



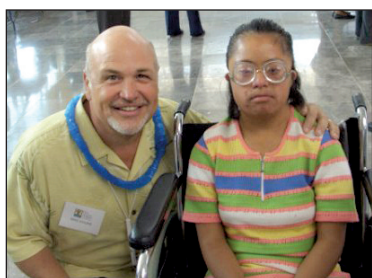
## “What’s in Your Cabinet?”

*Doctor asks every contact lens patient to bring bottle to exam*

**M**ike Hooks, OD, of Hoover, Ala., doesn’t want to see a blank stare when he asks his contact lens patients what solution they’ve been using. So he has a simple request: Please bring your current bottle of contact lens solution to the office for your exam. This way, there’s no way patients can say they forgot or that they use “the solution in the green bottle.”

“There’s been a lot of research in the past few years that indicates that problems with contact lens dropouts are with the solutions as well, not only the contact lenses,” Dr. Hooks says. With each contact lens prescription, Dr. Hooks records his recommended solution on the prescription

pad, and says, “This solution is designed specifically for your newer technology contact lens, and you should always stay with this brand.”



**Dr. Hooks on a Gift of Sight trip to Mexico**

Dr. Hooks constantly advises his patients against the use of store-brand contact lens solutions. “Some product formulas may not be ideal for use with your lenses. For example, preservatives and chemicals may cause dryness and redness more often than the actual contact lens.”

He also explains that the formulations of store-brand solutions may change and are typically older-technology products. “You may not know exactly what formula you are using.” Alcon® does not provide private-label solutions under any other label, so when he wants patients

to use OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS, that’s the specific brand he recommends. “Companies are savvy in their marketing because they know that not many individuals know their solution by name,” Dr. Hooks says. “So many store brands have copied branded carton colors. You have to be very careful that it is the exact product and not just the same color box.”



To help them remember, new contact lens patients or patients who have strayed from the recommended brand receive a starter kit. Current OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS users don’t need one—they’ve already brought in the bottle to prove they are staying on track. ■

## The ALLDocs Meeting Experience

**“ALLDocs has molded my entire way of practicing,” says Dr. Mike Hooks. He has attended all but one annual ALLDocs meeting in the past 15 years, calling it the most important meeting of the year. “Everyone does what I do in the same setting.” Here are a few strategies he has implemented or rededicated himself to after attending ALLDocs meetings.**

**Have a contact lens focus.** In addition to exam fees, contact lens sales contribute to the profit of an ALLDocs OD. He is converting patients to daily disposable and monthly replacement lenses; the increased compliance helps bring patients back for an annual visit.

**Use a distributor.** Dr. Hooks saves money with a distributor, and he also offers online reordering for contact lenses through his birminghamvisioncare.net web site.

**Maximize the medical model.** He’s become more comfortable with the billing that’s involved in medical treatments. ■

## New eyeVIP™ Program Simplifies Patient Communication

**U**sing emails to alert patients about their annual exams or other important eye care-related information is a great way to communicate and promote eye care.

Now, with the eyeVIP™ program from Alcon®, it will become extremely easy.



**Jack McIntyre, OD,** of Corpus Christi, Texas, has been using eyeVIP™ since late last year, and already he’s seeing the benefits.

“I had been doing e-blasts and sending emails, but eyeVIP™ is a combination

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## New eyeVIP

Continued from page 1

of both functions," he says. It's very simple to enroll patients in this system, and the system is secure and compliant with privacy regulations. "We tell them that I'll send a reminder when it's time for their exam, and they'll receive quarterly information and coupons." Staff quickly enter patients' emails and note whether the patient is an eyeglasses or contact lens patient. That's it. The transmissions are handled automatically.

Once a quarter, Dr. McIntyre can select the content for the e-blast. Contact lens patients are sent contact lens-related information and OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS coupons. Eyeglasses patients receive more general information about allergies or dry eye symptoms.

The process takes the staff far less time than traditional recalls, since the

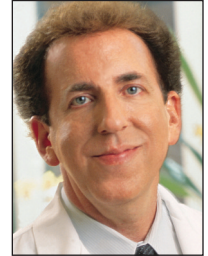
only required information is the patient's email and contact lens status. "I wanted to start an email recall system, but I didn't want to have to tie up my front desk staff to accomplish it," he says. With the eyeVIP® turnkey program, he doesn't need to.

Dr. McIntyre says he appreciates that Alcon® has developed this program for practitioners and their patients. "We love OPTI-FREE® RepleniSH® MPDS, and the company has top-rate pharmaceutical products. Now they've added this wonderful program that helps get patients information from their eye doctors in a friendly and convenient way."

For more information on eyeVIP™, contact your local Alcon® consultant or Alcon® customer service at 800-451-3937. ■

## Dr. Dean Ornish to Keynote ALLDocs Meeting

For more than three decades, **Dean Ornish, MD**, has been leading people to make better lifestyle decisions that can reduce their risk of heart disease. He will be bringing his practical, comprehensive advice to the November 2010 ALLDocs meeting as the keynote speaker.



Dr. Ornish

Dr. Ornish, founder and president of the nonprofit Preventive Medicine Research Institute in Sausalito, Calif., is the author of six best-selling books. His most recent book, *The Spectrum*, helps readers develop a personalized way of eating to accomplish their specific goals. Each plan features three components: nutrition, stress management and exercise.

In addition to regular articles in medical journals, Dr. Ornish has written a monthly column for *Newsweek* and *Reader's Digest*, and he serves as medical editor for the Huffington Post web site. ■

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

### California Dreaming

California's slogan is *Find Yourself Here*. We're adopting that as our own message for our next ALLDocs annual meeting, to be held Nov. 1-5, 2010, in Laguna Beach. And your ALLDocs board is already at work creating a program to support that goal.



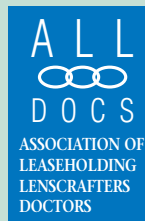
Dr. Gelb

It starts with keynote speaker **Dr. Dean Ornish**, whose inspiring message can help us take care of ourselves—an important step in being able to provide well for our patients and grow our businesses.

We'll focus on social media—and speakers will provide tips for finding your way through the choices of Facebook, Twitter, enhanced web sites and other social media outreach opportunities.

ALLDocs meetings also draw top speakers in optometry and medicine, and we're gathering the best practice management tips to be posted on the [alldocsod.com](http://alldocsod.com) web site. Feel free to share your marketing or management tips with me. Your input will help us update the web site so it stays relevant and becomes a useful source of information to all ALLDocs members. ■

Kerry Gelb, OD  
[drkmg@comcast.net](mailto:drkmg@comcast.net)



## Save the Date



The 2010 ALLDocs meeting will be held at Montage Laguna Beach, an oceanfront resort in Laguna Beach, Calif., Nov. 1-5, 2010. Visit [alldocsod.com](http://alldocsod.com) for the latest information.

# Outline Follow-Up Visits for Medical Patients

**R**andal North, OD, attends the ALLDocs annual meeting every year because it's a dependable place to pick up ideas and information for his four practices in Bloomington, Minnetonka, Burnsville and Roseville, Minn. For example, he's been incorporating a medical model approach for many years, but lectures by educational speakers and discussions with his colleagues often provide helpful suggestions.

Recently, he began creating specialty

recall cards for his medical patients. These recall cards are different from annual exam recall cards. They specify the number of months until the next visit and exactly what testing will need to be done at that point.

Finding a successful way to keep patients coming back is essential, especially for medical patients who can bring a greater profit to your practice. And Dr. North finds it particularly important to keep patients hooked in his Bloomington

office, which is located in the Mall of America. This location usually has a high volume of tourists, and the number of repeat patients is lower than in his other offices.

However, Dr. North's professionalism is drawing in more and more local patients who will likely stay with his practice. ■



Dr. North

## COOPERVISION GUEST COLUMN

### Facebook—What's in It for Me?

By Molly Hildebrandt, Marketing Coordinator, Internet & Social Media, CooperVision

**F**acebook isn't just for friends and families anymore. The social media network helps you connect with others and provides a platform for you to share information easily. And businesses are using the network to interact with their consumers and customers via a fan page.

A fan page has a message wall that allows for two-way communication, tabs for photo albums and spaces to upload videos and start discussions. Local businesses with Facebook fan pages have attracted billions of fans, according to the Facebook Press Room.

Great, but what's in it for you? Two things, really: it's a free platform to build relationships, and you can take advantage of one of the most targeted means of advertising.

Consider that the average person on Facebook has around 130 friends, according to the Facebook Press Room. When one of these users posts something on his or her page or adds a friend, that event is broadcast to everyone in the user's network. How does this relate to your practice? When a patient becomes a fan of your practice, a message that says Tom Smith is a fan of XYZ Eye Care will be broadcast to all of Tom Smith's Facebook friends. If 10 users become a fan of your page, the name of your practice is

being broadcast to 1,300 people. That's effective and free word-of-mouth advertising. People increasingly turn to the web for recommendations on products and services. With Facebook, you can make sure your practice has a presence where consumers are looking!

But Facebook is more than a 'Net-based place-

holder. It can help you build relationships with patients. You can engage in conversation and provide them with customer service, referral rewards and tips about eye care. Showcase your staff, share photos from community service events and mention any in-office promotions you're offering. Most importantly, encourage your patients' comments, questions and feedback, and dedicate a staff

member to monitor and respond.

Facebook also offers paid advertising options, which can be highly targeted to location, gender, age, marital status, education level and even by keywords. You only pay for the number of clicks on your ad or the number of impressions of your ad.

To get started, visit facebook.com and create a personal account. Then you can create a fan page (facebook.com/pages). Facebook also has a thorough help center, found under the account tab. Instructions for advertising can be found at facebook.com/advertising. If you would like to know how CooperVision can help you, contact Tom Nicholson at [tnicholson@coopervision.com](mailto:tnicholson@coopervision.com). ■



CooperVision has a fan page for ECPs.



## IMPLEMENTING THE TOTAL PATIENT CARE MODEL

# The Total Patient Care Model...Dead or Alive?



By John Rumpakis, OD, MBA

I have been asked these questions many times over the years about the Total Patient Care Model or TPCM: What is it? How does it apply to my practice? Am I doing it right? What should I be doing?

The TPCM often is mistaken as a synonym for the Medical Model in many publications and discussions. The TPCM goes beyond the medical model that so many are trying to incorporate into their practices. It is more—much more. Let's try and break it down so I can frame it into a perspective that can be incorporated easily into your practice.

I want you to first think about optometry and its role in the health care delivery system. Contrary to most beliefs, optometry is doing well. According to the American Optometric Association publication *Caring for the Eyes of America—2008*, optometrists provide nearly 77 percent of all first-time eye care to the U.S. population and 66 percent of care on an ongoing basis. Not bad...

In fact, we often don't give our market presence or our training enough credit where credit is due. Our training is unique in the fact that it allows us to take care of the vast majority of eye problems, refractive or medical in nature, that are presented to our practices. Another contrarian belief is that the delivery of medical eye care has come at the expense of surrendering our traditional refractive, binocular-based training. I would have to agree that in the beginning, as state legislators and associations were aggressively pursuing increased

prescription authority, our traditional optometric care took a back seat. However, today there is clearly a renaissance in traditional care delivery, with a robust twist. And this is exactly what the TPCM is all about.

Our training allows us to deal with nearly any problem that a patient could present. At the very least, optometry is the very best entry point into the eye care health system. As optometrists, we can deal with both medical and refractive needs together—in fact, the synergy between the two is immense and can have a significant impact on those practices where the practitioner actually understands the true value of this.

The TPCM forces us to inspect, question and investigate all aspects of the care that we deliver to our patients, whether it be contact lens care, trauma, infectious or chronic/acute disease. As an example, there is a great deal of value in the analysis you make in prescribing a contact lens system—meaning that you as the practitioner put critical thought into not only the type of contact lenses you are prescribing, but also making sure that you prescribe the best contact lens care products to go along with

those lenses. The cumulative expertise creates an entire system that will ensure the success of your patients and prevent contact lens dropouts, which recent studies have shown are extremely costly to a practice.

The TPCM is nothing new. It is simply the recognition of who we are, what we do and what we can become. The key? You must be able to integrate and implement it into your practice. It's not hard—it just means that you must strive to take care of all your patients' needs. In the end, they will see you for what you truly are and reward you for it. Until next quarter, best success! ■

## The Dropout Rate

Dropout rates may be higher than most optometrists think, said John Rumpakis, OD, MBA, in a January 2010 article in *Review of Optometry*. Historically, the dropout rate among contact lens wearers has been estimated at about 10 percent. But in his study, *Contact Lens Drop Out: The Cause and Effect*, Dr. Rumpakis was able to determine that the mean dropout rate in the U.S. was 15.87 percent.

"The economic impact of the loss of these patients is significant to an eye care business," says Dr. Rumpakis. "These eye care professionals reported charging a mean of \$101 for an eye exam and receiving \$275/year in revenue for each contact lens patient. The calculated mean lifetime value of a contact lens wearer was \$37,646."

He suggested that paying greater attention to contact lens wearers at risk of dropping out could help reverse this trend. "Eye care practitioners should select contact lenses and care products that minimize discomfort. Well-informed eye care businesses should be aware of the causes behind dropout, address them proactively and reduce the potential economic effect of contact lens dropout in their practices." ■