the crew and volunteers. The main deck is fitted out with a classroom, eye test and treatment areas.

James is very pleased that Sight2Save is engaged in discussions with aircraft owners who are interested in participating in the project, by donating a plane that can be refurbished to impeccable standards for ophthalmic requirements.

James's foresight for the project is that the customised plane would travel worldwide, and spend three weeks at each destination, giving the opticians and eye doctors sufficient time to ensure local surgeries and tests are available to all those who require them. He also notes that the local governments where Sight2Save has already visited are very pleased with the end results of capable and competent efforts



Poster to encourage frame donations to the non-profit charity

accomplished by restoring sight to people in need.

**AMBITION AND ADVENTURE**

Sight2Save is a totally non-profit organisation. "Everybody connected with Sight2Save is a volunteer," says James, "and none of us are paid." With trained pilots and opticians required for this exemplary work, is it a challenge to find people to participate?

"The response has been amazing," he says, "and the aviation community from all over the world wants to be involved. We have been able to find retired pilots with great experience who want to work with us, which is invaluable. We also have young medical students who want to be part of this project, along with retired opticians. Sight2Save appeals to a wide spectrum of people, and we are fortunate to have amazing support from aviation and the optical world. This is a complex organisation to run, and it's important to listen to what people want." Since the charity was formed three years ago, Sight2Save has initiated long-term corporate



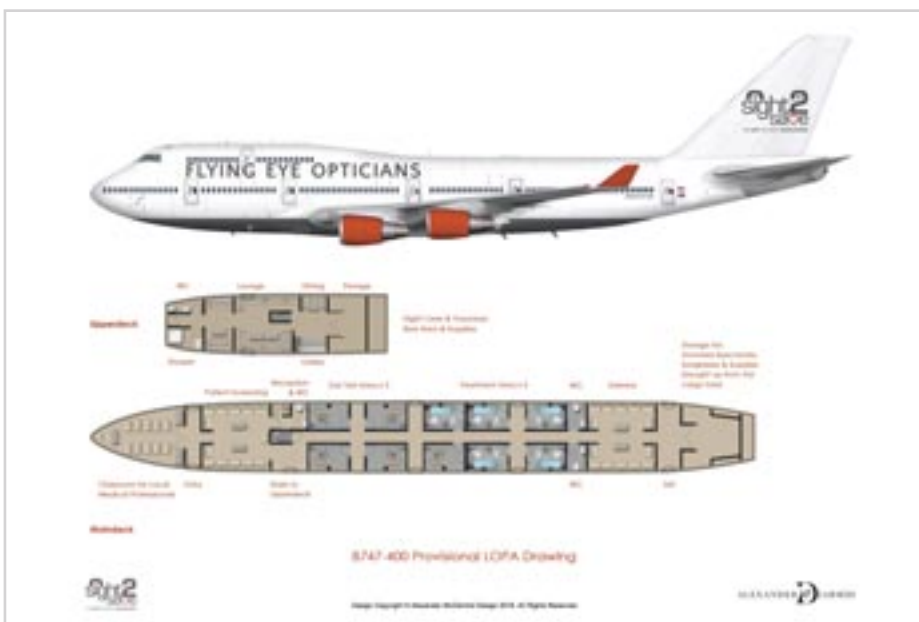
Sight2Save statistics and goals

sponsors and partnerships, and Moon is keen to have more companies and individuals becoming involved with development and international growth of this exceptional cause.

**FUTURE FORWARD**

The realisation of the Flying Opticians plane converted into a mobile surgery is paramount in future planning. "We really take everything day by day," says Moon philosophically, "and the most important goal is the conversion of a jet into a bespoke aircraft for eye tests and surgery. The conversion will take about 12-18 months. One of the obstacles we face is that airports in some of these countries that we want to assist are not good, and they are not equipped to handle huge aircraft and deliveries."

In the coming months, James and his team envision Nepal and Morocco on the agenda, where they will engage and aid people of all ages, and assist in the training of local medical professionals. The long-term goal is to help bring sight to people who most need it, and eliminate avoidable blindness. With the power of aviation and shrinking global distances, along with the compassionate support of philanthropic donations of caring people who truly enjoy helping others, the visionary expectations of Sight2Save continues to soar.



Proposed design for The Flying Opticians Sight2Save customised mobile surgery



The ability to read enables people to find jobs and develop personal skills at Jean Momo Foundation Moje Cameroon



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\* Compared with a standard single-vision, one-day lens over a three-year period.

1. Chamberlain P, Back A, Lazon P, et al. 3 year effectiveness of a dual-focus 1 day contact lens for myopia control. Presented at the 40th British Contact Lens Association Clinical Conference and Exhibition; 10 June 2017; Liverpool, United Kingdom.

