

50 Years of OT in the Netherlands

In November 2007 the NVE celebrated her 50th anniversary. In those 50 years many persons have worked hard to build up the OT in the Netherlands. At this celebration an award was installed for an OT who contributed considerable to the development of OT in the Netherlands.

Astrid received the Astrid Kinébanian award (named after herself) because of her enormous efforts and merits for the profession of occupational therapy in the Netherlands. Nobody had such vision on the future of occupational therapy as Astrid had. She introduced many new OT theories in our country. She was involved in all important milestones such as legislation of the profession and OT in higher education. She instigated important research projects and started the European Masters in occupational therapy. She had many positions in the OT organisation. She is a fantastic teacher and inspiring woman. She put so much energy, power and years of her life into OT. The Dutch association was very proud to name the first and only award after her and of course to give her the first award.

At the 50th anniversary of the Dutch OT Association Astrid Kinébanian highlighted the developments of the last 50 years and her dreams for the next 50 years. As Dutch delegate for the WFOT I asked her to write a summary of her speech for the WFOT bulletin, which follows below.

Summary of speech of Astrid Kinébanian about 50 years of OT in the Netherlands

“The foremost work of interest for occupational therapists during these 50 years has been the struggle for legal recognition, good education, and quality care in a multi-cultural society and financial reimbursement in order to make occupational therapy accessible for all people who can benefit of their services. This means that the Occupational Therapists have put (and they still do) a lot of effort into the development of the profession, to build up the association and into getting the profession well known and accepted in the Dutch society.

During the founding years of occupational therapy in The Netherlands after the Second World War the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) played a pivotal role. The Dutch government allowed a physiotherapy school, to start with an educational programme for occupational therapy because the plan for that programme was based on the requirements of the WFOT. In 1968 several organisations, including the Dutch Association for Occupational Therapy asked for legal recognition of the profession. All requests were rejected of various reasons. However the government labelled the close connection of the Dutch OT Association with the WFOT of great importance. In 1975 the Dutch Association applied again for legal recognition. This application was based on documents of the WFOT. The WFOT supported the application. In 1977 the government was advised by the National Health Council to accept occupational therapy as a legal Allied health Profession. The membership of the WFOT and the approval of the school by the WFOT were important arguments in this advice.

Finally in 1981 the profession was legalized and as a result of that the OT education became embedded in the system of Higher Education in the Netherlands and is subsidized since 1982. All these developments were instrumental for furthering the development of the profession. More students attended the education, resulting in

2007 in 4 OT schools in The Netherlands with an intake all together of about 400 students a year. The schools also received the opportunity to start with post-graduate courses and applied research.

Today there are around 3000 professionally active occupational therapists serving a population of about 16 million. Almost 80% of these occupational therapists work in the health services; they work with geriatric- and disabled person care, (child) rehabilitation, mentally retarded and psychiatric patient care. Lately occupational therapists started to work for occupational health and safety services and vocational rehabilitation projects offered by social services. At this moment there are about 100 private practices

In the table below the milestones in the development of occupational therapy in the Netherlands is described, and in the last column Astrid describes her dream for the next 50 years.

Mile stones	1957	2007	Dream for 2057
Amount of OT's	10	3000 (increase of 300 times)	30.000 (increase of 10 times)
OT schools	1	4	8
Workplace	Clinically especially in Rehabilitation clinics	Clinically and in the community , especially with elderly	75 % is working in the community also in social services
Legal recognition	non	1981 legislation as an allied health profession	A 'free' profession with a very good internal quality care system
Societal recognition	non	Nowadays there are TV programs about OT	Everybody knows OT All OT's have societal/political competences
Financial reimbursement	None	Since 200 financial reimbursement by healthcare insurance	Reimbursement also by social funds
Professional Profile	None	First profile in 1972 With the latest update in 1999 and a new one on the role	Professional profile is Occupation based and based on evidence and encompass OT in social services

Mile stones	1957	2007	Dream for 2057
Recognition as higher education	None	Since 1982 part of higher education and subsidized	OT and Occupational Science acknowledged as a scientific discipline
Post –graduate courses in OT	None	Since 1999 European Master of Science in OT	PhD in OT/OS is possible
Dutch OT books Theoretical underpinning Evidence	None None None	<u>+</u> 5 OT books First onset of underpinning by evidence through research	<u>+</u> 50 books Underpinned by evidence
Scientific research	None No publications	In the nineties the first scientific research 2007: about 8 OT's with a PhD Some publications	Research is self-evident in OT practice Many publications 250 PhD's 10 Professors in OT
Awards	None	2007 Astrid Kinébanian award	Several awards
Services OT offers	Treatment descriptions per diagnoses	Several guidelines for OT interventions such as CVA, Fall prevention, Dementia, Handwriting problems All evidence based	Clear descriptions of the product OT can offer, occupation-based, client-centred and evidence based
Dutch Journal of OT	1959 a stenciled paper	An official printed journal with a review board	1 journal focused on practice, 1 scientific journal

Mile stones	1957	2007	Dream for 2057
International Co-operation	1960 WFOT recognition	COTEC, ENOTHE, WFOT 2006 Hanneke van Bruggen is honorary fellow of WFOT and received a honorary doctorate of the University y of Brighton in beginning 2008	Diversity has become self evident in OT In all countries of the world OT is established and co-operation with those countries has expanded 10 OT's with a Honorary Doctorate

All these milestones are reached by the OT's in the Netherlands together, after 50 years one can say OT in the Netherlands is well 'rooted' in the society. The results reached in the last 50 years give a firm base for new achievements in the coming 50 years."

Astrid is convinced that over 50 years again it will be possible to state a lot of milestones, the 'ÓT tree' will have reached full maturity. And although Astrid her self will not be here anymore, by way of the Astrid Kinébanian award her spirit will be with the OT in the Netherlands for ever.

Astrid Kinébanian, OT MSc Social Science
Madeleine Mignot-Corstens, WFOT Delegate of the Netherlands