

## **Joint Planning Session to create the vision for Occupational Therapy in BC**

On October 22, BCSOT hosted a session that brought together four organizations that have the world of Occupational Therapy in British Columbia at their heart – BCSOT, CAOT, COTBC, and UBC. Also represented at the session was the Ministry of Health as well as OT's from both public and private practice. Helen Lingham, an external facilitator, led the group through a range of exercises and discussions to achieve the outcome of a common vision and strategic direction for the next two years.

The purpose of the session was tri-fold:

- To explore current trends and impacts which affect the world of OT and develop a common understanding of current reality;
- To generate a collective vision for OT in the province;
- To create some strategic directions that could be shared by the different organizations and fulfill upon the vision.

Participants introduced themselves in the room, sharing the particular lens they bring to OT, as well as their intentions and hopes for this day.

In exploring current reality, presentations (included as attachments) were made by:

- Judy Thompson, Director Allied Health Human Resources with Ministry of Health,
- Brenda Loveridge, Special Advisor, Allied Health Professions, Faculty of Medicine, UBC and
- Dori Van Stolk, Senior Leader Clinical Education, Foundational Leadership Program Coordinator and Coach, Children & Women's Health Centre.

These presentations highlighted current issues and concerns for MOH as well as the movement to Inter-professional Practice and Integrated Health.

Based upon the key messages heard in these presentations and their own knowledge, participants then created a joint mindmap of current trends and influences on Occupational Therapy in British Columbia. These would form the foundation to build upon for future strategic directions.

Work was done in small, mixed groups to generate a vision statement of the possibility for OT in BC. Several iterations of the vision were created, including:

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- We are a vibrant, collaborative community known for leading in enabling meaningful participation in everyday life.
- Occupational therapists are passionately engaged in their profession; trusted to influence the wellbeing of British Columbians.
- We are a passionately engaged, collaborative community trusted to influence the wellbeing, and enable the meaningful participation in everyday life, of British Columbians.

Standing now in the space between the awareness of current reality and the vision of what was possible, new mixed groups then brainstormed a number of possible strategic actions, designed to move OT in BC from its current state toward the vision. Participants picked a strategy to champion and participated in a ranking process to pull out the most powerful strategies for action.

The following strategies emerged as ones the group considered the most likely to create the new future for OT in BC:

1. To address resourcing issues of Occupational Therapist by increasing the number of seats at UBC
  - *a joint initiative between BCSOT, CAOT, COTBC and UBC currently being addressed by the Workforce Collaborative*
2. To enhance the capacity of Occupational Therapists to influence government and public policy through the development of a comprehensive lobbying strategy.
  - *a joint initiative between CAOT and BCSOT currently being addressed by the Workforce Collaborative*
3. To provide a range of relevant and desired continuing educational opportunities for the Occupational Therapists of British Columbia. To develop and implement a mentoring process for new graduates of the Occupational Therapy program.
  - *a joint initiative between BCSOT, COTBC and UBC*
4. To ensure that the impact of Occupational Therapy is acknowledged and recognized at all levels by collecting and analyzing accurate and complete data.
  - *a joint initiative between BCSOT, CAOT, UBC and COTBC currently being addressed by the Workforce Collaborative*

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5. To strongly promote membership in BCSOT such that BCSOT is seen as a valued and supportive organization to the Occupational Therapists in BC. The intention is to substantially increase membership in BCSOT.
  - *a joint initiative between BCSOT and COTBC (if appropriate)*
6. To further enhance the credibility and positive impact of OT as an intervention by developing a process to track client outcomes.
  - *a joint venture between BCSOT, UBC and COTBC*
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7. To further the professional identity of Occupational Therapy in B.C. by building pride and engagement with occupational therapists.
  - *a joint venture between BCSOT, COTBC, CAOT and UBC*
8. To further our work with the Integrated Health Network and to enhance relationships with General Practitioners.
  - *A joint venture between BCSOT, COTBC and UBC*

### Next steps:

- 1, 2 and 4 - Workforce Capacity Planning Collaborative is currently working on;
- 6 and 8 to be added to agenda for next WCPC meeting – December 15, 2009;
- Liability information – collaboration between BCSOT, CAOT and COTBC;
- 7, 5 and 3 - February teleconference to explore continuing education opportunities and review status;
- Identify ways to engage OTs in this work; get group together to build collaborative tool – survey/communicate. To be reviewed at the end of January.

This was the first time that these groups had come together to create something collective with respect to the future of OT. While each organization maintains its own individual identity and a distinct mandate, it was recognized that there are many places where working together would create a more powerful outcome for OT.

Note: To further engagement with the OT community, BCSOT presented the strategic directions at the Annual General Meeting on October 24, attended by approximately 100 OTs from the province. Attendees were invited to give feedback and post their comments on each of the themes.

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The strategic themes will be further developed by the BCSOT Board as they define the new strategic goals and directions.