

# The ALLDOCS

May 2004

Rx Therapeutics for Practice Growth

INSIDE:  
CD on Treating  
Ocular Allergy

Newsletter

## Make Chair Time More Valuable

*O.D. finds billing service helps bottom line and productivity*

Shortly after his graduation from Pennsylvania College of Optometry last year, **David M. Duffy, O.D.**, acquired the lease on the Langhorne, PA, location from his father, **John Duffy, O.D.** As much as the son admired the business that his father had built over the years, he did make one significant change: he hired a medical billing company. That change, along with his clinical protocols, has resulted in nearly doubling the practice's income.

"Even with the percentage charged by the billing company, typically close to 10 percent of collected revenue, it's worth it.

In addition to improving the speed and accuracy of payments, the billing service has reviewed all of our procedure codes and fees, and has made suggestions of fee modifications. The service has also obtained credentialing and participating provider status with many managed care plans we were not contracted with. These new affiliations have created additional revenue with patients we could not see before," said Dr. David Duffy.

"Many LensCrafters leaseholders only submit claims to vision insurance, whereas



Dr. David Duffy

I bill medical insurance." As a result, he typically receives reimbursements 30 to 40 percent higher than he would have. For example, let's say a patient comes in with Blue Cross/Blue Shield but no vision insurance. An office looking only for vision insurance might tell that patient he'd have to pay out of pocket for a

routine eye exam. But an office that looks at the entire medical picture, which could include diabetes, glaucoma, conjunctivitis or hypertension, for example, can gain ad-

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### VIGAMOX™ Receives Additional FDA Approval

In late April, Alcon received U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval to add a supplemental list of susceptible pathogens to its VIGAMOX, further demonstrating the breadth of coverage and potency that has made VIGAMOX the most widely prescribed ophthalmic fluoroquinolone on the market today.

With the addition of 22 pathogens added to the *in vitro* efficacy section of its package insert, VIGAMOX provides the broadest spectrum in the ophthalmic fluoroquinolone category. The pathogens newly added to the VIGAMOX package insert are:

**Listeria monocytogenes**  
**Staphylococcus saprophyticus**  
**Streptococcus agalactiae**  
**Streptococcus mitis**  
**Streptococcus Groups C, G and F**  
**Acinetobacter baumannii**  
**Acinetobacter calcoaceticus**  
**Citrobacter freundii**  
**Citrobacter koseri**  
**Enterobacter aerogenes**  
**Enterobacter cloacae**

**Morganella morganii**  
**Neisseria gonorrhoeae**  
**Proteus vulgaris**  
**Pseudomonas stutzeri**  
**Clostridium perfringens**  
**Propionibacterium acnes**  
**Chlamydia pneumoniae**  
**Legionella pneumophila**  
**Mycobacterium avium**  
**Mycobacterium marinum**  
**Mycoplasma pneumoniae**



### Las Vegas 2004 Meeting Spot Selected; Plans Shaping Up

The Palms Casino Hotel Las Vegas will be the site of the 2004 ALLDocs annual meeting, October 17-21. The Palms is known as one of the trendiest spots in Las Vegas. Look for an announcement soon on special pricing arrangements ALLDocs is creating to encourage members to attend. ■

## Chair Time

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ditional revenue by billing the patient's medical insurance carrier.

Not only does Dr. Duffy increase his practice revenue, the patient and LensCrafters benefit as well, he said. Because the patient doesn't have to pay for the eye exam out of pocket, Dr. Duffy has been able to raise the annual supply sales of contact lenses. Also true is that opticians in the LensCrafters store can more easily upgrade patients to better frames and lenses.

O.D.s are their own worst enemies in a financial sense. Dr. Duffy said his father

*"My chair time is what earns my income. It's what no one can take away."  
—Dr. Duffy*

used to do epilations for free all the time. "Medical insurers will pay \$95 for that. Similarly, why charge only \$70 for a routine exam, when a diabetic or hypertensive patient's medical insurance will pay \$135 for a comprehensive exam?" he asked.

Dr. Duffy admits that it's labor intensive on the front end, but definitely worthwhile. "You already have the pachymeters and corneal topographers. Just spend the time to understand the diagnosis codes and most of these tests and procedures are billable."

Dr. Duffy does see patients who do not present with medical indications. They have been happy to pay out of pocket because the exam they've just had has been the most comprehensive one ever.

Working with a reputable billing company also protects O.D.s from making common billing mistakes. "So many O.D.s are afraid of being audited if they start billing medical insurance, but the billing company has an equally high stake in not submitting fraudulent claims. So they're stringent," he said.

"My chair time is what earns my income. It's what no one can take away. Everybody sells contact lenses, so I tell patients, 'Here's what my contact lenses cost. You can get them here or wherever you want. I'm here to take care of you.'" ■

## Alcon Sponsors 3 Hours of COPE- Approved CE Online



O.D.s seeking online education on therapeutics can receive up to three hours of free continuing education credit sponsored by Alcon. Each of the following courses is approved for one hour.

◆ **Ocular Allergy Update:** Recent developments in understanding and treating allergies make the atopic patient more treatable. By **Arthur B. Epstein, O.D.**, and **John Yanni, Ph.D.** Available online at: [http://www.revoptom.com/index.asp?ArticleType=SiteSpec&page=osc/feb04/alcon\\_ocular.htm](http://www.revoptom.com/index.asp?ArticleType=SiteSpec&page=osc/feb04/alcon_ocular.htm)

◆ **Antibiosis: The Next Gen-**

**eration:** A look at the history of antibiotics and a primer on the latest generation of agents. By **Alan G. Kabat, O.D.**, and **Mark R. Bloomenstein, O.D.** Available online at: [http://www.revoptom.com/index.asp?ArticleType=SiteSpec&page=osc/feb04/alcon\\_antibiosis.htm](http://www.revoptom.com/index.asp?ArticleType=SiteSpec&page=osc/feb04/alcon_antibiosis.htm)

◆ **Dry Eyes: A New Look at an Old Problem:** While there is a long road ahead, we are finally beginning to understand how to treat the roots of this disease. By **Stephen Cohen, O.D.** Available online at: [http://www.revoptom.com/index.asp?ArticleType=SiteSpec&page=osc/feb04/alcon\\_dryeyes.htm](http://www.revoptom.com/index.asp?ArticleType=SiteSpec&page=osc/feb04/alcon_dryeyes.htm) ■

## Letter from the President

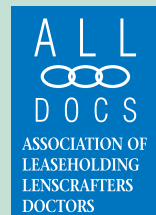


Dr. Gelb

I want to encourage ALLDocs members to come to our annual meeting in Las Vegas this fall. A strong turnout benefits us all by providing the opportunity to share more information with our colleagues. Those of us who have been to meetings before find we return to our practices with a number of solid ideas for better patient and clinical management. Our meeting is also our best chance of showing support to our vendor sponsors. Many of these vendors come up with unique and interesting contests or promotions just for us.

Keeping current with what's new in products and technologies is critically important as the industry is changing. As competition for contact lens sales becomes more intense, and profits are squeezed, this is a good time to find ways to distinguish ourselves. By being involved in the medical end of eye care, we benefit our patients, LensCrafters and ourselves. I refer you to the experience of **Dr. David Duffy** and the column by **Dr. John Rumpakis** for more information. Take heed: this may be our best chance to protect our practices and protect LensCrafters' patient base.

Finally, as we are putting together a vibrant and informative program for the annual meeting, feel free to make suggestions. If there is a particular topic you want to hear discussed, please fax me at 732.726.1735 with your suggestions. ■



## The Medical Model

# Paradigm Shift toward Primary Care

By **John Rumpakis, O.D., M.B.A.**

**A**s primary care O.D.s, we need to see ourselves as the entry point into the eye care health system, not just the world of refractive correction. Since nearly two-thirds of all first-time eye care encounters take place in an optometrist's office, integrating primary care eye care into your practice is essential to capturing our full marketplace potential, and expanding our revenue base far above that of providing refractive care only.

To illustrate, consider a spectacle-wearing patient who reports distance blur, watery eyes, bothersome glare and regular scratching and burning sensations. While doing the routine exam and prescription change as well as the anterior segment examination, you notice that the tear film looks irregular and that the lid margins are suspect for tear insufficiency. Rather than simply provide a sample of an artificial tear (perhaps even without any direct recommendation on formulation or use), recognize that this patient may benefit from palliative therapy, and may also have some underlying condition/medication that could be causing these symptoms. Schedule additional tests such as Schirmer I & II tests, phenol red, lissamine green and tear break-up time to reach a formal diagnosis related to their non-refractive complaints. Recommend palliative therapy, such as SYSTANE™, with a treatment protocol and schedule the patient for a follow-up visit.

At the follow-up visit, perform the appropriate level of case history, review of systems and medical testing. In addition to the SYSTANE therapy, determine the pa-

tient could benefit from punctal occlusion and begin with using a collagen plug to occlude the two inferior puncta. At a follow-up visit two weeks later, determine if the combination of the palliative therapy and collagen plugs have helped. Based upon these results, then continue your

treatment plan with occlusion of the inferior puncta with semi-permanent silicone plugs and schedule follow-up visits for one month, three months and six months.

Look at the economics in the ac-



**Dr. Rumpakis**

comparing table. It recognizes the diagnoses and treatment of the patient's refractive and medical issues. The additional amount of time spent with the patient to perform the ancillary testing and procedures was most likely less than 45 minutes. That is time extremely well spent. ■

### Look at the Economics

REFRACTIVE MODEL		MEDICAL MODEL	
<b>CPT code used:</b>		<b>CPT code used:</b>	
<b>92004 – New patient, CE</b>	<b>\$79.00</b>	<b>92004 – New Patient, CE – Recommend SYSTANE</b>	<b>\$79.00</b>
<b>92015 – Refraction</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>	<b>92015 – Refraction</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>
<b>Spectacles</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>	<b>Spectacles</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>
<b>Give Samples</b>		<b>99213 – E/M return</b>	<b>\$65.00</b>
		<b>68761-E2,E4 – Occlude inferior puncta (collagen)</b>	<b>\$365.00</b>
		<b>99213 – E/M return</b>	<b>\$65.00</b>
		<b>68761-E2,E4 – Occlude inferior puncta (silicone)</b>	<b>\$365.00</b>
		<b>99212 – E/M return</b>	<b>\$45.00</b>
		<b>99212 – E/M return</b>	<b>\$45.00</b>
		<b>99212 – E/M return</b>	<b>\$45.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$404.00</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1399.00</b>

(Schedule of visits and fees used for example only.)

## Allergies: The Practice-Building Opportunities

**I**nside this issue of *ALLDocs*, practitioners will find a CD containing practice-building tools to help uncover allergic eyes. The CD, supported by a grant from Alcon, contains customizable recall cards, a patient letter and a patient survey to help practitioners identify patients suffering from seasonal allergies—year-round.

The opportunities for practice building are enormous. Consider the following:



#### Recall card

- ◆ 60 percent of all allergy sufferers have ocular conditions.
- ◆ There are 30 million potential ocular allergy patients.
- ◆ 50 percent use OTC products.
- ◆ 41 million bottles of OTC allergy drops are purchased yearly, compared to only five million prescriptions for allergy eye drops. ■



## "Go for the Big Guns"

*O.D. reaches for strength when treating infections*

**W**e have a large contact lens practice and see contact lens-related complications rather often," said **Nancy Wolf, O.D.**, Manchester, NH. Corneal ulcers from extended wear or over-wear of daily wear lenses and occasional corneal abrasions are the typical problems for which she'll reach for VIGAMOX.

"It's an excellent product and I like to provide immediate treatment to the patient when I can," she said. Thanks to her Alcon rep's generosity with samples, she's able to put the first drop in herself. "Otherwise, when I only hand out a prescription, the patient may not fill it until the next day," she said.



**Dr. Wolf**

Immediate treatment, combined with potency, means patients begin recovering more quickly. "Especially with corneal ulcers, you want to go potent. I want to hit them with the big guns because I'm dealing with something that could potentially cause vision loss."

Overall, having therapeutics in the practice is "very important," Dr. Wolf said. "The patients that I'm fitting with contact lenses expect me to be handling all of their eye care. If I had to turn someone away who needed treatment for a relatively simple infection, I wouldn't be providing comprehensive eye care. In order to keep patients in my practice, I need to be able to do that," she said. ■

### VIGAMOX Tops Other Anti-Infectives

**VIGAMOX** ophthalmic solution is now the most often prescribed anti-infective by optometrists, according to **Source™ Prescription Audit (SPA)**. It is unlike any other ocular anti-infectives because the unique structure of **VIGAMOX** provides superior potency of fluoroquinolones for gram positive pathogens.

The therapeutic concentration of **VIGAMOX** provides penetrating results. **VIGAMOX** has 66 percent more antibiotic in every drop, providing superior in vitro potency and ease of use with one drop, *t.i.d.* dosing schedule for seven days. ■

### GUEST COLUMN What's Up Doc?

By **Bob Scott**, Director of National Accounts, Ocular Sciences

**A**s you gear up for the long, hot summer, your friends at Ocular Sciences want to update you on exciting developments. When ALLDocs talks, OSI listens. You've told us your wants and desires and we've responded.

Watch for information in July on the new **Versaflex 55% Aspheric lens**, which corrects for spherical aberration in the lens and then incorporates a second aspheric adjustment to correct for the aberration that occurs in the eye. Get ready for clearer, sharper vision and an even more comfortable lens wearing experience with a new thinner and smoother edge design. Also, we are ready to provide you with the trial lenses you need and to back it up with world-class customer service. And did you know that OSI pays the **Advantage 2% Administration Fee** when you purchase any OSI/Sunsoft product via LensCrafters?

Ask your OSI representative for information on:

- ◆ New Versaflex Toric lens banks,
- ◆ Diagnostic sets of Versaflex Toric (plus and -1.75D cylinder),
- ◆ New Toric fax diagnostic reorder pad or postage-paid mail reorder option,
- ◆ Availability of the -2.25D cylinder for the Versaflex Toric,
- ◆ Introductory offers on disposables and MRP lenses,
- ◆ Colors promotions for add-on sales,
- ◆ OSI rebate offers on Disposable, MRP, Colors and Toric, and
- ◆ Sunsoft Torics—custom fits for any prescription. ■



**Bob Scott**

### CANCUN MEETING FOLLOW-UP

#### Comparing Notes with Others

**J**ohn Smith, O.D., Elyria, OH, said the annual ALLDocs meeting is "always the best meeting of the year." He attended his first meeting in 2002 in Las Vegas because of the location and "came to the decision that I'm not going to miss it. I imagine I'll go every year," he said.

The Cancun meeting didn't disappoint him. The key attraction is that these meetings offer a chance to talk with O.D.s in similar practice settings with similar concerns. Even though LensCrafters leaseholders in his region try to schedule a dinner together a few times a year, "sometimes we make it, sometimes we don't." But at the ALLDocs meeting, he gets to hear what's happening at like practices. "We all have the same issues and nobody is afraid to talk about them." The O.D.s' conversations feel more cooperative than competitive, he said. ■