

August 2016

Dear Colleagues,

It’s hard to believe that on October 1, 2016 CAOT-BC will be celebrating its fifth birthday. We have come a long way and have a lot to celebrate and even more to look forward to.

Firstly, we must start by thanking all of our members for their continued support. Our association’s strength and continued growth stems from the tremendous work, dedication and tireless efforts of many volunteers and staff. We couldn’t do it without each and every one of them.

This past year was very productive for CAOT-BC with focused efforts and resources on key areas including- public awareness, promotion and representation of the profession and building member services.

Working with The Pace Group, a three phase public awareness campaign was fully implemented including development of a key message, engagement with government and media and finally, an occupational therapy day held at the BC legislature on May 12, 2016. Over the course of this campaign, CAOT-BC met directly with 4 Ministries, 40 MLAs and an additional 10 MLA representatives. In addition, CAOT-BC has made presentations to the Premier’s Office, Seniors Advocate, MP Mark Warawa, Ministry of Advanced Education, Minister of Children and Family Development, Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation, Ministry of Health and most recently, the Select Standing Committee on Health. CAOT-BC will build on key learnings from these activities and continue government relations efforts with the goals of raising awareness about the unique contributions of our profession to health and well-being and ensuring that British Columbians have access to occupational therapy when they need it.

This past year we have enhanced BC member services and resources even further. Most notably, CAOT-BC joined the electronic health library of BC (e-HL*bc* ). This means that our network has access to evidence at their fingertips—access to over 12 million bibliographic citations and abstracts for 6,148 journals and 5,100 full text journals. We have also added other exclusive benefits including discounted tickets to sporting events (Vancouver Whitecaps, Vancouver Giants), Playland and the PNE as well as Broadway Across Canada shows.

Another notable activity was the launch of *Talk to an OT* events during OT month 2015. These events paired volunteer occupational therapists with retail home medical equipment stores and pharmacies across the province to host in-store education clinics. Going forward, we will continue to build on this successful model to raise awareness about occupational therapy at the community level.

CAOT-BC also offers many other province-specific benefits including:

* Regional and practice-specific representation via the Advisory Committee
* CAOT-BC website and CAOT-BC blog
* BC-specific monthly newsletter (OTalk BC)
* ***Free*** access to twelve (12) special interest groups

Some of our activity highlights over the past year included:

* CAOT-BC team expansion with the addition of Sarah Slocombe as Service Coordinator
* Implementation of the CAOT-BC Public Awareness Campaign (including preparing a key message, engagement in media, public and government relations)
* Hosting two (2) CarFit training sessions and check-up events
* Publication of the CAOT-BC Private Practice Fee Survey (2015)
* Provision of three (3) grants to members presenting research via the CAOT-BC Research and Education Grant
* Announcement of the CAOT-BC Occupational Therapist of the Year award—Congratulations to Patricia Erlendson!
* Special interest group growth to twelve (12) practice areas--our newest network has a focus on Chronic Pain
* Hosting our 3rd UBC MOTII student fieldwork placement
* Hosting two (2) Networking & Education days
* Submitting a written and verbal response to the Ministry of Health policy papers and call invitation to present to the Select Standing Committee on Health
* CAOT-BC representation at over 40 events (consumer, inter-professional, intra-professional) either as an invited presenter, to host a promotional booth or both
* Participation in committees , task groups and other meetings including: BC Continuing Care Collaborative, Health Sciences Association, Driver Fitness Advisory Group (BC), BC OT Workforce Collaborative, Pediatric Occupational Therapy Council, OT Aboriginal Health Network, Shared Services BC, Alliance of Canadian Occupational Therapy Professional Associations and the BC Healthy Living Alliance

Looking forward to our next year, CAOT-BC will continue work diligently to represent the interests of occupational therapists, promote the profession and increase engagement with the BC occupational therapy community. Renewing or starting your CAOT-BC membership is worth it now more than ever. With access to professional development, group affinity programs, insurance coverage for your practice and member exclusives such as the Find an OT online directory and FREE WFOT membership, membership saves you money. Join over 1400 of your colleagues and gain access to the wealth of resources, support and opportunities offered by your professional association. Learn more at [www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca) or email caotbc@caot.ca.

We must continue to work hard to raise the profile of the profession so that it is understood that occupational therapy is vital to the healthcare system. This task is not an easy one, but working together as a team I am confident that we can achieve our vision that OT is valued and accessible across the province.

Sincerely,

Giovanna Boniface, OT, CCLCP

Managing Director of CAOT-BC /Directrice de l'ACE-CB

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists / Association Canadienne des Ergothérapeutes