

Actively Recommending MPDS Makes a Difference

Doctor sees reduced dropouts and compliance problems



Dr. Hendricks

During the Alcon presentation at the ALLDocs meeting, **Polly Hendricks, O.D.**, of Borden and Lexington, Ind., was nodding her head in agreement with the speaker who was saying that the kind of multipurpose solution a patient uses does make a difference. During the past few years, she and her staff have made a complete conversion to become committed and proactive prescribers of contact lens multipurpose solutions. "We exclusively recommend Alcon products in our office," says Dr. Hendricks. "I assertively and convincingly talk to every contact lens patient about why he or she needs to care for lenses and lens cases properly." She uses the well-publicized news stories about eye infections to inform new patients and reinforce the message to existing contact lens wearers. "I recommend OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® solution since it has been specifically formulated for today's advanced contact lenses. I recommend OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS as our solution of choice for an optimal contact lens wearing experience," she says. "I also explain that generic contact lens solutions are often older formulations."

Dr. Hendricks says it has been an



effective strategy to reduce her contact lens dropouts. Patients who are uncomfortable with their contact lenses may be at a higher risk of dropping out of lenses. To help the staff understand why the recommendation is so important, her Alcon representative presented an education session on corneal staining and multipurpose solutions. "When staff heard about corneal staining studies and understood what it could mean to patients, their attitudes changed," Dr. Hendricks says. "Now we tell every patient that this is the solution our office recommends."

In addition to promoting OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS for silicone hydrogel lens and all soft contact lens wearers, Dr. Hendricks also recommends SYSTANE® ULTRA Lubricant Eye Drops for her

patients with dry eye symptoms. "I firmly believe it is the best product in its class." Her Alcon representative provides her with the samples and staff training to deliver a consistent message to all patients.

Dr. Hendricks told Alcon representatives at the meeting how much more compliant her patients have become since she has taken this more proactive approach. Besides learning from vendor sessions, "I've made a wonderful group of friends, and it's an added benefit that they happen to be some of the finest optometrists practicing in this country," she says. "I've traveled to places I would never have discovered on my own—all the while becoming a better business person and practitioner. Why would I ever miss an ALLDocs meeting?" ■

Optometric Family Reunions

Alice Chen, O.D., of New York, N.Y., attended her fourth ALLDocs meeting in Cancun. "This group shares a lot of the same challenges, struggles and issues. We understand what each of us is going through, and we share ideas that can help each other." In addition to the camaraderie, Dr. Chen finds the caliber of the CE and presentations excellent and current. "I always learn something new that I can bring back to enhance patient care," she says.

For example, as a result of the past two ALLDocs meetings, she is moving forward with implementing practice management software and a practice web site.



Dr. Chen

"These are still works in progress since I am doing it one step at a time," she says, but she already notices a difference. The EMR portion of her software is easy to use.

"There's no more illegible handwriting from the doctors. I also love the fact that I can customize the layout of the medical forms. My staff like doing tasks more using practice software on the computer than on paper," she says. ALLDocs' partnership with LogicalSolutions.net for web site hosting meant that she didn't

have to take the time to locate a vendor she trusted to develop her practice web site.

For her, these ALLDocs meetings have become "my optometric family reunion." ■

SAVE THE DATE

ALLDocs Meeting:

Nov. 1-5, 2010

Montage Laguna Beach, Calif.

OneSight Wraps Up First Year

OneSight has experienced global growth during its first year, as reported at the annual ALLDocs meeting. OneSight programs now are active in more than 20 countries. The latest OneSight initiatives include regional clinics in China, India, Brazil and South Africa and an eyewear collection drive in the Middle East. ■



ALLDocs donated \$10,000 to OneSight.

Generate Awareness of Dry Eye

“Dry eye symptoms are the leading cause of contact lens dropouts in the West,” says **Joseph Martin, O.D.**, of Murray, Utah. That’s why he’s eager to implement the strategies from the Dry Eye

Centers of Excellence, a practice management program for building the dry eye component of a full-scope optometry practice. The program, which will be available on the web site, alldocsod.com, provides a turnkey approach to internal

and external marketing. Available documents, including signage, referral letters, media packages and in-office scripts, are ready to use, or they can be customized easily.



“The education we received, combined with class-leading products and programs offered by Alcon, is going to help me address this problem,” says Dr. Martin. “The program is awesome for offices providing medical eye care.”

Indeed, Dr. Martin expects quality programs and initiatives from ALLDocs meetings. “I come away from a meeting with good ideas that I can put into practice now. The best ideas I have put into practice have come from these meetings.” ■

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

A Meeting to Remember

The ALLDocs annual meeting in Cancun was spectacular, and we’re already looking forward to the 2010 meeting, to be held Nov. 1-5 in California. Between

now and then, we hope you start implementing some of the programs and promotions that were presented in Cancun.

Here are my 10 goals for 2010: develop search engine optimization for our individual doctors’ web sites; create online CE; implement regional ALLDocs meetings with practice management and clinical topics; develop Internet recall and marketing tools; make ALLDocs a leader in one-day contact lenses; add EMR; bolster use of the alldocsod.com web site; increase membership; increase attendance at the 2010 meeting; and build on the medical model.

I encourage you to prioritize your strategies and put them into your calendar—even if it’s one initiative per quarter. The time to start improving your practice is now. Your ALLDocs board wishes you a happy and healthy holiday season and an invigorating 2010. ■



Dr. Gelb

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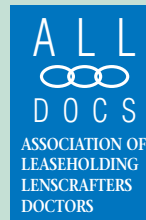
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Silver Award for CooperVision



Tom Nicholson of CooperVision was honored with a silver platter at the ALLDocs annual meeting as he was named honorary ALLDocs member. In presenting the award, Dr. Kerry Gelb said, “Tom’s service, selfless dedication and commitment to our group’s initiatives have been exceptional.”

It's Time to Get Social

Social media can allow you to differentiate your practice from your competition, said **Garth Bradley**, marketing manager for CooperVision, at the ALLDocs annual meeting. CooperVision will be conducting pilot tests with ALLDocs to learn how doctors can use social media outlets more efficiently to increase visitors to the practice, drive ratings and referrals and build brand awareness.

The results will be shared so you can decide what platforms you'd like to use, but there's no need to wait—a benefit of the instantaneous nature of the Internet is that you can get started right away. Bradley and **Ron Walker**, publisher for AllAboutVision.com®, offered tips for LensCrafters-affiliated O.D.s on social media, online advertising and search engine optimization.

◆ **YouTube**—This video-based web site is a great place for patient testimonials, a message from the doctor or your own practice YouTube channel. YouTube videos can be linked easily and played through other web sites, such as your practice page.

◆ **Twitter**—Think of these 140-character messages as mini press releases or quick updates that readers can view on their mobile phones.

Let People Find You with SEO

Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of causing a web page to appear prominently in search engine results for relevant queries. In other words, if a person searches for a San Diego eye doctor using Google—and you happen to be a San Diego eye doctor—you want your web site to show up high on the search results.

Determine the search terms or keywords you want to rank. These include terms such as optometrist, eye doctor, eye exam and contact lenses and should include your location. Set up a Google Analytics account (google.com/analytics) and register with the Google Local Business Center (google.com/local/add). Assign a tech-savvy employee to be your SEO point person who will modify text on the web site so it includes keywords, check rankings and monitor your web site visitors and how they found you.

To learn more, visit the alldocsod.com web site to view the entire CooperVision Social Media Guide. ■

◆ **LinkedIn**—Use this site to create an online resume and network with other professionals by joining groups or connecting with current or former colleagues.

◆ **Facebook**—Facebook allows personal pages and pages for organizations, companies and public figures. With more than 300 million active users, Facebook is another way to keep your practice in the minds of your patients when they aren't in for an exam. Like YouTube, Facebook

also offers paid advertising options.

◆ **Blogging**—Create a list of at least 10 topics on which you could write 300-500 words. Slot these into a schedule so you create a blog entry about twice a month. Research other blogs to understand the flow of the entries and writing style, or simply look for ideas. Finally, start your blog. Two user-friendly blogging platforms are blogger.com and tumblr.com. Both sites will walk you through the process. ■

Cancun Meeting Gallery



A: ALLDocs meetings provide a spectacular setting for learning; **B:** Dr. Joseph Martin; **C:** Jane Cunningham, Dr. Ron Cuevas, Shawna Loyd, Juan Robles and Dr. Alan Hymowitz; **D:** Dr. Karen Rosen, Dr. Phil Roy and Dr. Lynn Roy; and **E:** The ALLDocs board greets attendees in Cancun.



IMPLEMENTING THE TOTAL PATIENT CARE MODEL

The Final Challenge of 2009



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

Wow...what a year. This year certainly has not been more of the same for most health care practitioners. It has been a difficult, challenging year for most practices. Economic growth in most patient metrics was down in year-to-year comparisons. "Flat is the new up"

became the quip to describe the economic conditions. Some lessons stood out: medical eye care is more resilient than optical; the power of a doctor's recommendation is extremely important; and retaining contact lens patients is vital to the growth of a practice.

We have discussed the importance of incorporating medical eye care into your practice for many years—some of you have done this very well. You have benefited from increased net income and a more rewarding professional experience. Others, however, have made excuses.

So I challenge you again to start incorporating medical eye care into your practices. A single component makes it so beneficial to both patient and practice: your recommendation. The two most powerful words you can say to a patient are, "I recommend." Keep in mind that in the patient's perspective, your recommendation is the culmination of your education, experience and expertise—what I call the "three Es" of your intellectual property. Your ability to communicate your recommendation to the patient efficiently and effectively is the critical element to your success in treating these patients and building your practice.

Look for a Study on Contact Lens Dropout Rate

In the January 2010 issue of *Review of Optometry*, a new study by **John Rumpakis, O.D., M.B.A.**, will set out to identify the current contact lens dropout rate and the reasons for it. The study challenges the currently assumed dropout rate and quantifies the economic impact on a practice. Dr. Rumpakis also will be presenting his data at a poster session at the Global Specialty Lens Symposium being held in Las Vegas from Jan. 28-31, 2010. ■

Keep More Patients in Contact Lenses

When you upgrade your patients to the newest lens technology, make sure you also are upgrading and educating these patients to the proven lens care solution technology, like OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS.

Your message, and that delivered by staff, must be consistent and compelling enough to ensure your patients will adhere to your recommendation.

Discuss solution use with new contact lens patients as well as all returning contact lens patients. They're the ones who may have fallen into bad habits. ■

This year represents a pivotal point in understanding the value of your contact lens patients or, more appropriately stated, the economic impact to your practice of losing a contact lens patient. A contact lens patient has far more value to your practice than you might suspect. Not only does a contact lens patient contribute to the bottom line by having more frequent visits to the practice, each of these patients contributes through various means over the years, such as by having more frequent annual examinations and purchasing plano sunglasses, backup spectacles, contact lens care products and more.

To help you determine the true value of a contact lens patient in your practice, Practice Resource Management has developed the Global Contact Lens Annuity Calculator, available for free at GCLAC.PracticeResourceMgmt.com. This tool also will compare your practice data to other practices in the U.S., as well as comparing your data on a global basis.

In 2010, pay attention not only to the lenses you prescribe, but also to the solutions they use to maintain their lenses. Comfort is a primary factor in preventing a contact lens patient from dropping out, and your strong recommendation for a solution, reinforced at every opportunity, can help your patients get the best performance from their new contact lenses.

Use your three Es daily. Your patients and practice deserve no less. C'mon, I dare ya! ■