



Wednesday, April 16, 2014

Message from the COTBC Board Chair



Diane Graham

The first months of 2014 have been full of change and I believe indicative of the year to come. These are exciting times for the College and health care in general as we continue to meet the mandate of the *BC Health Professions Act* and protection of the public in this province.

Office staff are settling into new office space. We welcomed a new public board member Trudy Hubbard from North Vancouver and said our farewells to

Sherry Baker and Vila Nova Carvalho who completed 6 years as public members on our Board on January 31. More recently Guenter Weckerle from Williams Lake joined us as our newest public member and we look forward to welcoming him at our April meeting. Committees also had their comings and goings as they embark on a new year with significant changes in work plans ahead.

A change that I am particularly pleased about is the location of this year's Annual General Meeting and education day in Kelowna, my place of residence. This is the first time a COTBC AGM has been held outside of the Lower Mainland. I hope many of my colleagues in the Interior will be able to attend, and I look forward to welcoming any and all occupational therapists from around the province. We'll be working again with CAOT-BC and the UBC Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy to provide occupational therapists with updates on all three organizations as well as professional development activities. Save the dates now: October 24-25, 2014.

In 2014 the Quality Assurance Program will continue to expand with the launch of learning modules and the second Annual Competence Review. Pretesting and Pilot Testing of the Continuing Competence Exam will also take place this year with the planned launch in 2015. The Standards Committee has reviewed the practice guideline on Collecting, Recording and Protecting Client Information, and plan to release a new practice standard that will address the practice trends and questions from registrants that have arisen over the years. The Registration and Inquiry

Dates to Remember

April 26: COTBC Board Meeting in Victoria

May 31: Annual Competence Review due

July 1: COTBC registration renewal deadline

October 24-25: AGM in Kelowna

Committees process several files monthly, and I applaud their timely, consistent and fair approach.

As Chair of the COTBC Board, I am proud of the work done by the College and honoured to work with dynamic, energetic board members and college staff. Now in my fifth year with the Board, I have found my experiences to be an enriching opportunity for both personal and professional development. I do encourage you to think about standing for election or appointment to a committee. If you would like a taste of the excellent work COTBC is doing you are welcome to attend a Board meeting and to see our new office space. Please let the COTBC office know if you plan to attend. The dates, times and locations are listed on the College website and our next meeting is April 26 in Victoria.

Protect Public Safety with Consistent Use of Title

Kathy Corbett, Registrar



"Our purpose, your safety" is the theme of the BC Health Profession Regulators' public awareness campaign. Perhaps you noticed one of the province-wide bus shelter posters last fall, or heard a TV clip complete with closed-captioning, or happened upon the new BC Health Regulators website?

These are the first steps in our public awareness campaign designed to raise public awareness about the role regulatory colleges play in patient safety, and to encourage people to check to see if their health

professional is regulated. Visit www.bchealthregulators.ca to see a full list of health professionals who have been delegated the authority from government to govern the practice of their members in the public interest.

"Our title, your protection" is a way to think about what your occupational therapist title conveys to the public. The privilege of an exclusive use of title is a central and critical public protection element of BC's health professions regulation. Referred to as reserved title, "occupational therapist" or "O.T." assures the public that the individual using these titles has the required education, knowledge, skills and attributes to safely and ethically practice occupational therapy. Public confidence is raised knowing the registered occupational therapist is accountable for meeting standards for practice and ethical conduct, and maintaining continued competence.

Who can use title?

Only registrants of COTBC can use title. Represent your professional designation clearly using the title Occupational Therapist or O.T. Registrants must not use the term "specialist" or any similar designation suggesting a recognized special status in any documentation or communications such as advertising, business cards or brochures. While



2014 Annual Competence Review (ACR)

This year's Annual Competence Review (ACR) will open again in late April. Watch your email for a message with your username and login information. Occupational therapists have until May 31, 2014 to complete the ACR. More information on the ACR and the COTBC Quality Assurance Program is available on the [College website](#).

Inquiry Committee Member Needed

Are you interested in serving on a College committee?

The Inquiry Committee is looking for an occupational therapist who is comfortable considering complaints and making decisions as provided for in the *Health Professions Act*. To be considered, complete the [Expression of Interest Form](#) found on the College website. Registrar [Kathy Corbett](#) is also happy to discuss the responsibilities further. The COTBC Board would like to appoint someone as soon as possible to allow for overlap with an outgoing committee member.

the College has the authority to establish a specialist register, to date it has not done so.

How can I promote my other expertise?

Sometimes occupational therapists want to convey additional education, achievements or skills along with their profession title. Consider the use of other credentials and job title information from the perspective of your clients. While there may be benefits for the public, be mindful clients may not be able to distinguish the meaning or relevance to their needs. If you include additional educational or clinical achievements, we recommend that you:

- describe these in a clear and complete manner,
- avoid the use of abbreviations,
- place them on the line below the occupational therapist title, and
- take time to explain to clients what the achievements or job title mean and how it relates to your services.

For more information, review the College Advisory Statement on [Use of Title](#) and/or email info@cotbc.org.

Each profession's title helps the public understand what they can expect when receiving services from one of its members. The Health Profession Regulators of BC now provides a more formalized structure within which Colleges can share information, reach common understanding and communicate consistent messages to the public. Keeping true to our purpose and each of our titles helps keep the public safe.

2014 Registration Renewal News

Online registration will open toward the end of May. Meeting the requirements for renewal and paying fees can help make the process smoother for occupational therapists and help lower administrative costs for the College.

Requirements and deadlines

May 31, 2014 Deadline to complete the ACR
July 1, 2014 Deadline for Registration Renewal

Current professional liability insurance coverage, and a criminal record check every 5 years are also required.

2014-2015 Fee Increase

The fees for this coming year are as follows:

- Annual Registration Renewal Fee: \$525.00
- Non-Practicing Fee: \$125.00 (no increase)

This is an increase of \$50 from the previous year. Although the COTBC Board regrets having to impose this increase, it is confident that everything is done to keep the operations as cost effective as possible. Frugal use of resources and ongoing collaborations keep fees below or at par with many of the occupational therapy colleges in Canada.

An unexpected expense was the office move made necessary by the College of Dental Hygienists of BC's decision last summer to move and no longer share space. The College and its registrants benefitted from

Keep Your Email Address Current

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Save the Date: October 24-25

This year's Annual General Meeting and workshops will be held in Kelowna, BC. COTBC along with CAOT-BC and UBC's Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy look forward to seeing you there. Details coming!

cost savings for over 12 years. The new office space is located outside the downtown core which reduces costs, provides free parking, and improves the space for both in-house and online meetings. With no costs for the leasehold renovations, the College was able to further reduce the moving expenses.

Due to changes in the *Health Professions Act*, the College has also needed to expand the Quality Assurance Program. The decision to provide the program online is a resource-heavy endeavor in the initial development stages, but costs are saved over time due to decreased printing and mailing, and automation of administrative tasks. These development costs have also been reduced due to the collaborative efforts with the College of Physical Therapists of BC and other occupational therapy regulatory colleges in Canada.

Both registration and inquiry processes have increased in volume and complexity. Again, COTBC's ongoing commitment to collaboration has allowed costs to be minimized. As an active member of the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulators, COTBC and its registrants have been involved in developing tools to assist with improved and cost-effective credentialing review processes.

The general public is more concerned about safe, ethical and effective care, as well as the processes for raising concerns. With a mandate to protect the public, COTBC joined with other BC Colleges to launch the *Our Purpose, Your Safety* public awareness campaign. Bus shelters, newspaper ads, TV spots and a [website](#) with information in 10 different languages would not have been possible on our own.

If you have any questions regarding the fee increase please [email](#) the COTBC Registrar Kathy Corbett or call the office at 1 (866) 386-6822.

New Practice Standard Provides Clearer Expectations

Cindy McLean, Deputy Registrar

- *How do I put email correspondence into a client record?*
- *Can I release information to another health professional without the client's consent?*
- *I work in a non-profit organization that doesn't keep client records. What do I do?*

Occupational therapists who need greater clarity regarding record keeping requirements will find the new COTBC Practice Standard answers many of the questions raised by changes in practice environments, service delivery and record management. Clients trust that occupational therapists only gather information necessary to provide effective care and that the information recorded is protected and accessible only to those authorized by the clients. The practice standard supports occupational therapists to meet these responsibilities by providing explicit expectations for collecting, recording and protecting client information. Included in the practice standards is the risk tool, which helps occupational therapists to identify and manage risks specific to client records.

The new practice standard is based on the current *Collecting, Recording and Protecting Client Information Guideline* (2006), which was reviewed and revised by the COTBC Standards Committee. The diversity of the committee membership ensures that the practice standard is realistic and applicable to all areas of occupational therapy practice regardless of geographical region. Watch for the new practice standard later this year.



Quality Assurance Program Updates

Supporting and Monitoring Quality Occupational Therapy Practice in BC

April is Pretest Month

Many thanks to the 100+ occupational therapists who signed up to help test drive the new Quality Assurance Program online environment. We've now tested the online booking system and for the next two weeks 52 participants will try out the new case/question application. We had over twice as many volunteers as we had spaces, but occupational therapists on the waitlist will have priority when further pretesting of the program environment occurs.

Annual Competence Review (ACR) Due May 31

Reserve an hour this May to complete your ACR. It will open online at the end of April. Watch for an email with your username, password and URL for access. A link will also be posted on the home page of the College website. If you are concerned about completing the activities online please [email us](#).

Results of the 2013 Administration of the ACR

The purpose of the Annual Competence Review (ACR) is to support occupational therapists' continued competence. The ACR is designed to help OTs to identify transitions and support in their own practice, gaps in understanding, risks to client safety and, in turn, link with regulatory standards and resources to assist them in delivering safe, ethical and quality occupational therapy services. Below are some highlights from the first administration based on 1990 responses.

Transitions and Supports

77% anticipate at least one career transition over the next 6-12 months

Most Commonly Identified Transitions

Adjusting to a significant change in workload	37%
Adjusting to a significant change in policies and/or procedures which impact on the way they practice	26%
Adjusting to a change in workplace organization	21%
Adjusting to a significant change in practice setting	18%
Adjusting to a significant change in family demands which impact practice	17%

Currently Available Supports

59% identified more than 10 supports available

- Most Frequent
- 90% information and resources
- 87% continuing education activities/event

- Least Frequent
- 36% had formal written reviews of performance available although 48% had opportunities to receive structured feedback from supervisors/peers

Regulatory Quiz

80% answered most of the regulatory quiz questions correctly

Of the 1,990 occupational therapists completing the ACR by the deadline of May 31, 2013 75% provided feedback on some or all aspects of the online delivery and content. The Continuing Competence Committee extends its thanks to everyone who provided detailed comments regarding their first experiences with the ACR. Highlights include:

Relevance and Helpfulness

Percentage of Participants who Agreed or Strongly Agreed

Tool	Relevance	Feedback Helpfulness
Career Transitions and Supports	63.9%	47%
Regulatory Quiz	85.3%	82%
Risk Tool	69.5%	47% would like regular access

Time to Complete

We estimated the ACR would take approximately one hour to complete.
76% completed the ACR in less than 60 minutes; 17% in 60-90 minutes.

89% found the length of the ACR to be the "right length"
 10% found the length of the ACR to be the "too long"
 1% found the length to be "too short"

Ease of Navigation

96% agreed or strongly agreed that navigating through the website was easy.
 88% felt the information was easy to read.

Future Plans

This year's Annual Competence Review will run in the new online Quality Assurance Program platform which will address several of the navigation issues raised. Additions and modifications to the transitions and supports will allow occupational therapists to identify specific supports they will consider over the next year to maintain their competence. The regulatory quiz will continue with the four cases from a variety of practice contexts and settings. The risk tool, although identified by the majority as relevant and helpful, will require practice; additional resources are underway to help with this.

Code of Ethics Learning Module Available this Summer

Many thanks to the panel of occupational therapists who help in the development and review of the learning module, as well as Kevin Reel who is both an occupational therapist and ethicist. The content has been ready for online development but was delayed so it could be run in the new Quality Assurance Program (QAP) platform. The learning module is not a required part of the QAP.

Recently Posted QAP Resources

Check out the College website for more information on the Quality Assurance Program (QAP). Here you will find

1. [QAP Framework](#) which includes the program purpose, mandate, guiding principles and program development milestones.
2. [QAP Blueprint](#) which supports the development, delivery and evaluation of the program. By applying the blueprint to all elements, the College ensures the content focuses on the competencies necessary for occupational therapists to provide safe, ethical and quality care. The blueprint also illustrates the relative importance of each area of competence to be addressed in the program, in particular, the Continuing Competence Exam (CCE). The appendix of the blueprint provides descriptions of the four practice contexts.
3. [QAP Resources](#) that case writers have used to support the cases, questions and answers. If you are looking for resources to help keep you up-to-date, you'll find this list quite comprehensive. Not only does it pull the resources available for each of the regulatory topics in the QAP blueprint, it also lists several practice resources for each of the practice contexts. This list is updated regularly as new resources are used.

Coming this Summer/Fall

- Orientation materials to help prepare for the 2015 Continuing Competence Exam.
- Webinars describing the QAP with Question/Answer on the CCE

- Pilot Testing of the CCE

Practice Question Answer The correct answer is 10 years. Records must be safely kept and securely stored for a period of 10 years. (COTBC Bylaw 82). In the case of minors, records must be kept for 10 years after the client reaches the legal age of 19.

www.cotbc.org

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