

The Newsletter of
Primary Eyecare Network

focal point

April - June 2011



Social Media Marketing...

— Get Started —

Social Media: A Virtual “Word-of-Mouth” The new way to market your practice

The digital age has rapidly transformed the world of business and commerce, with social media at the core of this change. Sites such as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) have revolutionized the way businesses market their goods and services, allowing for direct interaction with consumers. Social media marketing, the concept of promoting websites, businesses, and causes through social media channels, enables business owners to communicate instantly with users, providing the potential to reach far more consumers than ever possible through traditional means. Consumer awareness is promoted through peer-centered, virtual “word-of-mouth”, which creates a greater trust and a higher chance of eventual conversion than commercial advertising.



Businesses in every industry are using social media marketing to gain exposure, promote their products and services, establish industry expertise, enhance customer loyalty and attract new customers. Even if you are not using social media to attract more patients, your competition is.

Social media is not only effective when it is done right, it is decidedly cost effective. Your practice can create a free account on Facebook and Twitter and through minimal cost, run a marketing campaign that will reach and engage your target audience.

[Yelp!](#) is another form of social media that has gained popularity. If you haven't heard of Yelp!, make sure they've heard of you. This is a form of social media that allows consumers to find and review local businesses online. It's driven by location and consumer feedback. Set up a business account with Yelp! and watch your practice popularity grow thru patient feedback and referral.

Any practice can benefit from tapping into the power of social media marketing. A few tips to get you started:

- 1 Ease into it.** There are a lot of sites out there so start with the social media marketing tools that you are most comfortable with. Focus your initial efforts on establishing a presence on one or two of the most popular sites such as Facebook and Twitter and concentrate on succeeding there first. You can link your social media accounts to save time on posting multiple profiles.
- 2 Delegate!** Find a web-savvy employee in your practice who can build you a profile in no time. Put a few guidelines in place about appropriate postings and overseeing their progress and you will be up and running in no time. Make sure your profile gives a full description of your practice, including hours, location, services, staff and most importantly your website and contact information.
- 3 Create your community.** Creating a Facebook page or Twitter profile doesn't come with an automatic following. You have to promote yourself and work to create your initial fan base. Start with your existing relationships, including staff, friends, family and patients. You will be surprised how thrilled they are to get connected. With increased activity, your following will grow naturally.
- 4 Provide value.** The goal of social media is to build personal relationships with people that set you apart and create loyal customers. If all of your posts are self-serving promotions, you will quickly lose attention and your following. On the other hand, offering optometric tips and advice establishes you as an expert and creates value for your network, providing a reason for users to follow and interact with you.

Get connected with The Social Media Experts

You can find many more valuable tips on how to use social media and the web to improve the exposure of your practice by visiting EyeCarePro online at www.eyecarepro.net. Check out their newsletter, blog and education center for packed-full advice on social media for optometric practices.

EyeCarePro, a PEN-approved vendor, is the leading provider of optometric website and online marketing development, offering significant PEN Member discounts. For more information call 1-866-886-4442, contact danielr@eyecarepro.net or, of course, you may find them on Facebook!

Connect with PEN
Online today



Contact PEN & sign up for email updates
at Info@PrimaryEye.net

How prepared is your office for an emergency?

by Terry Theiss, CPOT, ABOC

Emergencies take many forms, anything from a medical emergency like a patient who passes out after drops are instilled, to a tornado or earthquake or, heaven forbid, a fire or explosion. In today's litigious environment, as well as one of increasing governmental regulation and wildly unpredictable weather, it's time to prepare for these worst-case scenarios.



Terry Theiss
CPOT, ABOC

First, brainstorm at a staff meeting about all the different situations that might occur specifically at your practice. What kinds of extreme weather might you be likely to experience? Are you in a tsunami zone? Could you lose power and be unable to go home due to a gigantic blizzard? Is the practice located near a train track where a derailment could cause a toxic spill? Make a list of every potential emergency that can be imagined.

Next, walk through the building and identify potential hazards. As you look around, be sure to note and identify the location of fuse boxes, fire extinguishers, alarm systems, etc. If you have an on-site lab, are there any hazardous chemicals like acetone present? Does your office stock alcohol, disinfectants, anesthetic agents, sterilizers, etc.? Do you have smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors installed and are the batteries up-to-date? Are you disposing of bio-hazardous waste appropriately?

Now, develop an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and appoint a Safety Officer. If you already have an EAP, when was the last time you reviewed it for accuracy and timeliness? At a minimum your EAP should include the following:

1. Procedures for all the different potential emergencies you identified.

2. Names of those trained for medical emergencies, as well as the location of first aid kits, respirators, Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), etc.

3. Procedures and individuals responsible for protecting electronic patient records and other essential records of the practice both on and off-site.

4. Infection control guidelines, as well as universal precautions for protection from blood-borne pathogens. These are readily available from the AOA. Note the location of gloves and masks, if they are to be used. Identify proper containment and disposal of bio-hazardous waste, especially needles and syringes, if present.

5. An evacuation policy and procedure. Mention any alarms systems that might be activated. Designate a chain of command and which individual is to call the fire department, ambulance, police station, etc.



6. Emergency escape routes for each area of the practice. If you have them, identify safe areas. Include provision for ensuring that patients are assisted to safety, especially

disabled patients and those who do not speak the same language as your office staff. You may want to include an assembly location where everyone can be accounted for after an evacuation.

7. A list of individuals responsible for shutting down gas lines, propane lines, fuse boxes, etc, before evacuating. Mention which individuals are to operate fire extinguishers.

8. A list of the names and phone numbers of all staff (doctors and paraoptometric) with phone numbers, names and numbers of next of kin, and medical information.

(Continue on page 6)

Register for Upcoming Classes

Doctor Seminars

APRIL	
Walnut Creek, CA AMD & Pharmacology John A. McGreal, O.D.	Sat, April 16th 8:00 - Noon
Irvine, CA AMD & Pharmacology John A. McGreal, O.D.	Sat, April 17th 8:00 - Noon
MAY	
Webinar Expanding Your Practice in 2011: Getting Reimbursed by Insurance Aaron Lech, O.D.	Wed, May 4th 5:30 - 6:30pm PST
JUNE	
Webinar Expanding Your Practice in 2011: Deciphering Exam Codes Aaron Lech, O.D.	Wed, June 15th 5:30 - 6:30pm PST
Irvine, CA Employment Law for the Optometric Office Ron Goldman, Esq.	Sun, June 26th 10:00 - Noon, Noon - 1pm Lunch

Staff Seminars

APRIL	
Webinar All About Color Vision Terry Theiss, CPOT, ABOC	Wed, April 13th 12:30 - 1:30pm PST
Sacramento, CA Maximize Leadership Potential (Office Leader 2-Day) Mary E. Schmidt	Tues & Wed, April 26th-27th 9:00 - 4:00pm
MAY	
Walnut Creek, CA Insurance Billing Basics: Blue Cross & Blue Shield Lori Lobato, CBCS	Sun, May 1st 9:00am - Noon
Webinar Team Building Mary E. Schmidt	Thurs, May 19th 12:30 - 1:30pm PST
Irvine, CA Frame Adjusting (AM) Frame Styling (PM) Mary E. Schmidt	Wed, May 24th 9:00 - Noon 1:15 - 4:15pm
JUNE	
Burbank, CA Front Desk Essentials (AM) Front Desk Essentials (PM) Mary E. Schmidt	Thurs, June 2nd 9:00 - Noon 1:15 - 4:15pm
Walnut Creek, CA Front Desk Essentials (AM) Front Desk Essentials (PM) Mary E. Schmidt	Wed, June 8th 9:00 - Noon 1:15 - 4:15pm
Webinar What's in the Back Closet? Terry Theiss, CPOT, ABOC Mary E. Schmidt	Tues, June 21st 5:30 - 6:30pm PST

Education Resolution Checkpoint: Are you on track?

Whether you're interested in increasing your practice's profitability, improving your billing skills, or enhancing your access to patients, PEN has the educational series to fit the bill!

Expanding Your Practice in 2011 with Aaron Lech, OD, FFAO

This webinar series takes you step-by-step through the process of incorporating the medical model in your office. Start by learning how to get reimbursed by your paneled insurances and move through the process ending with Dr. Lech's real-life examples of common pit-falls he and other optometrists have faced.

- May 4th Getting Reimbursed by Insurance
- June 15th Deciphering Exam Codes
- July 20th Demystifying Modifiers & Diagnostic Testing
- August 25th Integrating the Medical Model into Your Office
- October 5th Marketing Your Services
- November 2nd Top 10 Implementation Issues Solved

Recording for March's *Developing Insurance Contracts* is available!

Insurance Billing Basics with Lori Lobato, Certified Billing & Coding Specialist

Don't lose another dime! This introductory insurance training will help reduce mistakes that can result in decreased productivity and revenue. Classes held on Sundays in Walnut Creek.

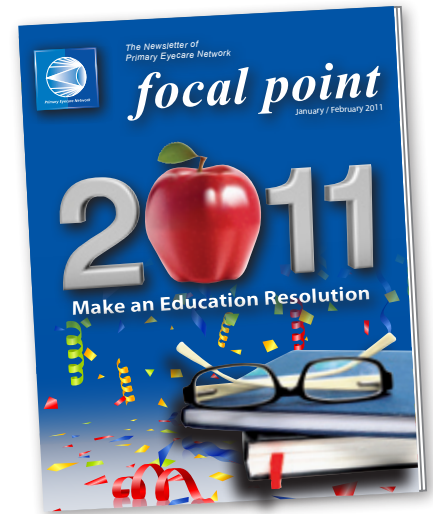
- May 1st The Blues: Blue Cross & Blue Shield
- August 28th Cigna & Healthnet
- October 2nd United Healthcare & Pacificare
- December 11th Aetna

Practice Partnership Education Series with Patrick J. Caroline, FFAO

This practice management webinar series is presented as a partnership between Paragon Vision Sciences, ABB CONCISE, and PEN. All classes held on Wednesday starting at 6pm PST (9pm EST). COPE Accreditation Pending.

- April 20th Myopia Control with Corneal Reshaping
- May 25th GP Problem Solving
- June 22nd Management of the Presbyope with GP Lenses
- July 27th Contemporary Scleral Lens Design and Fitting
- August 24th Management of Irregular Cornea with GP Lenses
- September 21st Modern Contact Lens Corneal Reshaping
- October 19th Management of the Astigmatic Patient with GP Lenses
- November 16th Keratoconus in 2011
- December 14th Modern GP Lens Materials and Manufacturing

For more information or to register, visit www.PrimaryEye.net/education or call 800-444-9230, option 5.



PEN Education Has Gone Green

Online Registration...quick, easy, and saves trees too! You may now register online for all PEN Education classes.

It's as simple as 1, 2, 3!

1. Visit www.PrimaryEye.net/Education for a complete listing of current classes.
2. Click on the registration link for the class you want to attend.
3. Enter in your email address, PEN Account #, and registration information*.

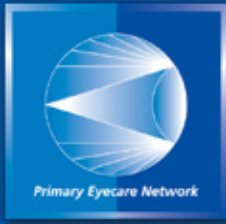
* PEN Members, please select the billing option "Pay at Door" to bill your PEN account. Non-Members, please select Non-Member pricing and pay with PayPal.

You will automatically receive a confirmation to the email address provided with all event information. What could be easier!

Join PEN's email list for important updates on classes and online registration.

Send an inquiry to: Education@PrimaryEye.net





Don't miss these Important Seminars!

Expand Your Practice • Elevate Patient Care • Increase Revenue

AMD & Pharmacology

Presented by
John A. McGreal, O.D.



Saturday, April 16th

Walnut Creek, CA • 8:00am - Noon

Register Online!

Sunday, April 17th

Irvine, CA • 8:00am - Noon

Register Online!

\$160 (Non-Members \$195)

Don't miss this important seminar!

- Discover state-of-the-art in macular degeneration diagnosis and management.
- Take the challenge out of implementing new topical and oral pharmaceutical therapies.

COPE Accreditation granted for all parts of this program

Maximize Leadership Potential

Presented by
Mary E. Schmidt



Tuesday, April 26th - 27th

Sacramento, CA • 9:00am - 4:00pm

\$225 (Non-Members \$295)

Register Online!

Stop putting out fires and start planning for the future!

- Maximize the potential in you and every member of your staff.
- Recognize staff members' strengths and maximize their performance.

Insurance Billing Basics: *Blue Cross & Blue Shield*

Presented by Lori Lobato, CBCS



Sunday, May 1st

Walnut Creek, CA • 9:00am - Noon

\$95 (Non-Members \$125)

Register Online!

Don't lose another dime!

- Introductory insurance training on the different types of health insurance as they relate to "the Blues."
- Reduce mistakes that can result in decreased revenue and productivity.

Vendor Highlights



If you don't have an HR expert in your office,

your practice is at risk every single day! Complying with ever-changing employment laws and regulations is a daunting task for any independent optometric practice, but you needn't feel "on your own" any longer!

PEN has partnered with CalChamber so that you can let them be the HR expert in your practice. They will show you how to avoid risk as they guide you through everything from hiring to termination. Plus, PEN has negotiated significant PEN Members discounts on CalChamber's HRCalifornia Memberships.

Online Membership: \$50 discount per year, 10% discount on compliance products, and FREE employee handbook software:

This turnkey solution assists with all your HR needs including an easy-to-understand labor law library, answers to everyday HR questions, over 350 customizable forms, and many other tools and resources.

Learn more about how CalChamber can help to protect your practice by contacting Mike Steere at 800-649-4921 ext 559 or mike.steere@calchamber.com, or by visiting www.calchamber.com.

Preferred Membership: \$150 discount per year, 20% discount on compliance products, and FREE employee handbook software:

The same benefits as Online Members, PLUS unlimited access to the *Labor Law Helpline*, a team of HR experts available to explain and clarify California employment laws.

Added Benefits of HRCalifornia Membership

Premium Partner Discounts: Save up to 26% on shipping with FedEx and up to 80% on everyday items with Office Max; discounts also available from PayScale, CareerBuilder, Cintas, and more.

HR Forms and Checklists: Free access to over 400 HR and employment law forms, checklists and other documents at their resource center.

CalBizCentral Discounts: Find notices, posters and pamphlets required by law, training courses, easy-to-understand labor law publications, and more. Discount 10% to 20%.

New Vendor



Every optometric practice is looking for ways to keep operational costs as low as possible. What if you could do just that and, at the same time, increase efficiency!

PEN has just added Xerox Corporation to its list of approved vendors because they have the equipment, accessories, service, supplies and reliability that can improve efficiency in your practice, and now...

PEN Members receive exclusive Distributor-Level Pricing on Xerox products, an average of 28% off list prices.

In addition to attractive, reduced pricing that is only available to PEN Members, Xerox offers the following to our membership:

- A selection of quality office products that meet the particular needs of optometric practices, including scanners that comply with EMR regulations.
- Financial options such as purchase and lease.
- A toll free number for assistance and support.
- Full-service maintenance agreements with 24-hour hotline support.
- Total satisfaction guaranteed for all Xerox devices.



Xerox Corporation is the world's leading document management technology and services enterprise. They manufacture the industry's largest range of copiers, printers, and multifunction devices. With their background and expertise, Xerox is able to help you determine which office equipment solutions meet the specific needs of your practice, including:

- The power and performance you need to satisfy your office's document requirements now and in the future.
- An ease of use, versatility, and reliability that will enhance productivity throughout your office.
- Superior quality output with every job.
- Improved cost control and easy device management.

Contact Primary Eyecare Network at 800-444-9230 for more information

Good News!



Essilor has increased the PEN Member discount to **30% on all products...** including Essilor's premium products!



Save 50% on PEN Staff Education by using your ClearVision Co-op Dollars!

When you register for a staff education class, simply ask for an invoice that you can turn into ClearVision's co-op department. (ClearVision requires a minimum of \$6,000 year-to-date purchases to qualify.)

Contact ClearVision's Co-op Department at 800-645-3733 ext 1655 for more information.

Advice from PEN's Medical Billing Experts

Whenever a Medicare beneficiary is provided with a service that is not medically necessary and reasonable (as established by your local Medicare carrier), you are required to notify the patient in writing before services are provided. This notice is called an Advance Beneficiary Notice (ABN).

An ABN is one of the most beneficial tools that can be used to protect both the provider and the patient:

The ABN process protects the patient by allowing the beneficiary the opportunity to decline the service or discuss less expensive diagnostic or treatment alternatives.

The ABN process protects the provider by holding the patient liable for payment. If an ABN is not completed as required, and your patient did not know that Medicare would not pay for the service, your patient cannot be held liable to pay.

Using an ABN on a voluntary basis means that you voluntarily issue patients notices announcing that a particular service was either excluded from Medicare coverage by statute or were services for which no Medicare benefit exists. For example, refractions are not a benefit of Medicare. However, you may want to notify the patient in advance of their liability for payment with a voluntary ABN in order to avoid any confusion as to the patient's responsibility for payment.

ABN Modifiers include...

GA: ABN issued, as required by payer policy.

GX: ABN issued, voluntary under payer policy.

GY: ABN issued, item or service statutorily excluded or does not meet the definition of any Medicare benefit.

[Click here to download a copy of the ABN](#)

New PEN Billing Tool Reflects Medicare Changes

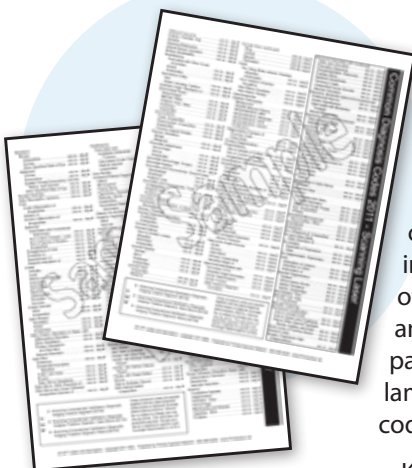
Medicare has issued three new scanning laser codes:

92132: Scanning Computerized Ophthalmic Diagnostic Imaging, Anterior Segment

92133: Scanning Computerized Ophthalmic Diagnostic Imaging, Posterior Segment, Optic Nerve

92134: Scanning Computerized Ophthalmic Diagnostic Imaging, Posterior Segment, Retina

Because of the large number of payable codes associated with the new scanning laser codes, PEN has decided to offer a new product for 2011: **Common Diagnosis Codes 2011 – Scanning Laser!**



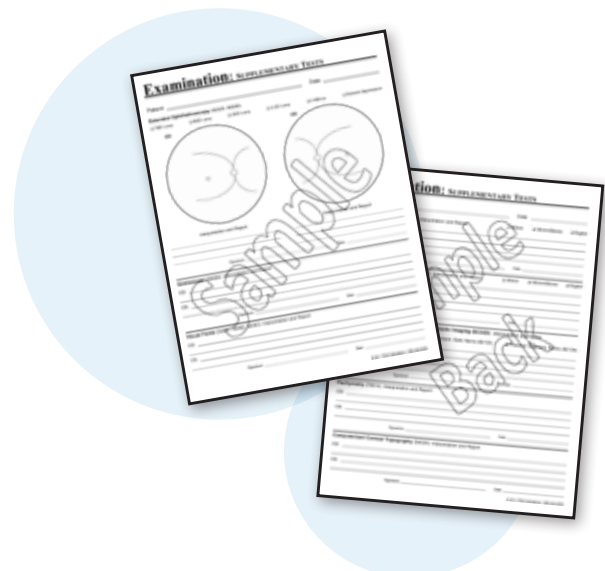
This 2-sided, laminated card conveniently lists codes alphabetically by category:

Just as with the popular Common Diagnosis Codes Card, this new, easy-to-use card for scanning lasers includes an indispensable key of specific procedure codes and diagnosis codes that are payable together. This 2-sided, laminated card conveniently lists codes alphabetically by category

• Keeps the most commonly used diagnosis codes at your fingertips.

• Includes a helpful key of specific procedure codes and diagnosis codes that are payable together.

PEN has also updated its **Examination: Supplementary Tests Form** to include the new scanning laser codes. This form should be used as a quick and easy way to comply with CMS regulations that require detailed documentation and interpretation for specified tests.



Download PEN's order form
or call 800-444-9230, option 3.

Tips Around the Office

In the spirit of PEN's Regional Small Group Meetings, where optometrists come together to share ideas and success stories, PEN is starting a new, regular column in the Focal Point. *Tips Around the Office* is your opportunity to share good ideas that have helped your practice run more smoothly and also pick up some tips from your colleagues.

To start us off PEN Advisory Board member Dr. Larry Wan passed this on, "I keep a patient list of plumbers, electricians, carpet cleaners, handymen, etc. so as projects present themselves, I have a current list I can refer to of people I trust."

If you have a tip that works for your practice, please let us know. You may email your tips to info@primaryeye.net and include your name so that we can acknowledge you in print.



Lecture Notes Now Available...

Ever wish you could get the lecture notes for seminars you hated to miss?

If you were unable to attend *Medicare Billing & Coding 2011* presented by Dr. John McGreal or one of the lectures in the five-part series, *Insurance Billing Basics* presented by Lori Lobato, CBCS, the lecture notes for these popular series are now available!

Medicare Billing & Coding 2011 Lecture Notes are available for \$50 each. *Insurance Billing Basics* Lecture Notes are available following each scheduled presentation for \$40. Medicare 101, which was presented on February 13, is now available. For a list of other topics and presentation dates in this series, please see page 3.

To order, please call PEN at 800-444-9230, option 3 or email at education@PrimaryEye.net.



Medicare Billing & Coding 2011

presented by
John A. McGreal, O.D.



Insurance Billing Basics

presented by
Lori Lobato, CBCS

(Continued from page 2)

How prepared is your office for an emergency?

9. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for any hazardous chemicals used or stored in the practice. You can get these from the manufacturer of each product.

Once you have established your EAP in writing, train everyone in the practice. Post signs and posters indicating the location of safety equipment, earthquake supply kits, exit routes, etc. Be sure everyone knows where your EAP Manual will be kept. Have a safety drill at regular intervals to be sure that everyone knows the proper procedures; set the scenario for a different type of emergency each time. This may seem like a tremendously

time-consuming project to take on, but in an emergency you will be very glad that all the details are in place. Also, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), a division of the federal Department of Labor, requires that businesses comply with many of the health and safety standards discussed above, as well as others not discussed. Your practice may be located in a state where there are similar requirements. Visit www.osha.gov for all the details or contact your state's agency for assistance.

Here's wishing you a safe and predictable 2011!



REGISTRATIONS ARE OPEN!

PIO 2011

PRESERVING INDEPENDENT OPTOMETRY

A World Class Staff Symposium



Claremont Resort & Spa
Berkeley, CA
October 28th & 29th, 2011



Harbor Beach Marriott Resort & Spa
Ft. Lauderdale, FL
September 16th & 17th, 2011

To register: visit www.PrimaryEye.net or call 800-444-9230, option 5.