

News from Member Organisations

March 2018



Argentina

Last December 2017, a new edition of the Argentinean Journal of Occupational Therapy was launched, you can access it [here](#). It should be noted that this is a free online journal of interest for the whole Occupational Therapy community.



Next march 10th, we will start a new scientific café agenda. This time, the topic will be 'Occupational Therapy interventions with people with severe dementia', and it will be moderated by our dear colleague Jimena Garriga. It's open to the whole OT community and has budget prices!



The AATO (Argentinean Association of Occupational Therapy) sadly informs de decease of our very dear colleague Susana García de Ravachini.

She worked on the psychiatric field, and was the first OT for day treatments in Latin America. She also was the first vice director for an OT program in Argentina, until her retirement.

She did also participate on the development of the 'General Guidelines of a National Mental Health Plan' which was a cornerstone in the Mental Health policies for the country.

We would like to honor her through this lines and thank her for all the hard work she has done in the development of the OT in Argentina.

Association of Caribbean Occupational Therapists (ACOT)

January 2018 signified the beginning of the two-year term for TTOTA's newest executive board, who started the new year rolling! Items on the agenda for the first quarter include a governance training for all members of the local association, participation in a falls prevention outreach programme, as well as various fundraising initiatives to support the operations of the Association and also the participation of the WFOT delegates in Cape Town.

The idea for governance training arose from the 2017 Strategic Planning meeting, in which members identified the challenges of contributing to the Association with little understanding of good governance practice. Members view good governance as paramount to ethical and legal standards of the association, and are considering sharing this training with other NGOs in the future.

Secondly, TTOTA will participate for the second time in a national falls prevention outreach programme lead by the Physical Therapy Association in March 2018. Though TTOTA will not spearhead the programme, the Association views it as an excellent opportunity to help older members of the community and their families, to learn more about how OT can help to reduce the risk of falls, and thus the disability and death that are commonly associated with falling. In 2017, graduate OT students from the University of the Southern Caribbean took part in this community outreach setting the standard for full inclusion of student TTOTA members in all promotional activities.

Last but certainly not least is fundraising. Members have come up with a range of innovative ideas to promote the profession while raising funds. The most novel initiative is undoubtedly the "Hike for All" project. Still in its early stages of development, this project includes six hikes that will allow everyone to engage, regardless of disability. Such an initiative is the first of its kind in Trinidad and Tobago. Other than promoting inclusion and engagement, this project will assist the WFOT Delegate and First and Second Alternates in traversing the path to South Africa for the Council meeting in May 2018!

India

Occupational Therapists included for SLD Certification in India

Gazette notification dated 4th January 2018 of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, has accepted the request from AIOTA and has included occupational therapist as one of the healthcare authorities of the constituted medical board, for issuance of certification to persons with specific learning disabilities (SLD). The recently constituted medical board will comprise of medical superintendent or chief medical officer or civil surgeon or any other equivalent authority notified by the state government, paediatrician or paediatric neurologist (where available), clinical or rehabilitation psychologist and occupational therapist.

AIOTA's Disaster Management Cell

AIOTA intend to develop a Disaster Management Cell with 30-40 members of AIOTA dedicated to serve the disaster survivors. To propagate this cause, Dr. Anil Srivastava, President AIOTA, Dr. Kit Sincalir, WFOT Ambassador & formerly President of WFOT and Dr. Neeraj Mishra, EC Member met key National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Officials in Delhi on Feb.20 2017. With suggestion and assistance of NDMA a meeting was also convened on Sept 18, 2017 with Disaster Management Unit of Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. President AIOTA, with other AIOTA officials discussed the issue in detail. He welcomed the proposal and consented to provide extensive training of 10-15 days to a batch of nominated 30 members of AIOTA free of cost. The members of AIOTA duly trained in rehabilitation and relief work for disaster affected will be on the database of the government for utilization of their expertise during emergencies. Duly trained members of AIOTA will be master trainers to further train the members in their regions. The issue is under further discussion for implementation.

AIOTA Certification for Ergonomically Designed Products

AIOTA has initiated to issue certification for seating ranges and other products for their ergonomic suitability. Certification for ergonomically designed seating range is being provided to the manufacturing firms of repute in India. The certifications issued after inspection of products on the basis of ergonomics and performance evaluation criteria laid down by AIOTA. The firms are also advised to appoint occupational therapist as ergonomic consultants in their set ups. AIOTA is intending to launch post graduate certification course on Ergonomics soon with an aim to have a pool of OT's with specialization in practice areas in ergonomics in India.

Annual COTE on Science and Ethics of Research Methodology and Art of Writing Research Academic Council of Occupational Therapy (ACOT) of AIOTA is organizing continuing occupational therapy education (COTE) program on "Science and Ethics of Research Methodology and Art of Writing Research" in collaboration with Indian Journal of Occupational Therapy (IJOT) from 22nd to 25th April, 2018 at Mumbai. The four days COTE is intended to be arranged annually and will be in the form of an intensive live as well as webinar course. It aims to enable amateur researchers to build strong research foundation and for the experienced researchers to fine-tune their research aptitude by updating their knowledge and skills with the latest guidelines, laid down by International Committee of the Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE).

OTICON'2018, Nagpur

OTICON'2018 i.e. the 55th Annual National Conference of AIOTA is being organized at Nagpur from 16th to 18th February, 2018 to commemorate the diamond jubilee of Occupational Therapy School & Centre, Government Medical College, Nagpur. The theme the conference is 'Occupational Therapy: Independence, Empowerment and Inclusion'.

Industrial Health & Occupational Therapy (Environment, Ergonomics, Safety and Wellness at Workplace) is the title of the pre-conference COTE organized by ACOT. Many international faculty members and alumni of occupational therapy school of Nagpur and guests from USA, Canada, UK, Australia, Sri Lanka and Middle East, have consented to participate and contribute. Dr. Vijay Suple from Canada will deliver the Key Note Address.

Dr. Anil K. Srivastava

President -All India Occupational Therapists' Association (AIOTA)
& WFOT Delegate

Italy

Dear colleagues this year is and will be a BIG year of changes.

The most important changes are on:

- public devices
- professional registers

In Italy a lot of devices such as wheelchairs, orthosis, Augmentative Alternative Communication communicators, shower chairs, hoists for transfer etc. are prescribed by the doctor after the OT evaluation and provided by the public health system.

It means that the majority of the costs are covered by public funds (the State).

Until this year the codes to prescribe all the devices were referred to a text written in 1999. This text never changed in these years even if technologies are going fast.

Finally, this year the public Health Ministry wrote a new document with new codes adding a lot of devices that in 1999 didn't exist.

2018 is the year of another important milestone for our profession in Italy: a new register for all the healthcare professions has been made.

At this point occupational therapists will be, for a numerical reason, in a register together with a lot of other health professions like Physical Therapists, speech therapists, laboratory technicians, podiatrists, educators, acoustic aid technicians..etc.

This will help us fight the illegal occupational therapy practice by different figures and practitioners.

Actually we are not totally sure of the exact evolution of our association after the setting of the register but...

Occupational therapists always face changes and react positively to them, and that's what we are doing!

In mid-April we will be present at the Italian Health Exposition with some events, a booth and some workshops to promote the knowledge of our interesting and unique profession.

At this big exposition we will display a photo contest that we organised for high school students on "disABILITY and the Occupational Therapist (OT)" to unknowledge pre university students about OT and lead students to approach these themes and professions.

In this newsletter we would even like to share with you all the pictures of our event in May 2017 about the 20 years of the OT profession in Italy and the 40th anniversary of the Italian Association of OTs (AITO). These were satisfying events with an important impact on politics and media recognition.



Michele Senatore (AITO President), Litterio Runza (AITO Vice President) and in the middle Mario Marazziti (Parliamentary Deputy And President Of The Commission For Social Affairs At The Deputies Chamber)



The invitation postcard at the Chamber of Deputies for the 20th anniversary of the recognition by law (136/1937) of the OT profession entitled: " Past and Future perspectives".



A view of the House of Representatives during the AITO convention for the 20th anniversary of the recognition by law of the OT profession.



All the Speakers of the event



The event LOGO



Michele Senatore (AITO President) with Ileana Argentin (Parliamentary deputy of the commission for social affairs)



AITO 40th anniversary postcard

Philippines

PAOT's 52nd Annual Convention: "Pagbabago—Towards a Transformative Practice"

Considered as one of the biggest events annually held by the Philippine Academy of Occupational Therapists, Inc. (PAOT, Inc.), the Annual Convention on its 52nd year gathered more than 400 delegates--occupational therapy students, practitioners, and educators--at the Century Park Hotel, Manila last November 19 to 20, 2017. With the theme "Pagbabago: Towards a Transformative Practice", the two-day event aimed to promote collaboration and innovation OT practice by introducing new and emerging practices.

Towards a Transformative Practice

With topics within and beyond the scope of OT practice, professionals in their areas of expertise shared their knowledge and experiences. This included talks on role emerging setting (mental health

accompanied by a workshop), professional development (updates on the Professional Regulation Commission's Continuing Professional Development, Asia Pacific OT Congress in 2020, Ayres Sensory Integration, outcome-based education, feeding, behavior management, family and culture, temperament and personality and effect on behavior management styles, needs assessment for educators), and diversification of practice (inclusive education and role of OT, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Adult and Adolescents, telerehabilitation, wheelchair assessment, community integration). The convention also served as a platform for exchange of knowledge amongst OT students and professionals through oral presentations about disaster risk reduction and management, mental health, academia, work interventions for PWDs, and student exchange programs.

Time for Firsts

First recognized chapter: Ms. Goebel Anwin Ygay, the President of PAOT Mindanao—the first ever officially recognized chapter of the Academy—presented the formation of their chapter and their objectives based on the Academy's general thrust to be inclusive and service-oriented.

First Continuing Professional Development (CPD) unit implementation: This is the first ever convention where the honoring of the CPD units for the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) was applied. Strict guidelines were implemented as each delegate's attendance were monitored in all sessions. This was done by utilizing a mobile application events manager, powered by Pointwest Technologies. The mobile application also allowed the delegates to have a detailed schedule, interact with the speakers and participate in real-time polls, provide feedback to the speakers and their talks, and easily exchange contacts. The use of the mobile application also served as a trial run in preparation for hosting the Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Congress in 2020.

First student involvement: For the first time, OT students were integrated in the event as volunteers. Interns from University of Santo Tomas and University of the Philippines Manila and members of OTSA (Occupational Therapy Students Assembly, the official student arm of PAOT) were instrumental in the preparations for and at the actual event.

Merit Awards

The outstanding contributions of two OT professionals were also recognized as they received merit of recognition:

Mr. John Cabilso for the Charlotte Floro Award of Merit for Education and Research

Mr. Archie David for the Conchita Abad Award of Merit for Extension Service

The Academy would like to thank the following sponsors for making the success of this event possible: Pointwest Technologies Inc., MedMom, Mindwerks, Able Center Inc., Sun Life Financial, DIGISTAMPS Phillipines, Inc., Gold's Gym, Play Therapy Center, Nurturing Early Skills Therapy Center (N.E.S.T), Inc., Center for Interventions toward Development & Empowerment through Allied Services (I.D.E.A.S.), Co., Cornerstone Therapy Hub, Gifted Ones Development Foundation Center, Inc., Move and Think Therapy Specialists, Chatter Therapy Center, Creative Actions Therapy Center, Theratalk Therapy Center, and Quality Life Discoveries.

And to all the delegates who joined us, thank you! We hope that your experience during this event has inspired you to explore diverse areas of OT practice. We look forward to seeing you on the next convention!

To continuous learning and discovery.

Para sa propesyon. Para sa bayan.

Philippine Senate Bill 454 "Occupational Therapy Bill" APPROVED on third reading, January 29, 2018

With twenty-one (21) affirmative votes and zero (0) negative votes, the Senate Bill 454 "An Act Regulating the Registration, Licensure and Practice of Occupational Therapy, Providing Funds Therefore and for Other Related Purposes" or "The Philippine Occupational Therapy Law of 2018" has been approved in its Third Reading in the Upper House.

The bill was introduced by Senator Antonio Trillanes IV, Chair of the Committee on Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation. The bill contains thirty-eight (38) Sections with major provisions such as: Creation of the Professional Regulatory Board of Occupational Therapy (Article II), Licensure Examination, and Registration (Article III), Practice of Occupational Therapy (Article IV), Penal and Miscellaneous Provisions (Article V).

Formerly, Republic Act 5680: Act Creating the Board for Physical and Occupational Therapists, has been the basis of the regulation of the Occupational Therapy practice in the Philippines. However, the rising demand to upgrade national healthcare and the speeding move toward ASEAN integration both create an urge for the national organization, the Philippine Academy of Occupational Therapists, Inc. to make it a goal to achieve it 1-20-2025 agenda--that is, 1 Occupational Therapist per 20,000 Filipinos by year 2025. The organization, headed by Mr. Anthony S. Grecia believes that by this law and other campaigns, the ratio of Occupational Therapists can be increased from 0.3% to 0.5% by the year 2025. Such call is made to meet the needs of Persons with Disabilities (*Kaibigang may Kapansanan*) such as Persons with Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Cerebrovascular Disease, Parkinsons Disease and Persons suffering from other disabilities whether physical or psychosocial. This bill if passed into a law, aims to upgrade and update the competence, knowledge, skills, and attitude of the occupational therapists practicing in the Philippines.

Occupational Therapy as defined under Section 3(a) of this bill, is a client-centered health profession concerned with promoting health and wellbeing through occupation. The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in the activities of everyday life. Occupational Therapists achieve this outcome by working with people and communities to enhance their ability to engage in the occupations they want to, need to, or are expected to do, or by modifying the occupation or the environment to better support their occupational engagement.

The Philippine Occupational Therapy Law of 2018 is expected to also be heard on three readings in the lower house before a Bicameral Conference Committee will reconcile the difference between the Senate and the House of Representatives version. Upon ratification, the bill will be submitted for Presidential Action. Despite the long years of waiting, Occupational Therapy professionals, students and even clients are all positive that we may finally witness this bill become a law in the Philippines.

Para sa Propesyon.

Para Sa Bayan.

Slovenia

Professional meeting from Slovenian Association of Occupational Therapists (ZDTS)-report
Professional meeting of Slovenian OTs was held on 7 December 2017 in URI Soča. One hundred and five occupational therapists attended the meeting.



Ms Zdenka Tičar from the Ministry of Health opened the meeting with a lecture on Professional audit – its aims and objectives. The professional audit is carried out by auditors who are occupational therapists and can be carried out on the proposal of Ministry of Health, individuals or institutions from Slovenia. There were several complaints regarding the need for audits, especially in the care homes for the elderly. This is a very current issue in Slovenia as many OTs working in care homes have already been subject to an audit. The auditor then issued different suggestions for improvement of practice, however OTs were not in the position to improve their practice according to the audit results. Ms Zdenka Tičar offered some very useful tips and guidelines regarding this matter. Occupational therapists working in care homes work in social care setting and must be aware of their contract of employment and its details as this helps when solving procedures and other issues.

Ms Monika Zadnikar – also from Ministry of Health – introduced the suggestions of new long term care legislation. Several OTs voiced their concerns regarding this legislation because occupational therapists are not mentioned in the legislation – instead the term coordinator is being used. The president of ZDTS Ms Katarina Galof explained that ZDTS had objected to the lack of OT inclusion in the legislation and suggested changes which would allow occupational therapists to apply for all positions and functions as suggested by the new legislation. This would also mean that several OTs would then have the opportunity to work in the community – and not just in the region of the pilot project but all over Slovenia.

Next on the agenda of the professional meeting was the lecture of our Maltese colleague Demis Cachia, MScOT, Dip. Ger., Dip. OT, who introduced the work of OT in long term care for elderly people and people with dementia in Malta.

Following his lecture Ms Katarina Galof introduced activities of ZDTS in 2017. One of the more important activities was starting the extended professional body at the Ministry of Health, which is an important body for OT as profession; OTs also actively participated in the long term care advisory group; three ZDTS members joined the advisory group for social institutions and are working towards unification of documentation. Ms Galof has invited attendees to actively collaborate with Palliative care team and also introduced the national project on »Back Pain«, with several OTs working on this project, putting together the clinical care pathway for patients with back pain and establishing professional guidelines. Ms Galof also announced that Slovenian journal of Occupational Therapy had started publishing again and the ZDTS members will receive it in the coming days. The president also invited all attending the meeting to actively participate at the 9th Congress of Occupational Therapists, which is being held on 25 and 26 October 2018 in Ljubljana.



The meeting was concluded with awards ceremony where professional title »Supervisor« was awarded; we congratulated dr. Tanja Križaj on successful doctoral dissertation disputation. Awards for professional achievements in different fields of occupational therapy were awarded to Barbka Huzjan, Darinka Brezovar, Darja Cijan, Elizabeta Štrubelj and dr. Marija Tomšič.

Switzerland

Steady increase of members of the Swiss OT Association (EVS/ASE)

2017 the Swiss OT Association (EVS/ASE) held 2370 members. 164 members were new registered and particularly due to therapists retiring, the association observed a loss of 88 members. The upward trend still continues. Since the employment market lacks skilled employees, the demand of occupational therapists has never been higher. The EVS/ASE commits itself to actively tackle this fact.

2017 the EVS/ASE registered 2700 hours of counselling with members of the association. Demands were either with regards to content and of organisational or of administrative kind. Demands such as the sale of an OT practice or the communication of an address were processed. The EVS/ASE recognises the extensive service to its individual members as its core task. Certainly, the service accounts for the constant increase of the number of members.

Quality Manual EVS/ASE

Last year the quality manual EVS/ASE was adapted and published. The manual consists of the overall definition of quality of the practice of occupational therapy and structural requirements to practice occupational therapy. The manual beneficially supports the negotiation of the conditions of the rates for occupational therapy services and strengthens the positions of occupational therapy in the fields of politics, public authorities and medical suppliers.

Web presence of the EVS/ASE

In summer 2018 the EVS/ASE will launch its new web presence after extensive preliminary work. Next to its new appearance it will offer new features, such as the listing of nearby occupational therapists, etc.

New Member at Large for WFOT

The Swiss delegate for WFOT Mrs. Theresa Witschi has been appointed as the new Member at Large for WFOT. She resumes the position from the former Swiss delegate Mrs. Luzia Isenegger- Häni, who with much expertise and dedication has held the position for several years.

Congress of the Swiss Occupational Therapists in 2019

The city of Locarno, situated in the Italian speaking part of Switzerland, has been named to run the 5th Swiss Congress of Occupational Therapy of the EVS/ASE from the 6.-7. September 2019.

Urs Mueller, 1st Alternate Delegate

20. February 2018, Lucerne / Switzerland

Taiwan

Asia-Pacific Occupational Therapy Symposium (APOTS)

The first Asia-Pacific Occupational Therapy Symposium (APOTS) was held at Chang Gung University in Taoyuan, Taiwan from Oct 20th to 22nd 2017. The organization committee led by the Taiwan Occupational Therapy Association (TOTA) has made this symposium a success, with the support from the Department of Occupational Therapy of Chang Gung University, the Asia Pacific Occupational Therapy Regional Group (APOTRG), and the Occupational Therapy Union of R.O.C. The theme of the 2017 APOTS was "**Contextualizing Occupational Therapy: Research, Practice, and Education**". Taiwan Vice President Chien-Jen Chen gave a speech in the opening ceremony to show government's support to the development of OT profession and welfare of people in Taiwan. APOTRG president, Patrick Ker, four keynote speakers (WFOT President Marilyn Pattison, Dr. Lorie Richards, Dr. Keh-chung Lin, and Dr. Ching-yi Wu) and over 800 delegates representing approximately 20 countries attended the event. There were 24 sessions of symposia, 21 sessions of oral presentations and over 300 poster presentations. The event provided all attendees with an intense but fruitful learning experience.

Standards for Occupational Therapy Clinics

Prior to the 2017 APOTS symposium, WFOT president Ms. Pattison, APOTRG president Mr. Ker, the WFOT Program Coordinator of Standards & Quality Athena Tsai, and the TOTA President Ling-Hui Chang met with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Health and Welfare to stress the importance regarding the revision of setup standards of occupational therapy clinics. The Secretary consented to expedite the bureaucratic process. The revised standards were announced in Taiwan on December 28 2017. The TOTA is grateful to Ms. Pattison, Mr. Ker, and the WFOT for their help and contribution during this process of the important revision of the standards to ensure higher quality and easier accessibility of OT clinics for people in Taiwan.

Trinidad and Tobago

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