

VMS RESOLUTION
PRESCRIBING AUTHORITY FOR OPTOMETRISTS

Passed at VMS Annual Meeting, October 26th, 2002

WHEREAS, optometrists are licensed to provide vision care services, optometrists are not physicians and have very limited pharmacology training;

WHEREAS, optometry schools have no minimum credentialing standards regarding pharmacological education and training;

WHEREAS, ophthalmologists are specifically trained and educated to utilize fully the science and art of medicine, including pharmacological agents, to provide comprehensive medical and surgical eye care to the public;

WHEREAS, optometrists have sought to expand their scope of practice to include prescribing of all pharmaceutical agents for the diagnosis, management and treatment of the eye and adnexa;

WHEREAS, Vermont optometrists unsuccessfully proposed a bill in 2002 that would have permitted them to prescribe all pharmaceutical agents for the diagnosis, management, and treatment of the eye and adnexa; and

WHEREAS, incomplete, inappropriate and nonmedical eye care may be hazardous to the health and vision of patients with the eye disease or other eye conditions requiring medical or surgical care; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that, in order to protect patients and ensure high quality care, prescription authority for optometrists should be consistent with their level of training and education; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Vermont Medical Society work with the Vermont Ophthalmological Society, the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Medical Association to oppose proposed legislation that would expand authorization of optometrists to prescribe all pharmaceutical agents for the diagnosis, management, and treatment of the eye and adnexa.