



Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry

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Multi-Organizational Steering Committee Developing Voluntary Optometric Guidelines for Independent Continuing Education (ICE)

Release: [May 11, 2009] The Association of Regulatory Boards of Optometry (ARBO) is pleased to announce our participation on a profession-wide multi-organizational Steering Committee formed to examine the issues surrounding commercial support of optometric continuing education (CE). The committee is composed of a distinguished group of appointees representing the AAO, AOA, ARBO, ASCO, SECO and industry. Chaired by Dr. Paul Ajamian, the Steering Committee has worked diligently on developing a voluntary “code of ethics” to address issues related to commercial support of CE, disclosure and advertising. We applaud the substantial efforts of Dr. Ajamian, the members of this committee, and their respective organizations in addressing these critical issues facing our profession.

The attached ICE Guidelines are now being disseminated for public comment. We encourage interested individuals and our Member Boards to review the guidelines and send your comments to the Steering Committee at Optometryonice@aol.com, or to ARBO at president@arbo.org.

The Steering Committee will review all comments and incorporate as needed into the final version. It is anticipated the final guidelines will be submitted to each of the respective organizations for consideration and adoption mid-May 2009.

ARBO is a North American association of optometric licensing boards celebrating its 90 year anniversary this year. We represent 57 jurisdictions in the US and Canada, including all US jurisdictions.

The mission of ARBO is to represent and assist member boards in regulating the practice of optometry for the public welfare. To this effect, an important function of ARBO is to assist our member boards in the review and accreditation of continuing education courses and events required by the individual optometrist for maintenance of licensure (MOL). COPE (Council of Optometric Practitioner Continuing Education) was created to provide a standardized model for CE accreditation that could be utilized by our member boards to assure the public of continued competence through continuing education. COPE CE standards reflect the various CE rules and regulations of our individual member boards.

COPE has been accrediting continuing education courses and events and assuring compliance with these standards on behalf of our member boards for over 12 years.

We anticipate that the final code of ethics developed by the ICE Steering Committee will be of great value to ARBO and COPE as we continue to evolve and address the needs of our member licensing boards and the constantly changing CE environment.
