



information

# update

College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario

Volume 5, Number 3

August 1999

## Annual Meeting and Newsletter

### Celebrate College's Five Year Milestone!

CHRISTINE JAMES, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1999 has been a very significant year in the world of occupational therapy regulation. The launching of our Quality Assurance Program, the holding of road shows throughout the province, the issuing of the Guiding Principles of Practice, and our forthcoming new bylaws are just a few of the events that have transpired this year. What truly makes 1999 special, however, is that it marks the fifth anniversary of the implementation of the

*Regulated Health Professions Act* – a piece of legislation that significantly advanced public protection and professional accountability for Ontario's health care professionals. The RHPA introduced self-regulation to the profession of occupational therapy, and our fifth anniversary provides us with an excellent opportunity to reflect on how this has influenced the evolution of our profession.

This special fifth anniversary edition of *Information Update* allows those who have shaped and directly influenced the profession to speak in their own voices. We have asked contributors from government, the provincial association, a pre-RHPA College, and College registrants, to reflect on their impressions of the RHPA in terms of its impact on health

care, public protection, and the profession of occupational therapy. Our President reflects back on the early days of the Council, and measures our performance against the vision established for the College in those early days. Our Registrar explores various aspects of the RHPA and what makes it unique and important for Ontario.

Our fifth anniversary celebration is also carried through the 1999 Annual Report, a copy of which accompanies this newsletter. The joint message from the President and Registrar, in particular, looks at some of the College's many accomplishments worthy of celebration. The Annual Report is also an opportunity to recognize the Council members, non-Council Committee members, staff

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## 1999 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday, October 26, 1999  
Howard Johnson Confederation Place Hotel  
237 Ontario Street, Kingston, Ontario.

- 6:30 Annual General Meeting
- 7:00 Guest Speaker: Alan R. Burrows
- 7:30 Registrant Question & Answer forum with College panel
- 8:00 Reception

To confirm your attendance, please RSVP to Britt Bengtsson, 1-800-890-6570 ext. 0, by Wednesday, October 20.

## Assemblée générale annuelle 1999

Le mardi 26 octobre 1999  
Howard Johnson Confederation Place Hotel  
237, rue Ontario, Kingston (Ontario)

- 18 h 30 Assemblée générale annuelle
- 19 h Conférencière invitée : Alan R. Burrows
- 19 h 30 Forum de questions et réponses des personnes inscrites avec un panel de l'Ordre
- 20 h Réception

Veuillez confirmer votre présence auprès de Britt Bengtsson, au 1-800-890-6570, poste 0, d'ici au mercredi 20 octobre.

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## Measuring our Accomplishments A Reflection on our Vision for the College

ON THE OCCASION OF OUR FIFTH ANNIVERSARY, I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO REFLECT UPON THE EARLY COUNCIL'S VISION FOR THE COLLEGE. What were our hopes and dreams? Were they very different from those we have today? And how have we fared?

Our beginnings were very humble, but we dared to take on the daunting tasks before us, perhaps out of naïveté or perhaps out of determination to reach the lofty goals we had set for ourselves. The original ten transitional Council members, later expanded to seventeen in December 1994, established a set of beliefs that has steered us through our journey these past years. These beliefs have withstood the test of time and are worth reiterating.

*We believe that self-regulation in the public interest is best served when the Council and College demonstrate:*

- fairness and equality in business interactions with the public and with registrants,
- accountability for decisions and actions,
- respect for both public and professional perspectives,
- an open, honest communication process,
- accessibility to services provided, and
- efficiency of business practice.

We set high standards for ourselves. And with these standards in mind, we set broad, chal-

lenging goals for the College even before we articulated them into our strategic plan. Writing about our goals in terms of the Council and its stakeholders will hopefully convey our early hopes and dreams.

With the Council, we strove for members to be equal participants, each bringing important perspectives to the Council table. Council members trusted each other to make recommendations based on sound background information, and to make decisions in the best interest of the public while being fair to occupational therapists practising, or seeking to practise, in the Province of Ontario.

With the public, we strove to promote and protect the public interest by being helpful, responsive, fair, and accessible while establishing standards of practice, ethics, regulations, guidelines and programs that would assist occupational therapists to practise safely and ethically.

With registrants, our goal was to help OTs understand the role of the College versus the professional associations, to seek their involvement and participation in College activities and decisions, and to be perceived and used as a resource to enhance their practice, not as a threat to restrict their practice.

With other regulatory bodies, our goal was

to develop our partnerships with the individual Colleges and the collective organizations so as to generate practices and responses for the benefit of the public and our registrants.

With other occupational therapy associations and the university programs, we strove to develop mutual recognition of each group's contributions and to collaborate within appropriate parameters.

With the government, our goal was to establish the College as an significant player whose input was sought on important issues that impacted the public's access to safe and ethical occupational therapy practice.

And finally, with the College staff, our goal was to hire a Registrar, who, along with the other staff, could represent the College in a professional, articulate, and sensitive manner to the rest of its stakeholders, demonstrating the same beliefs and behaviours expected of Council.

How have we fared? I will leave that to the readers to judge. I personally feel we have achieved much, and have a lot to celebrate.



Joy Sommerfreund

## Évaluation de nos réalisations réflexions sur la vision antérieure de l'Ordre

À L'AUBE DE NOTRE CINQUIÈME ANNIVERSAIRE, ON M'A DEMANDÉ DE RÉFLÉCHIR À LA VISION DE L'ORDRE QU'AVAIT EUE LE CONSEIL AU DÉBUT. Quels étaient nos espoirs et nos rêves? Étaient-ils très différents de ceux que nous avons aujourd'hui? Et à quel point les avons-nous réalisés?

Nos débuts étaient des plus humbles. Pourtant, nous avons eu le courage de prendre en main les tâches intimidantes qui s'étaient devant nous, peut-être par naïveté, peut-être par résolution de réaliser les objectifs grandioses que nous nous étions donnés. Les 10 premiers membres du Conseil de transition, dont le nombre a augmenté à 17 en décembre 1994, ont établi un ensemble de croyances qui nous ont guidés le long de notre parcours ces quelques dernières années. Ces croyances ont résisté à la désuétude et valent la peine d'être répétées.

*Nous croyons que l'autoréglementation au nom du bien public est réalisée au plus haut point lorsque le Conseil et l'Ordre démontrent :*

- l'équité et l'égalité dans leurs interactions d'affaires avec le public et les personnes inscrites,
- la responsabilisation en matière de prise de décisions et d'actions,
- le respect des points de vue du public autant que des professionnels,
- un processus de communication ouvert et honnête,
- l'accès aux services fournis, et
- l'efficacité de l'exercice professionnel.

Nous nous sommes résolus à chercher l'excellence et,

compte tenu de ce niveau d'excellence, nous avons établi des objectifs étendus qui se sont avérés tout un défi pour l'Ordre même avant de les avoir formulés dans le cadre de notre plan stratégique. En exprimant par écrit ces objectifs du point de vue du conseil et de ses intervenants, nous comptons communiquer les espoirs et les rêves de nos débuts.

Au sein du Conseil, nous avons cherché à faire des membres des participants sur un pied d'égalité, chacun apportant d'importants points de vue à la table du Conseil. Les membres du Conseil se sont fiés les uns aux autres lorsqu'il s'agissait de faire des recommandations selon des renseignements de fond vérifiables et de prendre des décisions selon l'intérêt public tout en étant équitables envers les ergothérapeutes exerçant, ou cherchant à exercer, la profession dans la province de l'Ontario.

En ce qui concerne le public, nous avons cherché à promouvoir et protéger l'intérêt public en étant serviables, attentifs, équitables et accessibles, tout en établissant des normes de pratique, une déontologie, une réglementation, des lignes directrices et des programmes qui permettraient aux ergothérapeutes d'exercer leur profession de façon sécuritaire et morale.

Du côté des personnes inscrites, notre objectif a été d'aider les ergothérapeutes à comprendre le rôle de l'Ordre par comparaison au rôle des associations professionnelles; de solliciter leur implication dans les activités et la prise de décisions de l'Ordre, et leur participation à celles-ci; et d'être perçus, autant qu'utilisés,

comme ressource qui ajouterait à l'exercice de leur profession, plutôt que de menacer de le restreindre.

Vis-à-vis des autres organismes de réglementation, notre objectif a été de développer nos partenariats avec les Ordres particuliers et les organismes collectifs de façon à générer des pratiques et des réactions qui profiteraient au public et aux personnes inscrites à notre Ordre.

Vis-à-vis des autres associations d'ergothérapeutes et des programmes universitaires, nous avons cherché à développer une reconnaissance réciproque des contributions de chaque groupe et collaborer avec eux dans le cadre des paramètres pertinents.

Vis-à-vis du gouvernement, notre objectif a été d'établir l'Ordre à titre de porte-parole important, dont les commentaires seraient recherchés en ce qui concerne les questions importantes qui auraient un impact sur l'accès du public à l'exercice sécuritaire et moral de l'ergothérapie.

Enfin, en ce qui concerne le personnel de l'Ordre même, notre objectif a été d'embaucher une Registratrice qui, tout comme les autres membres du personnel, pourrait représenter l'Ordre de façon professionnelle, bien exprimée et avec sensibilité auprès de ses autres intervenants, en faisant preuve des mêmes croyances et comportements qu'on attendait du Conseil.

À quel point avons-nous réalisé nos objectifs? Je m'en remets au jugement des lecteurs. Personnellement, je crois que nous avons bien des raisons de célébrer.

## Message de la Présidente

## Annual Meeting and Newsletter

# Celebrate College's Five Year Milestone!

(Continued from front page)

and affiliates who make the work of the College possible.

Celebration activities will culminate with our October 26 Annual General Meeting, to which all registrants and members of the public are warmly invited. This year, the meeting will be held in Kingston, Ontario. We are very pleased to have Mr. Alan R. Burrows as guest speaker. Alan was director of the Professional Relations Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Health from 1988 until his recent early retirement in 1999. In this role, his primary responsibility was to develop and implement the

*Regulated Health Professions Act*. Alan has represented Ontario nationally and internationally on such topics as the need for reform of professional regulatory laws, the impact of trade agreements on professional mobility, prevention of the sexual abuse of patients, and quality assurance. We look forward to hearing Alan's insights on our governing legislation and its impact on Ontario's health care system. Alan's speech will be followed by a forum at which guests are invited to ask questions of staff and Council members regarding College initiatives and activities. A wine and cheese networking

reception, which will also feature exhibits highlighting College accomplishments and activities will conclude the evening (see AGM schedule for further details on time and location).

Finally, the College's Council and staff wish to extend warm congratulations to Ontario's occupational therapists. Self-regulation involves challenges, as well as opportunities, and Ontario's OTs have admirably risen to these challenges. Our celebration is your celebration, and we invite you to join us in recognizing this significant milestone.

## L'Assemblée générale annuelle et le bulletin célèbrent le grand événement qu'est le cinquième anniversaire de l'Ordre!

L'ANNÉE 1999 S'EST AVÉRÉE TRÈS IMPORTANTE EN MATIÈRE DE RÉGLEMENTATION DE L'ERGOTHÉRAPIE. Le lancement de notre programme d'assurance de la qualité, nos tournées de présentations à travers la province, l'émission des Principes directeurs d'exercice de la profession et les nouveaux règlements que nous aurons sous peu ne sont que quelques-uns des événements qui se sont passés cette année. Ce qui rend l'année 1999 tout à fait spéciale, cependant, c'est la célébration du cinquième anniversaire de l'entrée en vigueur de la *Loi sur les professions de la santé réglementées* – une loi qui a beaucoup avancé la protection du public et la responsabilisation des professionnels de la santé en Ontario. La *Loi* a initié l'autoréglementation de la profession d'ergothérapeute et notre cinquième anniversaire nous offre une excellente occasion de réfléchir à la façon dont ceci a influencé l'évolution de notre profession.

Cette édition spéciale de cinquième anniversaire de *Information Update* permet à ceux et celles qui ont directement influencé la profession de parler de leur propre voix. Nous avons demandé à des collaborateurs du gouvernement, de l'association provinciale et d'un Ordre antérieur à la promulgation de la *Loi sur les professions de la santé réglementées*, ainsi qu'aux personnes inscrites à l'Ordre, de réfléchir à leurs impressions de la *Loi*, en ce qui concerne l'impact de cette dernière sur les soins de santé, la protection du public et la profession d'ergothérapeute. Notre Présidente

évoque les premiers jours du Conseil et compare notre rendement à la vision établie pour l'Ordre pendant ces premiers jours. Notre Registraire explore différents aspects de la *Loi* et ce qui rend cette dernière unique et importante pour l'Ontario.

La célébration de notre cinquième anniversaire fait également partie de notre rapport annuel de 1999, dont vous trouverez une copie ci-jointe. En particulier, le message conjoint de la Présidente et de la Registratrice jette un coup d'œil sur certaines des multiples réalisations de l'Ordre qui méritent d'être célébrées. Le rapport annuel nous donne également l'occasion de reconnaître les membres du Conseil, les membres de comités qui ne sont pas membres du Conseil et le personnel et les associés qui rendent possible le travail de l'Ordre.

Les activités de célébration se termineront par notre Assemblée générale annuelle du 26 octobre, à laquelle sont invités chaleureusement toutes les personnes inscrites et les membres du public. Cette année, l'AGA aura lieu à Kingston, Ontario. Suite à la brève Assemblée générale annuelle du Conseil, il y aura un forum au cours duquel on les invités auront l'occasion de poser des questions au personnel et aux membres du Conseil concernant les initiatives et les activités de l'Ordre. Suite au forum, nous sommes très heureux de compter sur la présence de Monsieur Alan R. Burrows en tant que conférencier. Alan a rempli les fonctions de directeur de la

Direction des relations professionnelles du ministère de la Santé de 1988 jusqu'à sa retraite anticipée, en 1999. Parmi ses principales responsabilités, notons la conception et la mise en application de la *Loi sur les professions de la santé réglementées*. Alan a également représenté l'Ontario à l'échelle nationale et internationale en ce qui a trait au besoin de réformer les lois de réglementation des professions, à l'impact des accords commerciaux sur la mobilité des professionnels, à la prévention des agressions sexuelles des patients et à l'assurance de la qualité. Il nous fera grand plaisir d'entendre ce qu'Alan a à dire concernant la législation de réglementation et concernant son impact sur le système de la santé de l'Ontario. Suite au discours de Mme Caplan, il y aura un vin et fromage pour le réseautage, à l'occasion duquel on présentera une exposition mettant en vedette les réalisations et activités de l'Ordre (consultez l'horaire pour plus de détails sur l'heure et l'emplacement).

Enfin, le Conseil et le personnel de l'Ordre souhaitent féliciter chaleureusement les ergothérapeutes de l'Ontario. L'autoréglementation présente des défis ainsi que des occasions – et les ergothérapeutes de l'Ontario ont relevé ces défis de façon admirable. Notre célébration est la vôtre et nous vous invitons à vous joindre à nous en reconnaissant cet événement marquant de notre histoire.

# Colouring Outside the Lines: *The Design and Dimensions of the RHPA*

JAN ROBINSON, REGISTRAR

THE *REGULATED HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACT* WAS IN THE MAKING FOR OVER TEN YEARS. It began under the guidance of Alan Schwartz and the Liberal government and traversed all three major political parties in its journey to acclamation on December 31, 1993. The process included broad consultation with the public and a wide array of regulated and unregulated health disciplines, including occupational therapy. The final product was also greatly influenced by a historical and controversial study on sexual abuse between doctors and patients. The result was a blending of existing regulatory models worldwide with a twist of unique features. It was a mandate so bold that it won international awards and recognition in its attempt to better serve the public interest.

The self-regulatory framework of the RHPA is based on the registration model. Three primary models of regulation exist internationally: *licensure, certification and registration*.

Licensure is the most specific method, in that the law prohibits an unlicensed individual from practising the specific scope assigned to the profession and from use of the designated title. Registration and certification, however, do not prohibit the practise of an unregistered practitioner but do restrict the use of title. For both registration and certification, scope of practice is usually defined, and entry-level competency requirements are clear. Certification usually also involves examination. In Ontario, our system is most usually referred to as a registration model, however, as many Colleges require examination and some issue certificates of registration, certification would also be a correct reference.

The RHPA contains several provisions that extend beyond the expected authorities of a regulatory organization. In addition to registration, complaints & discipline, and protected title, Ontario's model includes a controlled act scheme; a fitness to practise process that is separate and distinct from disciplinary measures; sexual abuse prevention; and mandatory quality assurance program requirements. These newer provisions are now shaping statutory developments in several other provinces and countries.

Whether a new college or one steeped in tradition, the advent of these new elements to professional regulation created a tremendous amount of dialogue and debate. Issues related to the interpretation and delegation of controlled acts, for example, have received broad discussion. New regulations and guidelines have been proposed and, in many cases, implemented. Educational activities for the public and College registrants have increasingly occurred. Despite the mandate now being into its sixth year, the



detailed development of many of these new features has taken time. Our College, for example, has just begun operationalizing the Quality Assurance Program. Solid information on the impact and outcome is still in the future.

One final significant dimension of the RHPA is its evaluation requirements. Coupled with our five-year celebration is our participation in a five-year review by the Ministry of Health. This process of evaluation supports and mirrors a Quality Assurance philosophy with a larger meta-analysis of the system as a whole, combined with a demonstration of ongoing effectiveness in protecting the public interest. The outcomes of this 5-year review of the RHPA will speak in particular to the legislation's unique elements.

Unique design, bold components, and broad authority painted an early picture of a self-regulatory scheme which would be challenging, yet flexible. To date, its complexities have been met with eagerness and, at times, frustration, but always with the greatest respect for protecting the public. As it continues to evolve, the changing colour and shape of this interesting legislation will be important to monitor.

## Enclosures

The following materials are included with this edition of *Information Update*:

- Promoting Quality Practice: PREP Module 1 Answers and Rationale: Store with your PREP Module.
- Draft Scope of Practice Discussion Paper: Your comments on this important document are requested by November 1, 1999. Store at Tab 4 of your Resource Binder.
- 1999 Annual Report / Rapport annuel: Store at Tab 8 of your Resource Binder.

## A registrant perspective: What has regulation meant to me?

Jacqueline McGarry  
O.T. ■

I WAS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE BEFORE THE COLLEGE EXISTED AS IT IS NOW.

Although the development of a voluntary college was a benefit, it did not hold the same weight as a College that is in existence because of the passage of a government Act, and whose members can be held accountable under the law.

Whether negotiating a contract with a business client or reviewing a consent with



Jacqueline McGarry

a clinical client, it is reassuring for the client to be told that if they are not satisfied with my services or have any complaint about my practice, they may phone the Registrar of the College. Most clients seem surprised by this information but it has the advantage of allowing the client to feel more in

control and powerful – a situation which clinical clients rarely feel after injury, accident and medical or surgical interventions.

A second benefit for me has occurred when negotiating contract fees. It appears now that we are a regulated profession, our credibility has increased and has provided an easier acceptance of fee schedules and restrictions requested by therapists during these negotiations. In some cases, the College provides the reason for saying no and because this refusal comes from the regulations of the College, it is accepted more readily and without question.

Generally, it gives more power to all negotiations and they become easier.

## Provincial association perspective: The benefits of regulation in challenging times

Christie Brenchley, O.T.  
Executive Director  
OSOT ■

PROCLAMATION OF THE REGULATED HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACT AND THE CREATION OF THE COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS OF ONTARIO MARKED THE REALISATION OF A GOAL THAT MEMBERS OF THE ONTARIO SOCIETY OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS HAD WORKED

TOWARDS FOR OVER 25 YEARS. This goal has been fuelled by the desire to achieve legal recognition of the profession's distinct body of knowledge and contribution to the health system, to protect the profession's title and scope of practice and to demonstrate and live the commitments of accountability to the public we serve.

Five years later, has regulated status been all that the profession anticipated? Benefits have been witnessed repeatedly in provincial public policy evolution. OTs now have a visibility, previously unattainable, in policy/regulations that provide definition for how health services are delivered in the province, e.g.; long term care services, the auto insurance sector, capacity assessment and disability determination.

Some OTs feel strongly that the costs of reg-



Christie Brenchley

ulation are high and obscure the benefits. College registration fees, demands of the Quality Assurance Program, and complaints investigations processes have indeed accosted the professional, unfortunately at a time when employment sectors are reeling with change and job demands have increased while job security decreased. It is

argued that regulation has cost individuals the ability to support their professional associations and that attention to regulatory standards and requirements is burdensome. Clearly, the impact of regulation has been borne by the profession, however, this is what the profession argued it could do, wanted to do and committed to do to achieve regulatory status.

OSOT, the provincial professional association, hopes that these pains are simply growing pains. Nothing new is easy. There *is* a positive side to these demands on the profession including: tangible standards of practice and guidelines, developed by occupational therapists, which provide direction and self-measure to practice; the growing dialogue amongst colleagues about practice issues (questioning and challenging); the increasing responsibility articulated by thera-

pists to regulatory standards; and shifting attitudes about how we see ourselves as consciously competent professionals. These are important benefits at a time when practise is ever more challenged by informed consumers, demand for evidence of efficacy, public health system reform and private sector evolution and competition. Our title is protected, but our practise is not!

OSOT has also experienced change and challenge related to the College's birth. Providing a common voice for members is not a new role but its application in advocacy/relationship to another OT organization with a mandate to protect the public, not the professional is unique. OSOT has enjoyed a collegial, respectful relationship with the College and values the leadership contribution of a different flavour that it brings to the profession. We have watched our regulatory sister evolve to be an organization of which the profession can be truly proud. Beyond our profession, *our* College is recognized for its leadership and profile in regulatory circles. The pioneering work the College staff and councils have assumed for and with the profession has brought the 25-year dreams of Ontario occupational therapists to life. Congratulations to the College on your 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

## A registrant perspective: Regulation means accountability

Karen Beer  
O.T. ■

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ACCOUNTABLE TO THEIR OWN ETHICS IN ENSURING SAFE AND EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO THEIR CLIENTS. Now there is a higher level of accountability that includes review and judgement of their decision-making, which can have a direct influence on their ongoing ability to practise.

Challenges exist for the individual practitioner:

- Understanding how the regulations translate into everyday practise,
- Ensuring ethical decisions are made with sound clinical judgement used in deter-

mining the reasonableness of client interventions,

- Committing to an excellence in clinical skills through continual upgrading and learning, and
- Balancing the needs of all stakeholders in the clients care (the client, the College, the payer, the employer).

I identify the following future challenges for the College:

- Establishment of regulations and programs consistent with the continual changing reality of OT practise,
- Maintain an awareness of external stakeholders and issues of conflict in the

provision of OT,

- Ensuring ongoing input and feedback from all registrants, and
- Keeping the playing field level by providing new information regarding daily practise issues to all registrants quickly and consistently.

With the ever-increasing profile of occupational therapy, it is my hope that regulation assists us in our efforts to demonstrate the true value of the profession.

## A fellow regulator's perspective: Thinking outside the box

Margaret Risk, R.N.  
Executive Director  
College of Nurses of Ontario ■

AS WE REACH THE FIVE-YEAR MARK OF RHPA, I REFLECT ON ITS REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS THAT STRETCHED OVER ELEVEN YEARS BEGINNING IN 1982. The complexity of the policy initiatives and multiple changes in government extended the process beyond anyone's expectations, but the high commitment to consultation with and among the professions and the public fostered the growth and development of constructive and collegial relationships that remain to this day.

Fundamental to the RHPA is the scope of practice model, which is innovative and remains unique. In its flexibility, and its



recognition of overlapping practice in a constantly changing environment, it has enabled response to changing practice demands, and increased opportunity for consumers in selecting the provider of their choice.

The inclusion of the legislated quality assurance requirement for all the regulatory colleges reflected a subtle change in emphasis from the individual practitioner to enhancing the overall quality of the profession's practice. The development of the QA programs has been resource intensive, complex, and challenging for all of us. The contribution of this initiative to the goal of increased public protection is still too early to evaluate but it

has definitely had an impact on practitioners' recognition of their personal professional accountability for quality practice.

The RHPA has encouraged us to think outside the box and to explore together new and exciting ways to meet our legislative mandate. Its goal of increased public protection has been realized in improvements in the procedural code and through more rigorous requirements for addressing such problems as client abuse.

It is fair to say that public accountability has been enhanced through greater transparency of activities and processes, but many challenges remain in involving the public more effectively as partners in improving and assuring quality of health professional practice in Ontario.

## A registrant perspective: Regulation – what does it mean?

Debra Cameron  
O.T. ■

THE PAST FIVE YEARS HAVE SEEN MANY CHANGES FOR BOTH THE PROFESSION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND INDIVIDUAL THERAPISTS IN ONTARIO. The inception of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario has resulted in both challenges and benefits. There is no doubt that for occupational therapists, the establishment of the College has meant increased demands on our time in terms of meeting the requirements of registration, the quality assurance program and of becoming self regulated

professionals. These demands have been counter-balanced, however, by many benefits which include the establishment of occupational therapy as a profession equal with other regulated healthcare professions. Our visibility as a profession has increased with the public, government ministries, other health care sectors, and various OT organizations. On a personal level, the implementation of self-regulation has encouraged me to examine my practice more closely and to become, I hope, a more

consciously-competent practitioner. I believe that the benefits of being a self-regulated profession are just beginning to be realized. My hope for the future is that the College will continue to foster open communication and interaction with its members and respond to feedback. This will allow the profession and its members to grow and develop and ensure the protection of the public desired by both the College and Ontario therapists.

## A government perspective: Equity underlies RHPA philosophy

Mary Lou Gignac, Coordinator  
Health Professions (1996-99)  
Ministry of Health ■

AT THIS IMPORTANT FIVE-YEAR MARK, I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE WITH YOU SOME OF MY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE *REGULATED HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACT* (RHPA).

The RHPA recognized the overlapping roles and competencies of health professionals, and the need for greater flexibility in how health professionals were being utilized. Since the implementation of the RHPA, we have in fact seen changes in who does what – especially in the areas of rehabilitation, nursing/personal care and alternative health care. Increasing pressure for cost-efficiency and



Mary Lou Gignac

consumer choice must be balanced against the need to protect the public. Regulators, employers and others will continue to be challenged to ensure changes are in the interest of the public.

Equity and equality are important principles underlying RHPA. Through the Act, the province established a common regulatory framework for the 23 health professions and 21 regulatory colleges. All colleges have the same mandate, accountability, regulatory authorities and procedural requirements.

The RHPA framework permits the Ministry of Health to set common regulatory policy – for instance, on conflict of interest and qual-

ity assurance. More importantly, because of the common regulatory framework, the public's understanding and trust of what it means to receive services from a regulated health professional will continue to deepen.

This common framework has also facilitated greater collegiality and collaboration among the regulatory colleges. In my view, this has greatly enhanced the system's response to health professional regulatory issues and the ability of the professions to influence legislative change and regulatory policy.

The Ministry of Health recognizes the accomplishments of the past five years of new colleges such as the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario. You have my best wishes for continued success.

## We are pleased to introduce the College's 1999-2000 Council Members



**Jennifer Cano**

I have been involved with both the Registration and Complaints Committees and numerous task forces over the last 5 years. Of current interest to me are the changes and developments in the global marketplace. These changes have interesting potential for influence on regulatory processes. I look forward to continuing to participate in the challenging work before the College.



**Keary Grace**

I am a public member and I have been on Council since August 1997. I have just completed my first year of law school and I work for the Ontario College of Teachers, so I am in the unique position of experiencing and understanding professional regulation from more than one perspective. I am continually impressed by the level of commitment, by both the College and its Registrants, to leadership and excellence in the profession of occupational therapy.



**Mervi Henttonen**

I am a public member, appointed to Council in January 1999. As director of the Lakehead Regional Conservation Authority in Thunder Bay, I am pleased to help bring a "Northern" perspective to the Council table, in addition to my contribution as a representative of the public. I bring considerable experience as a director on other boards, and look forward to applying this expertise as a member of the Registration and Fitness to Practise Committees.



**Ashok Jain**

I am a professional Council member and chair of the discipline committee since March 1998. I believe that OTs have a fundamental responsibility to their primary client. The College's recent initiative on QA is an excellent program to assist occupational therapists to become consciously competent.



**Claudia Maurice**

I am a professional member of Council, representing the Central East District. During my many years of involvement with the College, I have always believed that decisions must be based on a balance between protection of the public and professional interests. As a profession, we face challenging times, given the direction of health care reform in this province. I believe that the College is in a strong position to respond to this challenge.



**Irene Moore**

As a public member of the College for over four years, I have been privileged to participate in the exemplary teamwork of staff, council, input of registrants and other participants, all of which has provided an excellent regulatory foundation. With a background in business, I currently work in home support services for seniors. I believe the College is in a strong position to respond to the global credentialing challenges of the 21st Century.



**Joanne O'Keeffe**

As a new Council member from Eastern Ontario, I am excited to be a part of the College. Developing and maintaining competency is crucial for our future within the global marketplace. Regulation is essential for public protection but also for the credibility of our profession. As a member of the QA and Fitness to Practise Committees, and the Continuing Education Task Force, I look forward to contributing to the College's mandate of self regulation for Ontario's OTs.



**Ed Rayment**

I am a recently-appointed Public Member with a strong background in advertising and marketing. I have owned and operated several successful companies responsible for key public sector partnerships. I live in Niagara-on-the-Lake, with business centered in Toronto. I look forward to learning more about the College and helping to maintain the exemplary role it plays in regulation. Currently, I am on the Complaints and Patient Relations Committees.



**Susan Rappolt**

I joined the Council in March 1998 for a three-year term as the Academic Member. I have a strong interest in sociological theory of professions and professional accountability, and I am currently researching how professionals transfer research into their clinical practices. I have the privilege of participating in discussions to facilitate the availability of College resources to OT students, as well as serving on several Committees that advance the College's mandate.

# College



**Rhoda Reardon**

In chairing the QA Committee I will tap the experience I continue to gain in my position at the Institute for Work & Health, in quality improvement, program accreditation and evaluation, and designing practice guidelines under the insurance act. The College has demonstrated leadership in numerous areas and, true to the philosophic roots of our profession, will continue in a role as mentor to its fellow regulatory bodies and as a 'quality-enabler' with its registrants.



**Francis Sharon**

I have been with the College for two years, appointed in 1997. A now retired teacher/administrator, I enjoyed residence as president of the Scarborough East Provincial Ventrales Curling Club. My interest in the College is focused on education and public/professional protection. The College takes a leadership role in occupational therapy, and will continue to help define the role of OT in Ontario's health sector.



**John Schenk**

I was appointed 1 1/2 years ago as a public member of Council. As a practising lawyer, I am president of my local law association. This involvement in the regulating bodies of the oldest self-regulating profession and one of the youngest provides an interesting perspective on College development. My involvement in the College's emerging QA Program, which will benefit both registrants and the public, continues to be both challenging and satisfying.



**Karl Skierszkan**

I am a professional representative from the North East district. During my three years at the College, I have been involved with the Patient Relations, Registration and Discipline Committees. This has allowed me to reflect upon and explore the relationship between the OT, the client, the state and funding bodies. I believe that the guidance the College provides to OTs assists them to deliver, and clients to receive, better service.



**Joy Sommerfreund**

I have been privileged to sit on the Council since its inception. The knowledge I have gained from this experience and from being chair of the Registration, Fitness to Practise and Quality Assurance Committees will hopefully allow me to appreciate the big picture and, in my role as Council President, help steer our College through its course into the new millennium.



**Jill Trites**

I am a new professional member of the council, representing the Central West District. My experience as manager and rehab advisor at a personal injury law firm has given me familiarity with private sector issues, particularly insurance. This background, and my perspective as a patient advocate, will help me in my new roles as Chair of the Complaints Committee, and member of the Patient Relations Committee. I feel privileged to participate in the many College initiatives that promote accountability and professionalism.



**Judi Wagman**

I am currently serving my second term as elected professional member for District One. I am particularly interested in the College's communications, especially with the public and registrants. I am proud of the College's leadership role in the area of self-regulation, and our credibility with all stakeholders. I currently chair the Communications and Fitness to Practise Committees.



**Bill Weichel**

I am a public member appointed in March 1998. A retired secondary school teacher and department head, I served nine years on Council of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and two terms on the Board of Governors of Wilfrid Laurier University. A member of the Board of the Grand River Conservation Authority, I have keenly supported healthy lifestyles. During my tenure on Council, I have worked on Quality Assurance, Communications, Discipline, Editorial Board, and Elections Committees, and the Access to Service Task Force.

# Council

# You Asked

**Q** I have a client who is applying to the Ontario Disability Support Plan. I have been asked to complete the Activities of Daily Living form for the first time. Does the College have any guideline for completing this form?

**A** The College does not provide specific guidelines for completion of forms that are not generated by the College. There are numerous forms that occupational therapists have the authority to complete for their clients (e.g. ADP, treatment plans under Bill 59, Revenue Canada disability forms, etc.). These forms are generated by various branches of the Ministry of Health or, as in this case, other Ministries within the government. The body responsible for the form will provide the most accurate and thorough information regarding its completion.

Before completing any form, it is important to consider several factors. These include the purpose or intent of the form, how it will be reviewed and processed, the needs and expectations of the end user, and any implications it may have for the client. It is also important to ensure that proper client consent has been received prior to submitting any form on behalf of a client.

**Q** I work for a private rehab company and have accepted a referral to complete an assessment for an insurance company. The client's legal representative has indicated client consent for the assessment, however, only if I allow for videotaping of the session. What do I need to consider when reviewing this request?

**A** It is not uncommon for a client to request a particular approach for intervention and within a client-centered practice it is important to consider if the request can be accommodated. Before doing so, it is necessary to understand the request by asking why it is being made and how it relates to the proposed intervention. It is important to determine if fulfilling the request will be in the best interest of the client and if the therapist has the ability to oblige.

The College has received some inquiries about this type of request. In some cases, the request has been made with the understanding that the proposed purpose was to verify the findings of the assessment report. In this instance, there is concern that videotaping of an assessment does not sufficiently reflect the interaction between client and therapist. The therapist's observations and analysis during the session cannot be captured on a tape. In addition, it is not clear that this request is in the client's best interest. Many clients find it stressful to be assessed and the addition of videotaping equipment is likely to heighten this feeling. Similarly, unless the therapist is accustomed to being taped, it may also serve as a distraction for him/her.

Finally, if the client (or his/her representative) has concerns about the validity of an assessment report even before it has been completed, there are likely more important issues to explore before engaging in a relationship.

If videotaping of a session is decided upon, it is critical that there is agreement about its continued use. Issues of storage, copying, release, and interpretation must be clarified ahead of time.

**Q** I have received notice that I must pay a late fee with my registration this year. I mailed my form before June 1st. Can you please explain why this fee has been applied?

**A** Annual registration is due by June 1st. The late fee is applied on all registrations received postmarked after June 1st. There is no grace period. Therefore, if the late fee has been applied, it means that although you put your materials into the mail before June 1st, they were postmarked after that date. The College strongly recommends that if you mail your form after May 15, you do not use hospital mail, and consider sending your materials by Express Post or courier. (See 10 Steps to Easy Annual Registration, Information Update, February 1999).

The College mails notice of registration and renewal forms by April 1st, to provide registrants with sufficient time to complete the process. Postdated cheques for June 1st are accepted in order to assist registrants to meet the deadline. Therapists must remember that annual registration is an important and required professional responsibility.

In our May 1999 newsletter, we announced that The Honourable Elinor Caplan, MP, would be guest speaker at our October annual meeting. Due to her recent posting as Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Mrs. Caplan has had to withdraw from this engagement. We wish Mrs. Caplan all the best in her new position.



## Quality Assurance Program Update

CAROLYN HUBBLE  
CO-ORDINATOR, QUALITY PROGRAMS

THE INFORMATION SESSIONS HELD ACROSS THE PROVINCE ARE NOW COMPLETE. THESE SESSIONS HAVE PROVEN VERY VALUABLE. Feedback and questions from registrants continue to stimulate discussion and influence decisions. Particularly in those parts of the province more distant from Toronto, registrants expressed appreciation for the face-to-face contact with College staff. Attendance was strong in rural areas, with many registrants driving several hours to participate. This commitment to quality practice is commended! Many registrants expressed a desire for a regular interactive forum with the College. Council and staff will consider how this might become a practical reality.

The answers to PREP Module One and a summary of the data collected through the response sheets are included as the Promoting Quality Practice insert with this newsletter. Hopefully, this information will renew discussion on important issues!

Response forms from the Self-Assessment Tool are in and our consultants

report a 50% response rate. Thank you to all those who sent in their feedback. Input from registrants is invaluable as the Quality Assurance Program is developed.

Remember that it is the responsibility of all registrants to complete the Self-Assessment tool and Professional Development plan and to retain a copy. Each registrant is accountable for participating in the Quality Assurance Program.

The Professional Portfolio is coming! Plans are underway for distribution in late fall 1999. This rounds out the Competency Enhancement component of the Quality Assurance Program. The portfolio will serve two purposes. Registrants are encouraged to use the portfolio as a personal and professional tool to keep documents organized and to showcase competency activities. As the Competency Review component is developed, the portfolio will serve a second purpose and be one means registrants can use to demonstrate competency. Further details will be available as the Review process is developed and pilot tested.

The May newsletter informed registrants of a project to develop and validate essential competencies focusing the Standards of Practice into measurable, behavioural statements. It was expected that this project would be validated by circulation of a survey to all registrants this fall. This date has been postponed due to the initiative of the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO) to move forward with a project that will consider common competencies for occupational therapy practise on a national basis. This is an exciting development and in order to work in partnership with ACOTRO, to use resources most effectively, and to consider the compatibility of this effort, the College has decided to delay circulation of the Ontario competency survey. In the meantime, work already done to develop competency statements will contribute to the national initiative. Further information about this project will be provided, as it becomes available.

## Visioning Together for Leadership



At an October 1999 forum sponsored by Invacare Canada Inc., leaders from occupational therapy associations, regulators, academia and research environments will come together to collaborate and jointly discuss the collective leadership of the profession nationally. The need to create opportunities for the joint sharing of perspectives is becoming paramount with shifts in the health care system, the evolving roles of OTs, the importance of evidence-based practice, the implementation of advanced information technology and labour movement within the global marketplace.

CAOT, ACOTRO, ACOTUP, the PAC and COTF are collectively hosting this multi-sector event. Attendance is being held to board members or representatives of the above organizations. Outcomes will, however, be shared widely. This is an exciting, inaugural venture that may help shape the future of the profession. Look for more details in the November newsletter.

# Council & Staff Review, Revise Strategic Plan

As in previous years, members of the College's Council and staff set aside a day in June to focus on strategic planning activities. After a year of focusing on – and accomplishing – many of the strategies set out in the existing Plan, participants took a step back and re-examined the College's larger, overarching goals. Several of the goals were broadened in scope to allow for creativity, new initiatives and a continuation of the energy and enthusiasm generated by the earlier Plan. The Executive Committee will be working on fine-tuning the new goals and strategies, with a revised Plan formalized for Council approval in October. Upon approval, the new Plan will be added to the College's web site, outlining goals and broad strategies for accomplishing them. The enthusiasm and momentum generated by participants will help set the pace for College activities in the months to come.

## We Need Your Expertise!

Are you a quality guru at your place of work? Have any great ideas for our registration process? Know the insurance sector inside and out? If so, the College Committees and working groups want to hear from you! Committee work presents a great opportunity for College involvement, and remuneration is provided. Please forward your resumé to the attention of Jan Robinson to indicate your area of interest.

## Upcoming Events

### **Annual General Meeting**

October 26, 1999, in Kingston, Ontario. We will be celebrating our 5th Anniversary! See page 1 for further details.

### **Council Meeting**

October 27, 1999, in

Kingston, Ontario.

January 27, 2000, at the College office.

Registrants and members of the public are welcome to attend all meetings of Council. Please call Britt Bengtsson at the College office prior to the meeting to reserve a seat.

### **Windsor Open Forum**

Tuesday November 9, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Jan Robinson will be providing an update on the latest College initiatives. Location: The Learning Centre, 1st Floor, Western Campus, Windsor Regional Hospital, 1453 Prince Road, Windsor. A potluck dinner will be served. All are welcome to attend. Please RSVP to Heather at (519) 254-1661 x52260.

# Election 2000

## THE COLLEGE NEEDS YOU!

The College nomination process stirs each registrant differently, running along a continuum from disinterest to curiosity to throwing your name in for the running. Often, however, a registrant restrains his/her thinking based on support for the current incumbent. Though admirable, this is not in keeping with the spirit of an election! As well, we often find that many individuals hold back, without knowing if the incumbent is running or not. As a result, the district ends up with no nomination and a scurry to find interested participants.

Election 2000 needs full participation. A variety of nominations with diverse backgrounds assures a strong election process. In addition, it builds a strong College Council.

If you are interested in putting your name forward, call the Registrar to discuss current College activities and the opportunities for your participation in the growth and development of our profession. Don't hesitate – explore your interest. The profession needs you!

Elections will be held in March 2000 in the following districts:

### **Electoral District 3 (South West):**

Counties of Essex, Bruce, Grey, Kent, Lambton, Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford, Huron and Perth.

### **Electoral District 5 (North East) :**

Territorial districts of Sudbury, Parry Sound, Timiskaming, Nippising, Algoma, Cochrane and Manitoulin and the District Municipality of Muskoka.

### **Electoral District 6 (North West)**

Territorial districts of Kenora, Rainy River and Thunder Bay.

One member is to be elected in each of the three districts. The term of office for all districts is three years. Expenses are covered, and a nominal per diem is paid. Please note that you vote and are eligible for election in the district in which you work. If you do not have an employer, you vote in your district of residence.

## What's New @ [www.coto.org](http://www.coto.org)

The months ahead look exciting as we embark on the challenge of making the College website more useful but still fun and easy to use. In the past two months we have seen the number of "guests" visiting our site double. With this in mind we have begun to streamline the access to pages and to keep relevant pages more current.

A proposal to include a public register database with each active registrant's name, city of employment and registration number was recently accepted by Council. While the database will not serve as a method for finding an occupational therapist, it will provide confirmation to clients and employers that their occupational therapist is registered and in good standing with the College. We will be launching this important addition to our site at our October AGM.

Also, look for the number of official College documents accessible for download or printing to steadily increase, with all documents to be online by early 2000.

## Election Schedule:

### **Call for nominations**

Mailed November 1, 1999

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**Nominations must be returned to the office by**  
January 4, 2000

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**Election packages will be mailed**  
February 1, 2000

### **Voting**

Closes at 2:00 p.m.,  
March 1, 2000

## Council Highlights from the Meeting of June 23, 1999

### *Highlights from the June meeting:*

- The final 1999-2000 College budget was approved;
- Council confirmed the Regulation for Funding for Therapy and Counselling, which will now be forwarded to the Ministry for approval. This regulation establishes the conditions under which individuals are eligible to access funding for sexual abuse therapy and counselling.
- Final approval of revised by-laws and the related rescinding of the Elections Regulation and parts of the Core regulation. Revised documents will be distributed to Registrants in November.
- A draft discussion paper on Scope of Practice was approved for distribution to registrants for their comment. (See notice, page 15)
- Sexual Abuse Prevention was approved as the topic for the second PREP Module.
- Council decided to withhold distribution of a survey on OT competencies, which was highlighted in the *May Information Update*. (see Quality Assurance Update, page 11).
- A framework for the Professional Portfolio was approved. The Portfolio will be distributed in November.
- A calendar of Quality Assurance events was approved.

*For more information on any of these issues, please contact the College.*

## Thanks to Registrants who Commented on Fees By-law

Approximately 55 responses were received from registrants on the fees by-law. Circulation of this part of the by-laws was required in accordance with the *Red Tape Reduction Act*.

Many registrants took the opportunity to comment on the registration fee, despite the fact that this by-law revision is having no impact on that particular fee. A "You Asked" question was included with the May Newsletter to clarify this. A fairly high proportion of respondents did express concern that fees seemed to be on a steady incline and that they are becoming out of reach for some. We remind registrants that Council opted to introduce a planned \$100 fee increase over two years back in 1996. *Registrants are assured that the fee will not increase to \$500 for the 2000/2001 registration year.* Still others

commented positively that the fees seemed fair, and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to comment.

As a result of registrant comment, wording in the Registrar's Fees section has been adjusted to improve clarity. As another point of clarification, new applicants should note that the \$150 Credential Review Fee applies only to those whose academic credentials require Registration Committee review to determine equivalency with Ontario. One registrant's suggestion to require a certified cheque rather than successive fees for NSF cheques has been incorporated.

Thanks to all registrants who commented. Your input was presented to Council in June, and was an important step in finalizing our new By-laws.

# Your Comments are Requested

In June, Council approved for registrant comment a draft Discussion Paper on the Scope of Practice of Occupational Therapy. This document is the result of considerable research and debate at the College's Practice Issues Sub-Committee. The paper explores the appropriate delegation of controlled acts to OTs, and also looks at the complex issue of dual practice – i.e., the incorporation of unregulated treatments such as acupuncture or vitamin therapy, into the practice of occupational therapy. The Practice Issues sub-Committee is seeking comments from registrants on the practice examples provided in the document, and requests examples of other scenarios that registrants may have encountered that should potentially be incorporated into the Discussion Paper.

You will find the draft paper and comment sheet enclosed with this issue of *Information Update*. We look forward to receiving your comments by November 1, 1999.

## HELP US KEEP YOU INFORMED

The College regularly produces documents that are of significance to the practise of O.T. in Ontario. It is our responsibility to get this information to you in a timely manner, but we need your help! Please provide us with written notification of address changes, work or home, within 30 days of the move. It is your responsibility to keep the College up-to-date on your personal information... Thanks.

## Revised By-laws coming In November...

NEW BY-LAWS FOR THE COLLEGE WERE APPROVED at the June 1999 meeting of Council. These By-laws represent a significant revision, as the passing of the Red Tape Reduction Act resulted in the movement of the entire Elections Regulation, and significant sections of the Core Regulation into By-law. Council took the opportunity to thoroughly review all aspects of the existing By-laws to ensure that they still appropriately reflect Council philosophy and approach to business. The By-laws and (pending Ministry approval) revised versions of the affected regulations will be distributed in November.

## Council Officers and Chairs

### Joy Sommerfreund,

President

### Keary Grace,

Vice President

### Jill Trites,

Chair, Complaints Committee

### Ashok Jain,

Chair, Discipline Committee

### Judi Wagman,

Chair, Fitness to Practise and Communications Committees

### Karl Skierszkan,

Chair, Patient Relations Committee

### Rhoda Reardon,

Chair, Quality Assurance Committee

### Jennifer Cano,

Chair, Registration Committee

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### Jan Robinson,

Registrar

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## Letters to the Editor

To express your views on editorial content or any College matter, please contact the Editor by mail, phone or e-mail:

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e-mail: [cjames@coto.org](mailto:cjames@coto.org)

## Certificates of registration Revoked due to failure to meet a non-exemptable Registration Requirement.

In accordance with O.Reg. 835/93, Section 4(1) – 4, the Certificates of Registration issued to the following individuals were revoked on May 21, 1999 due to failure to meet a non-exemptable registration requirement.

NAME	REGISTRATION NUMBER
Cynthia Carty	.G9803444
Shelley Marie Elliot	.G9402437
Linda Kremer	.G9300948
Tanya L. Packer	.G9301960
Suzanne M. Soper	.G9502700
Jeannette Telebar	.G9302186
Lucie Vallée	.G9703348

## Correction...

The May 1999 introduction of our new District Four Council member, Joanne O’Keeffe, overlooked important information regarding Joanne’s work history. Joanne has served as a Regional Manager for a private rehabilitation company, and has extensive experience in the field of psychiatry. We apologize to Joanne for the oversight.

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