World Occupational Therapy Day 2015 Round-up

Celebrations were held around the world and on social media to mark World Occupational Therapy Day 2015. Examples of how people promoted the global profile of the profession are presented in this document.

**BANGLADESH**

**NINS celebrates World Occupational Therapy Day on 27th October 2015**

Tuesday 27 October was World Occupational Therapy Day. Occupational therapy is a profession which works for making life independent. This year the main theme of the day was “Being an agent for change”. World Occupational Therapy Day is the opportunity to heighten the visibility of the profession’s development work and to promote the activities of occupational therapy locally, nationally, and internationally.

Inauguration of World Occupational Therapy Day 2015 by Cutting Cake

Honourable Chairperson & Invited Guests are watching a presentation about Occupational Therapy Services
Worldwide this day was celebrated across 80 national occupational therapy professional organizations. One of the famous government hospitals, the National Institute of Neurosciences and Hospital (NINS) celebrated this World Occupational Therapy Day 2015 which was organized by Occupational Therapy Unit under the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Firstly, the program was opened by cutting a cake. Other programs of the day included a video presentation about Occupational Therapy Services, discussion meeting and occupational therapy services to the patients of NINS. The Chief Guest of this program was Director of the Institute Professor Dr Qazi Deen Mohammad, Chairperson of this Program was Assistant Professor Dr. Md Jahidul.

Many doctors, therapists and other health care professionals were present there to celebrate the day. Different posters about World Occupational Therapy Day were hanging in different points of the Neurosciences Hospital. The main aim of this day was making awareness about occupational therapy services among doctors and other healthcare professionals. This program was supported by Occupational Therapist Rabeya Ferdous, Marzia Akter and Popy Sarkar.

News Reporter: Rabeya Ferdous, Occupational Therapist, National Institute of Neurosciences and Hospital (NINS), Email: rabeya1988@gmail.com
BELGIUM

World Occupational Therapy Day presentations at HoGent / University College Ghent, Belgium.
FRANCE

On the occasion of the World Occupational Therapy Day that took place on October 27th and under the supervision of the members of the A.D.E.R.E. educational team Yannick Ung. PhD. Cand. (Occupational therapist and teacher) and Sandrine Dutruc-Rosset (Head of the Research and Continuing Education department), three third year students carried out a street interview in Paris. This project aimed to:

- gather information on how people perceive and feel about handicap in general,
- ask the general public what it knows about the work of an occupational therapist and to inform them about it,
- inform passers-by of the existence of our formation center in its neighbourhood (rue Vitruve, 20th arrondissement of Paris, France).

English subtitles have been added to make the video accessible widely accessible. View the video at https://youtu.be/yxznggPReLY

Léa Chekroun
Eve-Lise Zimmer
Jeanne Scialom
Third-year students at the A.D.E.R.E. Occupational Therapy Formation Center in Paris, France.
The German Association of Occupational Therapists (dve) had great plans for promoting occupational therapy by displaying large posters in 10 important train stations beginning the week before and ending with October 27. The posters included the motto “Full Power in Life.” See more at https://www.dve.info/ergotherapie/welt-ergotherapie-tag/bildergalerie.html
ITALY

The Italian Association of Occupational Therapists (AITO) on the 20th of November 2015 organised a World Occupational Therapy Day event in Chieti, one of the Italian Universities with an Occupational Therapy course, and in collaboration with them. It was also an occasion to celebrate the 10th year of the occupational therapy course at Chieti University. The convention was entitled “Occupational Therapy: from fake myths to good practice”.

The aim was to inform the population, institutions and academic world by raising awareness of Occupational Therapy – the event was attended by many different persons and professions (doctors, psychologists, nurses, local politicians, patients associations).

It was such a big and very positive event, a place of exchanges and dialogue.

Some of the interventions and topics titles were: “Sustainable Occupational Therapy: a new perspective"; "Occupational Therapy with dementia: staying nearer to memories"; " The neuropsychologist and the occupational therapist: competencies and integrations for a better therapeutic intervention"; Digital crafts and personalized rehabilitation: 3D printers, witches and wearables”; “Occupational therapists educational and working needs: the point of view of the health professions conference”, and some others.

At the end of the day there was a round table about “From student to professional: the evolution”.

The event was patronised and supported by the Regional Council of Abruzzo (the region where Chieti is in), SITO (Italian occupational therapy society), CONAPS (national coordination of health professions), SIMFER (Italian society of physical and rehabilitation medicine), SIRN (Italian society of neurological rehabilitation), SINDEM (Italian society for dementia) and ASPHI.

The meeting was even the stage of a photo exhibit about Occupational Therapy organized by the University “Autonomy’ colours”.

Giulia Zanaboni
Delegale
A series of events and activities took place in Jordan under the supervision, guidance, cooperation, and initiation of the Jordanian Society for Occupational Therapy (JSOT) celebrating the World Occupational Therapy Day & the International Day of Persons with Disabilities:

- The Occupational Therapy Departments of the University of Jordan (JU) and Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) celebrated the World Occupational Therapy Day and raised awareness about the value of occupational therapy services in the community during October, November, and December 2015.

- The celebration in the above mentioned universities was attended by University presidents, faculty and staff, students, as well as public figures and clients from the community.

- The JU celebration was addressing the role of occupational therapy in community based rehabilitation in refugee camps considering the WFOT Position Statement on Community Based Rehabilitation.

- The significant role that occupational therapy play in promoting health and wellbeing, as well as treating clients with occupational performance problems was addressed.

- Logo of the World Occupational Therapy Day was adopted from the WFOT.

- On Thursday 26 November 2015, the Jordanian Cerebral Palsy Foundation – Amman centre conducted a First free medical rehabilitative day of services for children with multiple disabilities from 0-12 years. The JOST participated effectively in that day through conducting a survey to gather important information about cerebral palsy and other disabilities in Jordan, raising awareness about the role of occupational therapy in providing services for children with multiple disabilities through conducting one to one instructions to families by specialized occupational therapists as well as providing written materials such as brochures.

- The JSOT conducted a lecture entitled: Management of Seating Neurological Clients on the Cerebral Palsy Foundation – Amman Centre on Thursday 3 December, 2015.
INDIA

Dr. Anil K. Srivastava, President All India Occupational Therapy Association (AIOTA) and WFOT Delegate reported that the World Occupational Therapy Day celebration in India is well taken up by members of AIOTA, Institutions and AIOTA Branches. For full details, go to https://www.dropbox.com/s/aqfh58p4ots9fvi/World%20OT%20DA%202015_India.pdf?dl=0

Occupational Therapists in Manipal, India, provided the information below.
School of Allied Health Sciences, Manipal University, Manipal

To celebrate World Occupational Therapy Day, the Department of Occupational Therapy, School of Allied Health Sciences, Manipal University, Manipal had organized events with the theme "Empower and Enable All Children".

Events Organised:
- OT EUPHORIA 2014, 16 November, 2015: The competitive events for occupational therapy students to encourage dialogue, debate and discussion on factors influencing the practice of occupational therapy in India, logo competition, essay writing, photography, poster presentation, and OT Quiz.
- Inauguration of ‘ASHA’ a project for awareness of Learning Disability in the community on 20 November, 2015.
- Street play titled ‘Enable and Empower All Children’ in Kannada language at many public places in Udupi on 21 and 22 November
- Twin workshops, 24-29 November, 2014: COTE Workshop I: Family centered care in Pediatric Occupational Therapy, COTE Workshop II: Qualitative research and research writing for health care professionals.

The program received good media coverage in leading newspaper such as the Times of India. The Hindu and Udayavani and was also relayed in the local television channel.

Release of brochure on Learning Disability

Students performing at Shree Krishna Mutt, Udupi

Manipal, SOAHS to dedicate World OT Day to children

Panadally Verma, Editor 5th November 26, 2015 16:52, Kankanacomm.net, Udupi, India

Manuel, Nov 20: The Department of Occupational Therapy, School of Allied Health Sciences, Manipal will dedicate OT day to children and provide them with the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to understand and experience the profession of occupational therapy. The event will be held on November 20.

Agnieszka Piotrowska, an internationally renowned expert in the area of treating children with special needs, will discuss the subject. Agnieszka has been the driving force behind many successful programs and workshops in the field of occupational therapy.

Dr Seetina Anita Dhouza
Professor & Head-OT

Project Asha will empower kids with learning disability

Tara Ravi, Newstrack

Manapal: To raise awareness of children with learning disabilities, the Department of Occupational Therapy, School of Allied Health Sciences, and Department of Community Medicine, BMC Manipal University, along with Lions and Lions Clubs, Manipal, will launch project ‘Asha’ in Udupi district.

The project will involve awareness programmes, teacher training, and screening with the aim to facilitate early intervention.

The project will commence with a street play ‘Enable and Empower All Children’ by the students of the Department of Occupational Therapy and distribution of brochures at public places in Udupi such as market place, local colleges, hospitals, and government schools in Udupi.

Lions District Governor, Lions district governor, will inaugurate the programme on November 20 at Shri Sai Baba Hall.

These programmes also mark the occasion of International Disability Day (December 3) and World Occupational Therapy Day (October 22). In India, about 10% of children face learning disabilities, and this percentage is even higher in rural areas. The project aims to raise awareness and encourage early intervention.

May think of them as disabled, meditated, and difficult to deal with; this attitude of neglect affects the child’s career prospects, and even their family’s reputation.

Even more, it affects the child’s self-esteem and confidence. Early identification and treatment can help these children reach their maximum potential and take up skilled careers.

However, many children remain untreated because of lack of awareness and resources, and there is a need for more initiatives like ‘Asha’ to raise awareness and provide early intervention opportunities.

Dr Seetina Anita Dhouza
Professor & Head-OT

SOCIAL IMPACT: Project Asha will be initiated in Udupi district. It will raise awareness programmes, teacher training and screening with the aim to facilitate early intervention.

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However, many children remain untreated because of lack of awareness and resources, and there is a need for more initiatives like ‘Asha’ to raise awareness and provide early intervention opportunities.
Spinal Nepal
We celebrated World Occupational Therapy Day 2015 at Spinal Nepal, in Nepal. That day we conducted games for patients and those who won games received a gift. We made a presentation on what is occupational therapy, history of occupational therapy, and the difference between occupational therapy and physiotherapy intervention. Finally we cut a cake. You can see more photos at http://anotnepal.blogspot.no/

Keshab Prasad Sitaula, Occupational Therapist, Nepal

Amrita Foundation

Amrita Foundation, a mental health rehabilitation centre in Kathmandu, Nepal celebrated World Occupational Therapy Day for the first time with a program of events facilitated by two newly qualified, UK trained, occupational therapists.

The advent of World Occupational Therapy Day, two weeks into the volunteer, role emerging placement, provided the therapists with an opportunity to promote and demonstrate the role of meaningful activity in mental health services in Nepal.

In preparation for the day, patients were invited to decorate the hospital with their art and written work and contribute to the first patient newsletter at Amrita Foundation. Patients shared their personal experiences of living with mental health problems, short fictional stories, poems, drawings and subjective reports on how they felt occupational therapy had contributed towards their journey to recovery and living well with mental illness.

On the day a podcast of the therapists being interviewed by a Nepalese mental health Non Governmental Organisation, was broadcast online (www.psychbigyaan.com/recent-activities/occupational-therapy/) and there was also a full day activity programme which demonstrated the profession’s core principles in a manner that enabled patients, staff and management to directly witness the positive effects of engagement.

Activities that were facilitated on the day were:
- "Getting active group" which included badminton, ball games, hula hooping and even bouncing on space hoppers!
- Beauty group for female patients to enjoy hair and hand massage, manicures, pedicures and rose water face cleansing
- Making music with hand-made percussion instruments, decorated and played by patients
- Mandala colouring-in
- A South American weaving craft project
- Garland making - from picking marigolds to stringing them together

Occupational therapy must remain person centred and hold the patient at the core of practice. Therefore, although therapists may attest to the success of the World Occupational Therapy Day 2015 program, it was important to seek and consider patient feedback in order to evaluate current practice in this role emerging arena in a different cultural context.

A patient feedback form was created to evaluate the success of the day and was tailored to meet their varied communication needs. It was completed by patients using translation assistance, where necessary, by designated "Occupational Therapy Facilitators" (fellow patients).

The feedback provided insight into patient perspectives and supported therapists’ recommendations for future service development, taking into account the anticipated lack of trained occupational therapists in the setting, and indeed the country as a whole.

- Environmental changes
  The majority of patients surveyed reported that being involved in decorating the hospital was an enjoyable experience and the creation of a notice board wall was a source of pleasure. Findings indicate that having a bright and colourful display in the hospital of artwork and writing by patients improved their daily life experience. By having the wall filled solely with the work of patients it may be argued that self-esteem, confidence and a sense of community belonging and purposefulness was increased. It has been recommended to the service that the wall be maintained and updated with fresh contributions from the patients to sustain and re-affirm the positive response and experience.

- Newsletter
  Patients reported that they were satisfied and felt positive about the newsletter and their contributions. They reported feelings of pride, happiness and achievement owing to the newsletter project. It has been recommended to the service that a newsletter be produced where possible, allowing for constraints of material, time and staff resources.

- Social engagement
  All patients surveyed reported that the day’s program helped them to socialise with both staff and patients in the hospital. Prior to the arrival of the volunteer occupational therapists there had been a lack of regular, structured group activities on offer within the hospital, with the exception of a weekly live music session. The feedback from patients supports one fundamental premise of occupational therapy practice that social interaction skills and social satisfaction may be increased through the medium of occupational participation. While patients interact with one another on a daily basis, the lack of a structured group activity program may have arguably hindered social engagement within the patient population, and between patients and staff. This may result in a loss of interaction skills, social confidence and capacity to communicate effectively with others. All of these issues serve to negatively impact on the patients’ experience following discharge when the demands of interaction and communication in the community may prove challenging, and perhaps overwhelming. In order to support recovery and improve quality of life with mental illness occupation may be harnessed to develop and regain these vital skills for patients and therefore positively impact on life in both the hospital and the community. It has been recommended to the service that organised group activities should be continued after the departure of the visiting occupational therapists.
Activity levels and rest
The majority of patients surveyed reported that they would like to continue to rest less and be engaged in more activities during the day. This patient feedback was an affirmation of the day’s success. The professional approach of psychologists within the setting, prior to the therapists’ arrival, was that rest was the cornerstone of mental health recovery together with psychological intervention. Due to this assertion patients were not generally encouraged to assist with daily tasks, engage in physical exercise and activities. This approach arguably contradicts significant tenets of occupational therapy practice whereby occupation is promoted as a catalytic tool in the journey to mental health recovery and wellbeing.

This positive response from patients wishing to engage in more activities and rest less bolstered the therapists’ belief in the positive effect of meaningful activity for this client group and demonstrated its application to local staff.

The immediate success of World Occupational Therapy Day is that it has resulted in further well-received activity programmes celebrating recent Nepalese festivals. The anticipated long-term success may be continued group activity provision in collaboration with psychology students and staff trained in occupational therapy principles by therapists (Nepal does not have an occupational therapy educational programme). World Occupational Therapy Day 2015 acted as a catalyst in creating a sustainable focus on the power of activity in mental health treatment in the hospital.

Carla White and Amanda Peacock
PHILIPPINES

In celebration of the World Occupational Therapy Day, the Capampangan Occupational Therapy Students Assembly (COTSA) of Angeles University Foundation organized a small event to gather and unite all the BSOT students of the university. Here's a short video clip of all the exciting and fun activities we had to celebrate World Occupational Therapy Day and show the spirit of occupational therapy in the Philippines.

https://youtu.be/vVQyoOJaXeA
Micah Renea Ferreras Galang

PORTUGAL

The Portuguese Association of Occupational Therapists asked all the Portuguese occupational therapists to change the cover art on Facebook, using the WFOT Facebook cover, and ask their friends and family to do the same. We sent a phone written message to all our contacts congratulating on the World Occupational Therapy Day. We also send the WFOT Portuguese Poster and Logo to all Portuguese occupational therapists so they can use them in their initiatives.
We facilitated celebrations in the Portuguese occupational therapy schools providing them all the WFOT materials. They shared with us their initiatives and we showed them in our national Magazine
Elisabete Roldão
PAOT President

RWANDA
The Rwanda Occupational Therapy Association (RWOTA) was recently born and in collaboration with the University of Rwanda, College of Medicine and Health Sciences the profession is expanding through the Occupational Therapy Bachelor’s educational programme at the university with support from Handicap International. On the 27th November, the association celebrated World Occupational Therapy Day in the community center for children with disabilities where 6 occupational therapists and 15 occupational therapy students conducted some self-care and recreational activities. The day was a good opportunity to raise the awareness of the profession for the first time in the country.

Epiphanie Murebwayire
Chairperson
Rwanda Occupational Therapy Association

UGANDA

Occupational Therapy Global Day of Service (OTGDS)
Thirty six occupational therapy students including 1st, 2nd and 3rd years went to Busabala Nursing Home using the institutional bus to work with clients of different conditions like cerebral palsy, Down’s syndrome, microcephalus, mental retardation, hemiplegia following stroke, back pain and sensitization about occupational therapy in different settings among others.
Each student funded their own t-shirt and lunch, transport was offered for free by the administration of the institution.
Ten students stayed at Busabala Nursing Home in the occupational therapy department and worked with clients, whilst others went to Opening doors rehabilitation centre at Najjanankumbi.
A total of 300 flyers and brochures which were distributed to people at different points which included

- Freedom city
- Kenjoy supermarket
- Along Busabaala road
- Banana leaf restaurant
- Along Mubarak road and around different parts of the city
This was intended to expand on peoples’ awareness about occupational therapy as a profession and its services within our communities.

Students gathered at the Banana Leaf restaurant for lunch of bananas, rice, sweet potato, yam and beans or ground nuts plus a bottle of soda. After having lunch, they created awareness to the people around the restaurant about occupational therapy and served out 35 flayers to each person around. The rest of the flyers were supplied along Mubarak road.

Then the students went back to Busabala nursing home for a word of appreciation by Mr. Kalanda Emanuel the Head of Department of Occupational Therapy. He emphasized to us to keep the spirit high of being occupational therapists and make the course more pronounced. He urged us to be more creative in the next year’s celebration and make it more colorful than it was.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Assessments were done for free to the clients and appropriate referrals were made
- The first year Students were also oriented especially about community occupational therapy
- The community members were also sensitized through the use of flyers brochures and the health talk that we held.

APPRECIATION

We appreciate the following

World Federation of Occupational therapists
Principal of UIAHMS-mulago for his support
Principal tutor, Occupational Therapy school for his guidance
Occupational Therapy Department Mulago Hospital
Uganda Occupational Therapy Students Association and all the students who participated.

Ndyowaawe Arron Bram
Northumbria

Northumbria University’s Occupational Therapy Society finished World Occupational Therapy Day 2015 with an event called ‘Occupation in Action’.

There were a range of guest speakers who attended and spoke about the organisation they work or volunteer within. Starting the evening off was Dr Dawn Dury who is a Senior Lecturer for Occupational Therapy within Northumbria University. She spoke about her experience in the Crisis Resolution Home Treatment Team. This involved visiting people at home and supporting them to carry out their regular activities again after crisis struck them. Hearing this from Dawn emphasised that anyone can benefit from meeting an Occupational Therapist and the diversity of the career.

Mindful Therapies gave a short meditation session, allowing us to just focus on ourselves. During this session we also had a discussion about the top 3 things we value, this made me realise how disrupted my life would be if I could not access these things.

A group of female refugees sang a traditional South African song and then an English song which was very inspiring. One of the women shared their journey with Crossings and how the organisation helped her through music. Crossings Women’s Choir meet once a week to create a safe environment for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants.

Lotte Mikkessen was a guest speaker for Laughter Yoga. During this session she worked us up from laughing a small amount and in different tones to finishing with lying on our backs in a circle. This taught me that starting the day with something positive such as laughing can have an effect on my mood for the rest of the day. I will use this method when I am having a bad day so that it does no effect anyone else.
Another workshop that was held was crochet, this helps people relax and have a repetitive sequence to carry out a task as well as using their fine motor skills. This was run by Many Mercer.

Lynn Readman from Carerstrust spoke about young carers and their families. The charity started in 1990 and has developed since then. They want to be able to improve the lives of carers and their families by providing a holistic range of services. This charity does not only specialise in young carers but people of all ages and disabilities. Their main aim is to develop positive outcomes for families.

The charity Thrive uses gardening to bring positive changes into people’s lives. These service users could be isolated, have disabilities or be of ill health. Gardening promotes service users’ physical and mental health. Having this time allows people to improve their communication skills and make new friends. Overall it helps people to be more independent.

The final talk that summarised World Occupational Therapy Day was by Launchpad. A service user first told his story about how Launchpad helped him to now live a more rewarding life after overcoming so many problems. He has now had the opportunity to write a book and share his story. After he spoke, Sharon Race spoke about a Women’s comedy club (Laughter for Lasses) which allows females with mental health problems a place to build their confidence through performance. This gives them a safe place which they can write sketches about mental health or another topic that comes to mind.

All of the information gathered from the evening can be used in practice for Occupational Therapists whether it be through referring people, suggesting ideas or now having a greater knowledge of the services that Occupational Therapists can be involved within. The evening helped raise awareness of all of the organisations that were there, which really benefitted the people attending as many were not students from Northumbria University and may not have been exposed to this kind of work before. It had a greater emphasis to hold the event on World Occupational Therapy Day as it can now be a celebrated event each year by the organisations and the people who attended. As many of the people who attended the event were not students of Northumbria they may not have been exposed to the profession of Occupational Therapy and now have an understanding of what the profession is and the benefits of the profession to service users.

Holli Lunan
First year occupational therapy student