

NEWS FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

JANUARY – MARCH 2015

BELGIUM

National:

We are working with the Ministry of Health for registration and evaluation of continuing education. Members of the two regional associations represent the occupational therapists at the National Council of Paramedical Staff, at the Technical Commission for Paramedical Staff and at the Commission of Appeal since 2014.

(<http://www.health.belgium.be/eportal/Healthcare/healthcareprofessions/Paramedicalstaff/CouncilsandCommissions/index.htm?fodnlang=en#.VLWNploZ28w>)

Inscription with the National Health refunding organisation (INAMI-RIZIV) is also mandatory in order to work in private practice according to the new legislation. Foreign occupational therapists also have to apply for registration in order to work in Belgium. Information about registration procedure is available on our website www.ergobel.be

We are making steps towards a legal national association, for which statutes need to be rewritten. Both websites of regional association give possibilities to find the occupational therapist with the right specialty, information on accreditation, continuing education, research, self-employment and legal statute, geriatric, publications, etc.

You can follow the evolution either directly on each website and also on facebook.

Dutch-speaking regional association:

A lower amount of members (10-15%) seems to be a tendency year by year. A solution has been sought by proposing payments through domiciliary system, information in schools and eventually reintroduction of free occupational therapy membership for students, with promotion material.

The website is being renewed (more interactive, with possibilities to make adjustments, VITnetwork, personal log in system for members) with possibility for independent occupational therapists to advertise.

The newsletter has a new layout with Flexious.

The association is involved in "Icare4you", first line care, Tetra project, interdisciplinary education programme, professional profile easy to read for non professional, code of ethics, publication of "OT and developmental disorders"

For more information: www.ergotherapie.be

French-speaking regional association:

The annual publication in French consists in two different sections with 4 scientific articles and 5 professional experiences. It is distributed to every member in December and can be ordered from the online store which was renewed and expanded with recently published books.

The association Website is a platform where job offers are numerous: 82 were published in 2014.

The different groups (geriatric, neurology, home care) are very active and are present on our regional website, where everybody can find information on their meetings and research. A newborn theme group has started in April 2014 for occupational therapists who wish to develop the profession as self-employed.

The association has been the interface to inform occupational therapists about: the professional insurance, the new practice related to stroke rehabilitation, the royal decrees concerning myoelectric prosthetics, specialised education and care in paediatric oncology/haematology.

The association has called for nominations in order to participate in the elaboration of recommendations for autism, in the development of the ICD-11 classification in mental health, in the genesis of practices for chronic diseases. The access to OTDBase is offered to AE members since January 2015.

For more information: www.ergo-ae.be

Marlies Suetens, Delegate; Pauline de Hemptinne, 1st Alternate; Claire Valentin, President Belgium

CANADA

The Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO) which is the national organisation of all OT regulators in Canada has advised that from May 2015 a new national assessment process will be implemented on behalf of all provincial regulatory bodies in Canada (except Quebec, which has a distinct regulatory structure). This will affect internationally-educated OTs applying for registration in all of the other provinces in Canada. For more information visit <http://www.acotro-acore.org/>.

Additional information from CAOT:

As of 1 October 2014 candidates for the National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE) will have a total of three opportunities to successfully pass. Candidates who have already attempted the NOTCE prior to 1 October 2014 will have three more opportunities to write the exam. If a candidate does not succeed in passing the NOTCE after three attempts, the candidate will no longer be eligible to write the NOTCE. Research supports the rationale behind this policy and demonstrates the fact that three attempts allow candidates a fair opportunity to pass the NOTCE, while limiting the number of false positives that are likely to occur after three attempts.

CAOT Practice supports for OTs wanting to practice in Canada:

1. The [Trial Occupational Therapy Examination Manual \(TOTEM\) and Trial Occupational Therapy Examination \(TOTE\)](#)

The TOTEM contains 100 practice questions with answers and rationales and is reflective of the National Occupational Therapy Certification Exam (NOTCE). This paperless, web-based resource introduces you to the format of the NOTCE and the type of questions that you may encounter when writing the National Exam. In addition, when you purchase the TOTEM, you receive a **one-time access**

to the TOTE. TOTE is a paperless, web-based resource and is intended to be used as a measure of readiness for the National Exam. It's an on-line exam consisting of a 100 questions, with a 2 hour time limit. Once you complete the 100 questions, you are provided with a summary of your score.

2. The CAOT Occupational Therapy Exam Module (OTEM) assists candidates to prepare for the National Occupational Therapy Certification Examination (NOTCE) through online group discussion of practice questions. <http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=4238>

3. MOMENTUM. CAOT's Momentum consists of four webinars that allow individuals/mentees to explore the concepts of mentorship, coaching, networking and partnering. The webinars provide an opportunity for a mentee to be matched with a mentor based on similar values, interests and professional paths. <http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=4230>

4. Career Readiness Online Module (CROME). Through reflective exercises, small group discussions and mock interviews, CROME participants will come to understand the current Canadian work environment and prepare for the job market. CROME consists of a pre-requisite, self-study Culture Activity and four interactive webinars facilitated by an experienced occupational therapist. A final one-hour, optional facilitated discussion is also available to debrief on the mock interviews.

5. The Self Assessment Readiness Tool is designed to help internationally-educated occupational therapists understand the Canadian occupational therapy profession. It describes what occupational therapists who work in Canada are expected to know and do. It outlines the competencies, or knowledge and skills that Canadian occupational therapists must have. <http://access.nsc.ca/cgi-bin/perl/CAOT/index.pl>

Other resources:

OTepp offers the McMaster University OTepp Certificate Program that aims to assist re-entry and internationally educated occupational therapists meet their learning needs in order to successfully transition into Canadian practice. During the intake interview, the applicant will be assisted to determine his or her needs. <http://www.otepp.ca/>.

Paulette Blais and CAOT

HONG KONG

Hong Kong Occupational Therapy Association (HKOTA) has obtained an extra into the Guinness World Record by participating in the largest qigong lesson which involved 833 persons. The qigong classes were organised as an Occupational Safety and Health Program jointly organised by the Development Bureau, the Construction Industry Council of Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the HKOTA. The program aimed at promoting occupational health for construction site workers who work for extended hours as a relieving exercise. On the day of record keeping there were 833 persons including occupational therapists and some of those who are certified qigong coaches, occupational therapy students, government officials, and construction site workers. This was an enjoyable event and participants had positive comments about taking exercise.



Manfred Fung, Delegate Hong Kong

ITALY

The Italian Association of Occupational Therapists (AITO) is glad to update you with some news from Italy.

This year has been a year of changes in AITO, starting from the election of a new Executive team in March 2014. The team is now made of nine Councillors: Francesco Della Gatta, voted as new President, Michele Senatore the Vice-President, while Gabriella Casu remains the Secretary, Gaia Girardi, Margherita Schiavi, Simonetta Del Signore, Litterio Runza, Darin Arjam the Treasurer and Giulia Zanaboni as WFOT and COTEC Delegate.

In May, goals for the future years were decided:

Firstly, AITO decided to work hard to create guidelines to face the occupational therapy profession abusiveness and promptly activate legal actions and procedures against fake occupational therapists and hospitals or rehabilitation centres that declare to have an occupational therapy service without graduate occupational therapists working there, obviously that leads to unemployment problems for accredited Italian occupational therapists.

In Italy the occupational therapy profession is still often confused with lots of health and rehabilitation figures like PT, educators, and others. This situation is worsened by the Italian Health Minister that is just now starting to work on the approval of a law about health professions and definition of competencies to protect their ethical and formative aspects.

Secondly, we want to open new university courses of occupational therapy around Italy to spread the knowledge of the profession and to have a better capillarity on the Italian territory (for example, in the southern part of Italy at present there is only one occupational therapy course), and finally gain the WFOT approval for the majority of the university courses to permit Italian occupational therapists to be recognised around the world and to allow them to continue their education or work abroad.

Apart from these macro goals we are trying to increase our member numbers improving the association services, captivating the students as a living and passionate part of the future profession and association, renewing the AITO webpage, promoting the profession in a wide range of expositions, exhibitions, congresses and events, and offering to the members economic agreements with advantageous companies.

Giulia Zanaboni, Delegate Italy

KENYA

13th Scientific conference and Annual general meeting took place on the 26-28th November 2014 in Mombasa County and it was a success. Theme for the conference was "Occupational Therapy in Kenya - Fostering Occupation – Based Practice."

Kenyan Scheme of service for OT's (revised) has already been implemented.

Occupational Therapy Bill is at the legislature level.

Revision of Kenya Occupational Therapists Association (KOTA) constitution has been finalised and adopted.

Revision of standards of practice document also finalised and adopted.

In the process of developing of a Kenyan occupational therapy practice framework (ongoing).

Pursuing introduction of occupational therapy degree courses in other universities in Kenya namely Mount Kenya University.

Degree courses being offered at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) (awaiting WFOT Approval) and Presbyterian University of East Africa (PUEA).

Election of new KOTA officials in November 2015.

Pwani Occupational Therapists Regional Group (PORTG) based in Mombasa County organised end of year party and strategic planning for 2015.

Next AGM and Scientific conference will be held in Eldoret (Ausin Gishu County) in November 2015.

Erastus Shuma, Delegate Kenya

THE NETHERLANDS

A web based tool, CEE (Client Experienced occupational therapy list) has been launched for members of EN (the Dutch Occupational Therapy Association). The already existing list has been made accessible through a web-based tool. With this new functionality it is easier to frequently access the data and to compare the data with, for example, a nationwide database. The instrument measures the experiences of the client with occupational therapy. Various elements of the intervention are assessed such as accessibility, experienced expertise, processes etc. With this measurement, the occupational therapist gets valuable feedback to improve his practice.

SEO, a scientific research institute, has done an analysis regarding the costs and benefits of occupational therapy intervention with people with dementia and their carers and with children with writing problems. Occupational therapy is cost effective in both groups.

The most significant cost savings are reached with the group of people with dementia. Only in the first year spectacular savings of 150-236 million euro are possible! This is partly due to the fact that the client can continue to live longer at home, can function more independently and other health care costs are evaded or postponed. In addition, the quality of life of the client and the caregiver substantially increase.

Awards 2014:

At the General Assembly in November 2014, two awards have been given. For the first time 'the Dutch Association of Occupational Therapy Graduation award' was presented for the best bachelor project. Two students of the University of Applied Sciences Arnhem-Nijmegen (HAN) won the award with their research project on PROM's (Patient Reported Outcome Measures).

Stephanie Saenger was granted the "Astrid Kinébanian Award 2014". The organisers unanimously choose Stephanie out of three candidates and praised her outstanding contribution to the development of the profession in varied areas, and her longstanding voluntary work for both National and European OT Associations. Stephanie dedicated the award to all volunteers of the Dutch Association EN. This was the third time the award, consisting of a bronze statue, was granted. Stephanie will hold the Astrid Kinébanian Lecture at the EN congress in 2015.

For more news: <http://www.cotec-europe.org/eng/23>

World OT Day:

For the first time, the Dutch OT association, in cooperation with the four occupational therapy universities of professional education, has awarded a prize to those students who developed the most eye catching activities with regard to World OT Day. The prize was won by four students from the Zuyd University in Heerlen (Audrey Cortenraad, Britt Hogenhout, Jill Hendrickx and Pia Gussen, coached by Rianne Jansens).

The students made their own flyer and displayed the flyer at several places inside and outside the university, they made an OT rap (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncqQBoxPz3Y>) and a powerpoint about what occupational therapy is; this powerpoint was showed throughout in the OT department, the library and the central hall.

Mieke le Granse, Delegate Netherlands

USA

The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) produced the Third Edition to the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process in 2014. It can be found in the American Journal of Occupational Therapy, March/April 2014, Vol. 68, S1-S48. doi:10.5014/ajot.2014.682006. The purpose of the Framework is to describe OT assumptions and domain of concern, as well as to inform practitioners and external audiences about our unique professional contributions. In this document the domain of OT is now defined as “Achieving health, well-being, and participation in life through engagement in occupation”. Among changes from the previous edition, the Third Edition offers more information on consultation, group intervention, self-advocacy, and therapeutic use of self.

AOTA’s 95th Annual Conference and Expo will be held in Nashville, Tennessee, 16-19 April 2015. The conference theme “Giving Voice to the Distinct Value of Occupational Therapy” relates to advocating for our services in policy, research and practice. Of the 900 sessions, there will be many internationally focused sessions and discussions. We are so pleased our International Breakfast Speaker will be Liliana Alvarez, PhD, WFOT Delegate for Colombia, who will speak about “The Power of Occupation in the Midst of Conflict: Occupational Therapy in the Land of El Dorado Legend”. For more information: <http://www.aota.org/Conference-Events/Annual-Conference.aspx>

AOTA’s Evidence Based Practice (EBP) initiative continues to expand. The EBP Directory is now available online with searchable links to guide and support practice. <http://www.aota.org/Practice/Researchers/EBP-Resource-Directory.aspx> Everyday Evidence podcasts are also available: <http://www.aota.org/Practice/Researchers/Evidence-Podcast.asp>

Sue Coppola, Delegate USA