

COTBC Update

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Message from the Chair

This fall has been a very busy one - lots of meetings and preparation for a number of key events, including our annual general meeting and upcoming elections.

Much of our work this fall has come from our Strategic Directions document, which was finalized last spring and has been guiding the board and our committee work since. It is rewarding to see what we have accomplished these past months. At the risk of using a tired cliché; "Rome was not built in a day" and although we have established a sound foundation for the College we have much work to do.

As you can see from the updates on our committee activities in this newsletter, all of our college committees are now fully operational, with logic model work plans in place. This form of planning is outcome based and allows for the ongoing evaluation of those outcomes over time, to ensure they are consistent with the mission, mandate and values of our college.

The board has continued to ensure that our resources are there to support the committee and board work. A Finance Advisory Panel has been established, to develop further

policy in this area. A Communications Panel is in the process of helping us develop communications policies and set standards for our communications with registrants and the public. We have recently updated

our website, which I think you will find much improved, more useful and accessible. I encourage you to visit the site and give us feedback on how we can continue to improve it over time.

This newsletter style of update is also new for us. The board is committed to providing these update newsletters more regularly, and is looking for registrant's feedback on what types of information would make the update more useful to you. Please take a moment and send an email to the college with your thoughts and feedback on our first effort.

Angenita Gerbracht, Chair



From the Registrar's Desk

As I reflect on the growth and development of our young College, I can't help recalling my former practice life as a pediatric occupational therapist working with young children for almost 20 years. Our College is now just over three years old, and as with a child's development, it is both amazing to see what has been accomplished in that short period of time, and exciting to think about what incredible growth is still to come.

The College structure is sound and leadership is strong.

The College Board, comprised of three public members and six elected full registrants, established an important grounding for the College early on. The board articulated a clear mission statement and a set of core values and principles to guide our work in meeting the responsibilities of our public protection mandate.

Recently, the Board finalized a strategic plan that underscores a commitment to continuous quality improvement, effective communication and enhancing registrant's practice through programs and practice guidelines. The plan identified four key results areas that will focus the work of the College over the next few years. Information on the plan will be available on the college website at www.cotbc.org and is also highlighted in this year's annual report in the "Message from the Chair".

Our seven college committees are also working hard to meet their mandates. This past year there

were 41 committee meetings - 17 of which were in-person full day meetings. Each committee has established a work-plan using a "program logic model" that frames their work-plans within an outcome oriented evaluation framework. Program evaluation has become an essential part of an occupational therapist's practice in our current health care environment - and the College is committed to this in its own operations.

Communication with registrants during our initial years has been primarily through mailings of registration renewals, annual reports, cards and receipts, notices of our Annual General Meetings, and nominations or ballots for our elections. This COTBC Update marks a new milestone in the implementation of a more formal communications strategy for the College, and we will be providing more information to registrants in the coming year, through updates such as this and on our website. We have recently improved our website, making it easier to access, more interactive, and providing more useful information for the public, registrants and employers. The improvements enable us to provide registrants with timely, up to date information on what is new at the College on a more regular basis. A feedback form has been posted and is a reflection of our commitment to expand the use of the website and encourage interaction with registrants and the public. Please check it out, and let us know what you think of it and what you would like to see on it.

Professional Liability Insurance

Registrants are required to maintain valid liability insurance and are responsible for ensuring that liability insurance policies are current.

Registrants are reminded to check the expiry date of their insurance policy and to ensure a valid copy of your insurance is in your College file.

A reminder: If a registrant has more than one employer, the registrant must ensure that they have liability insurance for all practice settings.

New COTBC Website!

The College now has a new improved website, which is easier to access, more interactive and contains more useful information for registrants.

We also have a feedback survey posted on the site - please, take a moment to go online and fill out the survey, as it provides the college

with valuable feedback on how we can improve our service to our registrants, the public and employers.

The site can be visited by going to www.cotbc.ca

Let us know what you think!

We strive to offer an efficient and responsive office. In the past year we have presented information about the college at a number of venues, answered over two thousand emails (does not include other College staff) and I have personally been available to connect with over 250 registrants who called the College. There have been an increasing number of calls to the College from registrants seeking information on particular practice issues or ethical circumstances. This is great to see. The College wants to continue to be a resource, responsive to registrants' questions and the public's requests for information. Monitoring practice trends and providing trend information to the Board and its committees helps in setting priorities for future practice guidelines and advisory statements, as well as information for our website and newsletter updates.

Building and sustaining strong relationships, and working in partnership are more than a philosophy at the College. We share office space with the College of Dental Hygienists of British Columbia (CDHBC), and one of the benefits we receive lots of positive feedback on is the result of our sharing a receptionist position, so calls are answered five days a week. COTBC is an active member of the Health Regulatory Organizations of BC (HRO) where we participated in an initiative that resulted in a submission to the government recommending amendments to legislation that would protect information submitted by registrants for continuing competency purposes.

A national perspective is sustained through our work with our provincial counterparts (ACOTRO), which also includes connecting with CAOT and the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs (ACOTUP). ACOTRO is highlighted elsewhere in this issue of our update. We also meet regularly with BCSOT to discuss common issues and continue to hold our annual meetings together. These are a few examples to highlight our network of established and respected relationships.

I want to remind registrants that an election is underway for three elected Board member positions. One of the hallmarks of self-regulation is that the profession itself is responsible for regulating the practice and conduct of its members. This is your opportunity to determine the leadership for that important role. Ballots must be returned in the form specified and by the deadline to be counted.

I am looking forward to the work ahead and in particular, directing efforts to keeping registrants informed with updates such as this and through the use of our website. To those who I have had the personal opportunity to talk with on the telephone, let me say that this is a very rewarding part of the job of Registrar. We can be proud of the professionalism and accountability for quality occupational therapy services exhibited by COTBC registrants.

Kathy Corbett, Registrar

COTBC Quick Facts

- As of September 30, 2003, the college had 1285 registrants
- The college received over 2000 calls last year
- The college gave 7 presentations in the past year
- Six board meetings were held
- 41 committee meetings were held in the past year
- The college received over 5000 emails last year

Our National Connection: What is ACOTRO?

COTBC is a member of the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO). ACOTRO is comprised of a member from each province's regulatory organization responsible for registering/licensing occupational therapists.

ACOTRO has existed since 1988, with a mandate to provide national leadership on regulatory matters concerning occupational therapy and the protection of the public. ACOTRO's work also focuses on improving the sharing of information between provinces and addressing current issues such as labour mobility and change to the entry level education. In recent years, collaborative efforts have resulted in a commitment to establish consistency and congruency across provinces in entry to practice review processes and quality assurance programs.

Some highlights of recent ACOTRO accomplishments include the signing of the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) to enhance the mobility of

occupational therapists moving from one province to another; receiving a grant with HRDC Canada to establish the Essential Competencies of Practice (ACOTRO, 2000); and creating the first formal partnership between the five ACOTRO members to jointly fund the performance indicators project.

ACOTRO is not a formal entity per se; it is not staffed outside the "voluntary" structure by its members. The momentum of the group is sustained by a mutual passion for quality regulation, and a commitment to collaborative work. The work of the group is focused by a strategic plan that sets clear direction. The work would not be possible without the ongoing support from respective Provincial College Board's and Councils who live the adage, the sum of the parts are greater than the whole.

Kathy Corbett, COTBC Registrar, is currently the chair of ACOTRO, and recently represented ACOTRO on a national tele-health guidelines advisory committee.

COTBC Strategic Directions

The college board has adopted a strategic plan to guide the work of the college from 2003-2005. More information on the plan is available on the COTBC website, at www.cotbc.org

Key Results Areas:

Providing Responsive, Accountable

Governance - The College is a responsive, credible and accountable organization that engages in ongoing evaluation on how it governs and conducts its business. The College is committed to maintaining effective and efficient operations, to implementing improvements where required, and to ensuring long-term viability.

Promoting Registrant Competence -

Registrants must have the knowledge, skills, abilities and judgement to maintain and continuously develop safe, ethical and effective

occupational therapy practices. In order to assist registrants to meet these expectations, the College provides innovative practice guidelines, tools and supports.

Improving Public Awareness - The College is committed to provide information so that the public can be knowledgeable about their rights to safe, ethical and competent practice by occupational therapists, and also be aware of the role of the College in protecting those rights.

Increasing Registrant Participation -

The College has a responsibility to ensure that registrants are knowledgeable about the obligations and expectations of a regulated professional. The College is working to increase communications with registrants and encourage feedback.

CAOT Exam Results

If you still hold a provisional practicing registration and have received your exam results from CAOT, please be sure to forward the results to the College. Your registration status will be changed to full registration and the condition requiring that you practice under general supervision is removed. A new registration card and your registration wall certificate will also be provided.

In the event you were unsuccessful in passing the exam please be sure to notify the College and provide an updated declaration to re-write the exam at the next available sitting of the exam.

Update on COTBC Committees

Registration Committee

This committee is responsible for granting registration to every person who satisfies the committee of their qualifications, and pays the required fees.

In the past year, the committee met a total of 16 times, and approved 88 applications for registration. In addition, a review and second revision of the policy for English Fluency requirements was completed. This process included a survey of the fluency requirements for occupational therapy education programs in Canada. This proved to be a complex issue, and draft revised policy is being prepared to be presented to the board for approval.

Quality Assurance Committee

The QA committee is responsible for making recommendations to the board regarding continuing competency, re-entry into the profession, standards of practice and practice guidelines, and professional ethics.

The committee met four times in the past year. The committee completed the mandate, philosophy and goals of the QA program, which were adopted by the board. The committee also worked with the client relations committee on the process for establishing the Code of Ethics review panel and its terms of reference. The committee also advised and supported the standards committee on the development of its first practice guideline.

Continuing Competence Committee

This committee is responsible for making recommendations for establishing and monitoring adherence to standards for continuing competence for registrants. The committee met twice in the past year. The committee conducted a detailed review of specific tools and processes implemented in other jurisdictions and examined their potential to meet core elements of the college's continuing competency program. The committee is finalizing draft recommendations for the Quality Assurance committee and college board to review.

Standards Committee

This committee is responsible for the development of standards of practice, practice guidelines, and advisory statements. The committee met four times in the past year. The committee drafted two practice guidelines, and is working on finalizing those documents, which will then be submitted to the college board for approval. Once approved, the guidelines will be sent to registrants.

Client Relations Committee

This committee makes recommendations to the board regarding client relations programs, including measures for addressing professional misconduct of a sexual nature. The committee met four times in the past year. The committee made recommendations to the board regarding the need for a consistent and comprehensive approach to educating registrants on breaches of conduct in all ethical areas. The board approved their recommendations, and the committee is working on developing an approach to addressing ethical matters in practice.

Inquiry Committee

This committee is responsible for investigating matters that are raised in complaints against registrants. The committee met a total of six times during the year. The committee currently has two complaints from 2002 that are ongoing. Inspectors have been hired to complete investigations into these matters. The committee received four new complaints in 2002/03. Following investigations, three of these complaints resulted in the committee taking no further action, as the conduct or practice of each of the occupational therapists was considered satisfactory. The fourth complaint is currently under investigation.

Discipline Committee

This committee conducts disciplinary hearings. No disciplinary hearings were held in the past year.

COTBC Elections

Three COTBC board member terms expire on January 31, 2004. Nominations for these positions closed on September 24, 2003. The names and biographies of the four nominees are available on the website. Ballots are due back by November 17, 2003 and will be counted November 18, 2003. Candidates will be notified of the outcome on November 20, 2003 and then the results will be posted on our website.

Keeping Current

Visit our new website and click on "What's New" for current COTBC activities, events and announcements.
www.cotbc.org

COTBC Board Meetings

The COTBC Board of Directors is the College's policy making and governing body. The board is comprised of three public members and six elected registrants, and meets at least four times a year.

Upcoming board meetings:

Saturday, January 31, 2004
9am-5pm
Richmond BC

Friday, April 30 and
Saturday, May 1, 2004
9am-5pm
Victoria BC

The board is also planning an information session for Vancouver Island occupational therapists in conjunction with this meeting. For more information, please contact the college.

The Current COTBC Board

Public Board Members (Appointed by the Minister)

Dr. Nancy Sheehan - Surrey

Nancy Sheehan is Dean Emeriti at the University of British Columbia, having served 13 years as Dean of the Faculty of Education. Professor Sheehan came to UBC from the University of Calgary in 1987 as the first women Dean and the first woman in the senior administration at UBC. Her area of research is the History of Education with a specialization in Western Canada, women's organizations and teacher education. During her time as Dean she was a member of a number of boards, agencies and associations. Her longest tenure (11 years) was on the Council of the BC College of Teachers, which is the certification and discipline body for teachers in BC. She has also served on the boards of the Canadian Education Association, the Canadian Society of the Study of Education and Crofton House School for Girls. Dr. Sheehan is currently on the board of Southridge School, located in Surrey, where she resides. Nancy was first appointed to the College of Occupational Therapists in January of 2001 and currently also serves as the public member on both the Registration Committee and Inquiry Committee, and was elected by fellow Board members to serve as Vice-Chair of the Board for 2002-2003.

Lynda M. Casey - New Westminster

Lynda M. Casey is a Sole Practitioner practicing under the name of Nordman, Casey & Co. in New Westminster. Her main area of practice is Conveyance, Real Estate transactions, Administrative Law, Mortgages, Wills and Estates and Corporate and Commercial law. Lynda has been involved in her profession and her community in a variety of ways. Professionally, she has volunteered on the Practice Advisory Panel for the Canadian Bar Association. She has also been a member and Past President of the SRS Vocational Services Society where she and other board members are responsible for managing and administering an annual budget of \$3 million. Lynda's other activities include the Scott Road Business Association, fundraising for the White Rock Amateur Theater, volunteering for Skate Canada and for the United Way Community Awareness Events. Lynda completed three years at

Simon Fraser University towards her BA in History and is a graduate of the University of Victoria with her Bachelor of Law. She is a member of the Law Society of British Columbia and the Canadian Bar Association. Lynda was appointed to the Board in October 2002 and also serves as the public member on the Client Relations Committee.

Mary O'Callaghan - Vancouver

Mary O'Callaghan is a Senior Principal with KPMG's Risk and Advisory Services practice in Vancouver. She is a Certified Management Consultant and her area of practice is business improvement, including strategy, governance, process improvement and organization development. Mary's previous business experience includes the position of Manager of Communications for BC Hydro's Customer Services Division, as well as working with the Federal Business Development Bank and General Motors of Canada. Mary has also been a member of a Vancouver YWCA Committee, as well as President of the Vancouver College Parents Association. Mary is a graduate of the University of British Columbia with Bachelor of Science and Master of Business Administration degrees. She is a member of the Canadian Association of Management Consultants. Mary was appointed to the Board in October 2002 and also serves as the public member on College's Quality Assurance Committee.

OT Board Members (elected by registrants)

Angenita Gerbracht - Prince Rupert

Angenita Gerbracht has been practicing in the northwest for the past sixteen years, utilizing a broad base of OT skills, in a variety of healthcare settings. Practicing in a rural area has given her opportunities to be involved in a variety of projects and committees that reflect her commitment to the excellence of occupational therapy. Presently she is a member of the Northern Health Authority - NWSD Rehabilitation Advisory Committee and a member of the NWSD Education Committee. She welcomes the opportunity to bring her experience to the COTBC board. In addition to her role as elected Board member, Angenita also serves as Chair of the College's Quality Assurance Committee and was elected to assume the role of Chair of the Board by her fellow Board members for 2003-2004.

Sandra Bressler - Richmond

Sandra Bressler is the Director of Therapy (Occupational therapy, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Engineering and also the Acting Administrator, Communication Development/ Audiology and Speech Language Pathology at the Children's and Women's Health Centre of British Columbia. Sandra also is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the School of Rehabilitation Sciences, University of British Columbia. Sandra has participated in many interagency and provincial government task forces, committees and boards. She has participated actively in CAOT since 1990, as a Board member for British Columbia, Treasurer, President-Elect and President and has held volunteer positions in BSCOT and COTF. Most recently, Sandra has taken on the role of President of the Canadian Occupational Therapy Foundation (COTF) as of October 1, 2003. Sandra was elected during the very first College election, also serves as the elected Board member on the Inquiry Committee, and is nearing completion of her term on the Board which expires on January 31, 2004.

Nancy Scullion - Kamloops

Nancy Scullion graduated from the University of Toronto in 1980 and has worked in a variety of clinical settings including paediatrics, neonatal care, and homecare. She has also worked as a Manager of Occupational Therapy in acute care, and as Rehabilitation Manager in long term care. As an Associate Clinical Professor at the University of Alberta, Nancy taught undergraduate courses in burns and hand injuries. She relocated to Kamloops from the USA and is currently in private practice. Nancy's strong clinical and public relation skills, and her experience as Chairperson of the Standards of Practice Committee for AAROT, enable her to be a strong advocate for the practice of occupational therapy. Nancy's is nearing completion of her two year term on the Board which expires on January 31, 2004. During her term on the Board, Nancy served on the Registration Committee and is currently the elected Board member on the Discipline Committee.

Risa Greenwood - Penticton

Risa Greenwood has been the Occupational Therapy Clinical Practice Leader at Penticton Regional Hospital for four years. Since her graduation from UBC, her 12 years of experience have included clinical specialty in acute spinal cord injury (five years), private practice (three years) and community locums in isolated rural environments. Highlights of Risa's continuing

education include courses in ethics and justice (while on COTBC's Quality Assurance Committee) and a healthcare-specific leadership program. She is passionate about excellence in occupational therapy practice and dedicated to the continuing and essential role of OT in Canadian Healthcare. Prior to her election to the Board, Risa was a member of the College's Quality Assurance Committee and was elected to the Board for the term February 1, 2003 - January 31, 2005. Risa also serves as a member of the Continuing Competence Committee.

Jill Rihela - Surrey

Jill Rihela has been an occupational therapist in BC for 27 years and has worked in acute care, rehabilitation and extended care settings. Currently, Jill manages the Departments of Occupational, Recreation and Respiratory Therapy at the Royal Columbian Hospital. Following her personal commitment to life long learning, Jill completed her Masters degree in Business Administration in 2001. She is also committed to active professional participation. Jill has served as Vice-President, President and Fraser Valley board member of BCSOT, as chairperson of the BC Directors of Occupational Therapy group, and since 1998, as Clinical Associate Professor at the UBC School of Rehabilitation Sciences. Jill was elected to the Board for the term February 1 - 2003 - January 31, 2005 and also serves as the elected Board member on the Registration Committee.

Jan Gauthier - Surrey

Jan's 25 year work history in BC has spanned many occupational therapy practice areas in the Lower Mainland and in northern BC. Her professional commitments have been at local, provincial and national levels. Jan's current position is Rehabilitation Consultant with Vancouver Community Health Services, which provides services for citizens living in their homes and community settings. She recently acted for a 1-1/2 year term as the Interim Division Head of the Occupational Therapy program at UBC. She has a current appointment as Clinical Associate Professor in the School of Rehabilitation Sciences at UBC. Jan was appointed by the Minister of Health to the inaugural board of the College and was elected to continue her role as Board member. Jan has seen the College develop from its beginning and continues in an elected Board member role until January 31, 2005. Jan also serves as Chair of the College's Client Relations Committee.

Upcoming COTBC Information Sessions

In recent years, the college has provided information sessions upon request from OT's. To date the majority of these sessions have been in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland, however these sessions can be held in communities across the province, and are available upon request. If you would like an info session in your community, please contact the college at 250-386-8622 or email us at info@cotbc.org

Essential Competencies Performance Indicators Project

In December 2000, the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations or ACOTRO published the Essential Competencies for Occupational Therapy Practice in Canada. The COTBC adopted the competencies in January 2001 as the core "standards" document describing professional competencies required for safe, effective and acceptable occupational therapy practice in British Columbia. The competencies, prepared and validated nationally, describe statements of the necessary or "essential" generic knowledge, skill, behaviour and judgement required to practice the profession.

In April 2002 ACOTRO embarked on a project to develop performance indicators for the essential competencies statements. Along with COTBC, four other provincial partners supported the project. All provinces participated in all aspects of the development and validation process with in-kind resources. This collaborative effort resulted in a nationally validated, professionally sound document.

The performance indicators help to further define the expected behaviour or performance of the

occupational therapist. A performance indicator is defined as a "specific behaviour indicator of the enabling skills, knowledge or attitudes necessary to demonstrate an essential competency" (ACOTRO, 2003). This work builds on the platform established with the Essential Competencies of Practice for Occupational Therapists in Canada. It is upon this platform which the College's entry or re-entry to practice review, continuing competence, client relations and other quality assurance programs will be based.

The document was signed off by ACOTRO members in June 2003 and will be presented to the College Board in fall 2003.

The creation of the Essential Competencies Performance Indicators document is a credit to the strong relationships within ACOTRO as well as the relationships between ACOTRO and other outside organizations, such as the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) and the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs (ACOTUP).

We Want to Hear from You!

Here at the COTBC, we're committed to communicating regularly with our registrants, and consulting with you as our programs are developed.

We also want to hear from you! Please call, email, visit our website or fax us with any questions you may have, or topics you'd like to hear more about in future issues.



How to reach us

COTBC staff:

Kathy Corbett, Registrar

Jill Langridge, Executive Assistant

Darlene Hay, Receptionist and Office Assistant

Telephone: 250-386-6822

or toll free in BC 1-866-386-6822

Fax: 250-383-4144

Email: info@cotbc.org

or for registration questions: registration@cotbc.org

Web: www.cotbc.org

Address Changes: Let us Know!

Keeping all your contact information up to date is a critical component of registration.

It is your responsibility to ensure your contact information is accurate and current. Up to date contact information ensures College mailings are received in a timely manner. Also, COTBC is required under the Health Professions Act to maintain a public register. Information on the status of your registration is accessible to the public by contacting the College. The Act mandates that name, registration status and address be accessible on the public register.

The College provides the business address when requests for information are received. Should you be self-employed, your business address may not be provided if it is the same as your personal address.

To update your registrant file, please provide the information in writing by mail, fax or a quick email message to registration@cotbc.org