

Patients Want Rapid Resolution of Ocular Infection

Kenneth O'Daniel, O.D., Scottsdale, AZ, reports a variety of reasons for prescribing TOBRADEX® and VIGAMOX™ in his practice, where roughly half the patients are contact lens wearers.

"I typically prescribe TOBRADEX for my patients with non-ulcerative ocular infections. It provides quick relief for most ocular infections, and it has a broad spectrum of coverage while providing maximum coverage against *pseudomonas*. Patients who experience ocular pain due to ocular inflammation tend to receive rapid resolution of their ocular inflammation and discomfort

due to the addition of dexamethasone in TOBRADEX."

TOBRADEX provides rapid resolution of ocular inflammation. Therefore, patients feel better and look better sooner when compared to other antibiotic drops, said Dr. O'Daniel, who typically writes up to three of these prescriptions each week.

"I'm very cautious when using TOBRADEX on any contact lens patient. If the cornea has superficial punctate keratitis, I will use VIGAMOX as my primary medication of choice. However, I will use TOBRADEX as my first line of treatment if *phlyctenulosis* is present or when there's

significant inflammation and non-corneal involvement. *Phlyctenulosis* is a non-specific delayed hypersensitivity reaction, which requires the use of a steroid."

Dr. O'Daniel uses TOBRADEX when there is no significant corneal disruption and there is significant ocular inflammation and pain. "I use VIGAMOX when I'm concerned about a serious mucopurulent bacterial conjunctivitis, if there is a bacterial ulcer present, or when I'm concerned about herpetic corneal involvement," he said. ■



Dr. O'Daniel

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Miami Memories



Dr. Gelb

The museum of art deco known as the Ritz Carlton South Beach...famous Joe's Crab's House...an evening cruise on the Intercoastal Waterway...a moon-lit evening reception at poolside...the white sands, waving palm trees and gentle pounding surf...entourages from all the leading contact lens companies...continuing education hours...golf...dancing...were among the highlights of this year's ALLDocs annual meeting in Miami in October.

The main attractions, however, were colleagues—a record number of them. Especially pleasing was that this year's attendance included about 40 first-timers. Feedback was very positive, with many saying this was the best ALLDocs meeting yet.

Special thanks go to our vendor partners. Title Sponsor CooperVision reported on the continuing growth in the contact lens markets. Alcon provided seven hours of continuing education on medical billing and coding, plus communications skills. Rob Young put together that excellent session, which was coupled with a strong presentation on medical coding by John A. McGreal, Jr., O.D. Many O.D.s left the meeting fully prepared to put medical billing into practice. CIBA Vision sponsored a clinical update on silicone hydrogel lenses and lens care. Carl Zeiss Meditec Inc. reported on the clinical and practice management implications of employing high-tech instrumentation.

Our other vendor partners were also well represented and warmly received, including AMO, Art Optical, Polymer Technology, Paragon/X-Cel, Essilor, Bausch & Lomb, Extreme H2O, Vistakon and Optos.

We also appreciated the optometric relations team from Luxottica Retail that reviewed the issues, opportunities and challenges seen from corporate headquarters.

Needless to say, the meeting could not be produced without the tireless efforts of a highly talented and thoroughly committed cadre of ALLDocs O.D.s who volunteer to develop, organize and manage every detail of the annual meeting. Richard Hults, O.D.; Bob Mulgrew, O.D.; Bill Fox, O.D.; and Doug Kiefer, O.D., deserve particular applause.

Most of all, thank you. Just like a school is nothing without students, a meeting doesn't exist without attendees. Thank you for making the meeting in Miami so memorable. Your ideas are invited for the next one. ■

Kerry Gelb, O.D.
drkmg@comcast.net

IMPLEMENTING THE MEDICAL MODEL

Gauging Where We Are



Dr. Rumpakis

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

With the end of the year near, it is a perfect time for self-reflection. I use this time to rekindle my spirit and drive for improving upon what I have done so far this year. As I reflect upon our conversations regarding the medical model, I can't help but think about how far we have come. Yet, when I hear the excuses of those who say why they can't embrace the medical model, I'm reminded how far we have to go.

Today's O.D.s share an equal opportunity. Sure, scopes of practice may differ from state to state, but there has been significant equalization over the last decade and more is likely to be realized. Regardless of practice modality—independent private, group, affiliated, hospital-based or academic-based practice—you all have the opportunity to treat patients.

Yet some of you see this opportunity as a problem. It's expressed in many ways, such as "We don't have time to diagnose and treat," "We're not on the insur-

ance plan," or "We have to take too much time to explain things to the patient." My advice: take advantage of the opportunity to use all of your skills to take care of patients to the best of your ability.

The quality of care delivered within a particular location is not dependent on the location, but on the practitioner inside. Understand the equality of opportunity that exists and what it means to patients. American Optometric Association research shows that over 70 percent of all first-time eye care encounters take place in an O.D.'s office. This is a huge opportunity for each and every one of you to demonstrate your education, experience and expertise to the patients who have entrusted their care to you. Patients don't understand perceived differences in practice modalities; they only understand one thing—being treated appropriately by their practitioner and having it done with good communication and respect. Don't find reasons not to treat your patients; find every reason that you should!

There are many exciting developments coming next year. It is a great time to be in the eye care field, where you can treat patients' needs, both refractively and medically. I look forward to the conversations. ■

Miami Meeting Gallery



A: (l-r) Drs. Jeff Case, Bob Rudman and Frank Verdone. **B:** Dr. Wayne and Anne Goldschneider. **C:** Drs. Alan Hymowitz and Cindy Cieszko. **D:** Dr. Kevin and Angela Glancy. **E:** Dr. Dan Wendorf and his office manager Marcia Burns with Dr. Polly Hendricks (center). **F:** (l-r) CooperVision's Tom Shone and Jeff McClean. **G:** (l-r standing) Drs. Doug Kiefer, Bill Fox and Dave Spruill congratulate new inductees into LensCrafters' Horizon Club, (seated) Drs. Steve and Karen Rosen.

GUEST COLUMN FROM COOPERVISION

Cruise the Mediterranean with CooperVision... Get Out There!

By Bob Scott, Senior Director of National Accounts

Thanks for the opportunity to be the first-ever Title Sponsor of the ALLDocs annual meeting in Miami. It was another great meeting and wonderful to see everyone. CooperVision appreciates your business, and we want to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation for your support.

The response to our Mediterranean Cruise promotion was overwhelming. We will be counting your sales from now through April 2006 for the contest period. Watch for more information coming in the weeks ahead.

At the Miami meeting, **Jeff McLean**, president of CooperVision said, "We are the advocates of the eye care practitioner." CooperVision is working diligently to uphold the ethics and values of the professional, and we are committed to providing you with the finest eye care products and programs. Our VP of Marketing, **Tom Shone**, reported on the robust pipeline of new products we will be launching for you and your patients in 2006. We hope you're as excited as we are!



Finally, let us take a moment to thank those of you who gave us your valuable feedback in the ALLDocs Focus Groups. We already are implementing some of your suggestions, and you will see a deeper commitment to Luxottica Retail and Lens-Crafters Leaseholding Doctors as we move forward. As soon as your schedule permits, please take a few moments to register as a practitioner on the Cooper-



Bob Scott

Vision.com website. This website can be a valuable tool for

you and your staff when it comes to our products and providing you with useful information and ease of doing business with our company. I also want to offer our assistance with business planning for your practice in 2006. Please give **Garth Bradley** or me a call at (800) 538-7850 to obtain information on goal-setting and organizing for a more productive and profitable 2006.

Best wishes for Happy Holidays and a prosperous New Year! ■

O.D.s at Rapt Attention for All-Day Seminar

Walter West, O.D., F.A.A.O., and **John Rumpakis, O.D., M.B.A.**, teamed up at the ALLDocs annual meeting to capture the attention and questions of the audience for seven hours of continuing education, sponsored by Alcon, on "Taking the Medical Model to the Next Level." Dr. West focused on communications skills to benefit patients and practice, while Dr. Rumpakis addressed practice building through advanced ophthalmic coding.

The 3Rs of successful medical eye care practice are: recording, or establishing the medical necessity for providing care; recommending what the patient wants and needs; and prescribing the best solution, said Dr. West. He advocated listening skills to understand what patients feel and to discover what they want or need versus selling skills, which focus on persuasion, recitation of features

and benefits and closing technique. He said body language and tone of voice account for the vast majority of what patients "hear."

Dr. West challenged O.D.s to role-play with their staff to improve their speaking styles and listening skills. "Think about what you will say and how you will say it. Think about how you will listen to your patients, not with the intent of responding, but rather understanding their wants and needs."

In setting the stage of a detailed update on current billing and coding issues, case presentations and a question-and-answer session with the audience, the dynamic speaking duo reported on de-



Dynamic Duo: Drs. Walt West and John Rumpakis conducted a seven-hour Alcon-sponsored session on billing and coding at the national meeting in Miami in October.

velopments in third-party markets, both public and private.

"Nationwide, nearly 65 percent of the average O.D.'s gross income is coming from a third-party insurer," said Dr. Rumpakis. On the other hand, a show of hands revealed that less than 25 percent in the audience collect both

medical and vision care data.

That task should be delegated. When O.D.s collect such data, he said, "it's inefficient, unproductive, limits profitability, increases stress and reduces our role in the patient's mind."

Appropriately valuing services could net an additional 25 to 125 percent profit annually, said Dr. Rumpakis. ■

Panel Offers Advice on Bonuses, Walk-ins, Other Issues

A rapid-fire panel discussion on a wide range of practice management topics was held during the ALLDocs annual meeting in Miami in October. **Kerry Gelb, O.D.**, served as moderator. The panel included **Jack McIntyre, O.D.**; **Steven Lutz, O.D.**; **Kenneth Kopolow, O.D.**; **Steve Girisgin, O.D.**; **Bill Fox, O.D.**; **Robert Mulgrew, O.D.**; and **Brian Berliner, O.D.** Highlights included:

Internet Challenge: To overcome the challenge presented by Internet and mail-order contact lens firms, Dr. McIntyre reported that 98 percent of his patients now received annual supplies of contact lenses. The figure is 90 percent in Dr. Lutz's practice, where staffers tell

patients the practice can beat the price of such firms, with or without product rebates. Dr. Fox looks to change patients' prescriptions annually to an upgraded product in order to combat patients shopping for replacement lenses. Dr. Girisgin, who is a partner of Dr. Kopolow in six practices in Las Vegas, said they use a mystery shopper program to score the effectiveness of staff in dealing with alternative suppliers. Those scores are applied to staff bonuses.

Monitoring production: Dr. Berliner reported that he used to monitor gross revenues, but has since switched to net income and its components: contact lens fits, service policies, annual supplies and retinal photography. "I set weekly



(seated, l-r) Dr. Richard Hulst reviews CE session sponsored by Alcon with Alcon VP Marv Morrison. Standing are Alcon's Director of Professional Relations Dave Sattler and Director of National Accounts Rob Young.

goals for each of my two offices. At the end of each week, we can see if we met our goals and we can be very proactive in quickly responding to issues."

Accommodating walk-ins: Set targets, Dr. Mulgrew advised. He pays bonuses to staff members who book a certain number of walk-ins per day, based on the number of doctors working that day.

Bonus numbers: Among the bonus plans reported, Dr. Lutz pays a \$100 bonus to staff O.D.s who take on a LASIK co-management patient. Dr. McIntyre doesn't pay bonuses to O.D.s, but his staff members can earn up to a five percent bonus of their salary annually. Dr. Berliner pays his O.D.s \$20 when new patients purchase contact lenses. ■



Practice management panelists included: (l-r) Drs. Bill Fox, Jack McIntyre, Bob Mulgrew, Brian Berliner and Steve Girisgin.

FDA Approves Alcon's OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH™ MPDS

In October, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration cleared OPTI-FREE RepleniSH Multipurpose Disinfecting Solution (MPDS) for all soft contact lenses including silicone hydrogel lenses. This new formulation is designed to be compatible with silicone hydrogel lenses, the fastest growing lens material in the U.S. today.

OPTI-FREE RepleniSH MPDS contains TEARGLYDE™, a unique, powerful wetting system. Recent scientific stud-

ies demonstrate that OPTI-FREE RepleniSH MPDS with TEARGLYDE keeps silicone hydrogel and traditional hydrogel lens surfaces fresh and moist throughout the lens wearing day. OPTI-FREE RepleniSH MPDS is labeled to recondition the lens surface to retain moisture for enhanced comfort.

"Having seen the OPTI-FREE RepleniSH MPDS clinical data, I am extremely impressed with the potential of this contact lens care system to change

the way the entire industry thinks about lens care," said **Walt West, O.D., F.A.A.O.**, Brentwood, TN. "Alcon has gone beyond merely cleaning and disinfecting to a level of lens reconditioning that provides patients an opportunity to wear contact lenses more comfortably." ■

