

ON THE record

VOLUME 15 ISSUE 2

SPRING 2015

Transparency: A Clear Priority

La transparence : Une priorité manifeste

Expanding Public Information

Building a Record Keeping Resource

Exploring Clinic Regulation



College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
Ordre des ergothérapeutes de l'Ontario

ON THE record

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Occupational therapists (OTs) work with infants, children and adults who may have difficulties because of an accident, disability, disease, emotional or developmental problem, or change related to aging.

OTs help people learn or re-learn to manage day-to-day activities.

Letters to the Editor

We welcome your feedback.
Please send your comments to:

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We're sorry!

Last issue, we misspelled the names of Dr. Susan Rappolt and Serena Shastri-Estrada. Please accept our apologies.



Transparency: A Clear Priority

Elinor Larney, Registrar

Transparency is an ongoing priority at the College. The very reason for the existence of a regulatory College is the protection of the public. To protect the public, we must share our knowledge so members of the public can make informed decisions about their health care.

As we reported in the last issue of *On the Record*, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care asked regulatory Colleges to review practices with a view to increased transparency. At the March 26, 2015 Council meeting, revisions to College Bylaws were discussed. **The proposed Bylaw changes would require more registrant information to be available on the public register (OT Directory).**

Council approved circulation of the first proposed amendments to the Bylaws. These amendments may affect you and we encourage you to read on, learn about the proposed changes and provide your feedback before May 31, 2015. **Thank you to the OTs who have already submitted their comments and concerns.** Your input will be delivered to Council for consideration.

Current Consultation

The first stage of change focuses on adding information to the public register (OT directory). This information includes registration history

in other jurisdictions (including discipline history and fitness to practise history), criminal convictions and bail conditions. OTs are presently required to report information about registration in other jurisdictions and criminal convictions. The provision of bail condition information is new.

If Council gives final approval to the proposed changes, this additional information will be placed on the public register. You can read more about these proposed changes on page 10.

Next Steps

There is an expectation from the public and the government that the College will provide more information to the public about the outcomes of the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee (ICRC). Other health regulatory Colleges are already progressing in this area.

As you can read in the College's annual reports, most OTs do not get involved in these processes and the vast majority of ICRC decisions

regarding a complaint about an OT do not progress to the discipline stage. If the complaint is not dismissed, the ICRC will often take a remedial approach and order educational activity.

The education can either be ordered directly, which is called a Specified Continuing Education and Remediation Program (SCERP) or negotiated in an undertaking. Or, the ICRC will take the opportunity to outline concerns with the OT's practice and express the expectation

We also recognize that privacy concerns must be balanced with the public's expectation to have sufficient knowledge about health practitioners to make informed decisions about their health care.

Have Your Say: The College will carefully consider all feedback at the June Council meeting before any Bylaws are finalized. The deadline for input on these amendments is May 31, 2015. Visit our website at www.coto.org to review the consultation and complete our survey, mail your feedback to the College or email transparency@coto.org.

for change (known as a Caution). Cautions are usually delivered to the OT in person by the ICRC members, or they may be in writing. Most Colleges are discussing the implications of publicizing these outcomes. College Council will discuss these processes and the implications of placing the outcomes of ICRC decisions on the public register during the June 2015 meeting.

We recognize that privacy concerns must be balanced with the public's expectation to have sufficient knowledge about health practitioners to make informed

decisions about their health care. We will continue to keep OTs apprised of the developments in this area and as always, welcome any comments, suggestions or opinions from OTs, the public and other stakeholders.

The College is not asking registrants to provide information about *Highway Traffic Act* offences or Municipal Bylaw infractions in Part 18.01.02 (g) of the current consultation.

La transparence : Une priorité manifeste

Elinor Larney, Régistratrice

La transparence est une priorité permanente pour notre Ordre. Les ordres de réglementation existent pour protéger le public. Pour ce faire, nous devons partager nos connaissances afin que les membres du public puissent prendre des décisions éclairées concernant leurs soins de santé.

Comme nous l'avons signalé dans le dernier numéro de notre bulletin *On the Record*, le ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée a demandé aux ordres de réglementation d'examiner leurs pratiques afin d'être plus transparents. Lors de la rencontre du conseil le 26 mars 2015, des révisions aux règlements administratifs de l'Ordre ont été discutés. **Les modifications proposées exigeraient que plus d'information sur nos membres soit affichée sur le tableau (public) de l'Ordre.**

Le conseil a approuvé la circulation des premières modifications proposées aux règlements administratifs. **Ces modifications peuvent vous affecter** et nous vous encourageons à les lire, à vous renseigner davantage sur ces changements et à nous soumettre vos commentaires d'ici le 31 mai 2015. **Nous remercions tous les ergothérapeutes qui ont déjà partagé leurs commentaires et préoccupations avec nous.** Vos opinions seront présentées au conseil pour examen.

Consultation actuelle

La première étape des modifications vise à afficher de l'information additionnelle sur le tableau de l'Ordre. Cette information vise l'inscription des ergothérapeutes dans d'autres compétences territoriales (y compris les antécédents liés à la discipline et à l'aptitude professionnelle), les déclarations de culpabilité et les conditions d'une mise en liberté sous caution. Les ergothérapeutes sont déjà requis de divulguer l'information sur leur inscription dans d'autres compétences

Nous reconnaissons qu'il faut établir un équilibre entre les préoccupations visant la protection de la vie privée et les attentes du public qui désire obtenir assez de renseignements sur les professionnels de la santé pour prendre des décisions éclairées sur ses soins de santé.

territoriales ainsi que sur leurs déclarations de culpabilité. La disposition concernant l'information sur les conditions d'une mise en liberté sous caution est nouvelle.

Si le conseil approuve les modifications proposées, cette information additionnelle sera affichée sur le tableau de l'Ordre. Vous pouvez vous renseigner davantage sur ces modifications à la page 10.

Prochaines étapes

Le public et le gouvernement s'attendent à ce que l'Ordre fournisse encore plus d'information au public sur les résultats des décisions du comité des enquêtes, des plaintes et des rapports (CEPR). D'autres ordres de réglementation de la santé avancent déjà dans cette direction.

Comme vous pouvez le lire dans les rapports annuels de l'Ordre, la

majorité des ergothérapeutes ne participent pas à ces processus et la plupart des décisions du CEPR concernant une plainte portée contre un ergothérapeute ne font pas l'objet de mesures disciplinaires. Si la plainte n'est pas rejetée, le CEPR adoptera souvent une démarche corrective et ordonnera des activités de formation. Ces activités de formation peuvent être ordonnées directement (Programme d'éducation permanente et de remédiation déterminé) ou négociées dans un engagement. Le CEPR peut également profiter de cette occasion pour discuter des inquiétudes posées par les pratiques d'un ergothérapeute et expliquer les changements qui sont attendus du membre (ce qu'on appelle un avertissement). Les avertissements sont généralement communiqués en personne aux ergothérapeutes par les membres du CEPR mais ceci peut aussi être fait par écrit. La plupart des ordres étudient présentement les répercussions de communiquer ces résultats au public.

Le conseil de l'Ordre discutera de ces processus et des répercussions d'afficher les résultats des décisions du CEPR sur son tableau au cours de sa rencontre de juin 2015. Nous reconnaissons qu'il faut établir un équilibre entre les préoccupations visant la protection de la vie privée et les attentes du public qui désire obtenir assez de renseignements sur les professionnels de la santé pour prendre des décisions éclairées sur ses soins de santé. Nous continuerons de renseigner les ergothérapeutes sur les développements dans ce domaine et nous sommes toujours heureux de recevoir les

commentaires, suggestions et opinions des ergothérapeutes, du public et d'autres personnes intéressées.

À vous la parole! L'Ordre examinera soigneusement tous les commentaires reçus lors de sa rencontre en juin avant de finaliser les règlements administratifs. Vous devez soumettre vos commentaires au plus tard le 31 mai 2015. Visitez notre site Web à www.coto.org pour vous renseigner sur notre processus de consultation et répondre à un sondage. Vous pouvez envoyer vos commentaires à l'Ordre par la poste ou par courriel à transparency@coto.org.

L'Ordre ne demande pas à ses membres de fournir de l'information sur des infractions au *Code de la route* ou à des règlements municipaux dans le paragraphe 18.01.02(g) de la présente consultation.

Zero Tolerance: Preventing Sexual Abuse of Patients

In December, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) contacted all the health regulatory Colleges seeking information about the programs, processes and resources in place to prevent the sexual abuse of patients and the processes to manage any complaints from patients related to sexual abuse. Since that time the MOHLTC has established the **Task Force for the Prevention of Sexual Abuse and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA)**. The Task Force was established to examine and provide advice and

“the College has been clear that there is zero tolerance for sexual abuse of patients by occupational therapists”

recommendations on how to best strengthen the RHPA provisions related to sexual abuse of patients.

In our communications with the Ministry and the Task Force the College has been clear that there is **zero tolerance for sexual abuse of patients by occupational therapists** and that the College is committed to ensuring registrants are aware of the **expectations of the profession** and have the necessary resources to **support the prevention of sexual abuse**.

Practice Resource Service

Practice@coto.org
1.800.890.6570/
416.214.1177 x240

View the College reports to the Task Force on the College website at www.coto.org.

College Resources

- Standards for the Prevention of Sexual Abuse
- Standards for Professional Boundaries
- Professional Boundaries: Defining the Lines (PREP Module 2010)
- Practice Resource Service

Zero Tolerance Reminders

- Occupational therapists are responsible for maintaining appropriate boundaries with clients at all times.
- Client consent is never a defence for violating a professional boundary.
- Occupational therapists are required to carry liability insurance that includes funding for therapy and counselling for clients who have been sexually abused.
- Occupational therapists are required to file a mandatory report if there are reasonable grounds to believe that an occupational therapist or member of another regulated health care profession has sexually abused a client.

Standards for Professional Boundaries

Standards are regularly reviewed because we know it's important to provide clear expectations for occupational therapy practice.

This winter, the Patient Relations Committee reviewed the Standards for Professional Boundaries.

There were only minor revisions to the Standards as the Committee was confident the Standards continue to be relevant and reflective of current OT practice.

Stay tuned for circulation of the revised **Standards for Professional Boundaries**.

The College regularly reviews publications to ensure accuracy and relevance.

To find the most recent version of documents, check www.coto.org.

Continuing Education Funding for OTs



HealthForceOntario provides financial support for Ontario's allied health professionals through the **Allied Health Professional Development Fund**. Occupational therapists are able to apply for as much as \$1,500 this funding year (April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016) in education grants for completed professional development courses, conferences, and workshops. These grants are intended to improve health care professionals' access to professional development activities.

Eligible health professionals are also able to access the fund's **Electronic Health Library** which offers the most recent health care literature in support of evidence-based practice.

Visit www.ahpdf.ca for more information.

Questions About Practice? Contact the Practice Resource Service



Have you heard about the College's Practice Resource Service?

The Practice Resource Liaison is available to provide private and confidential support to occupational therapists and stakeholders such as students, applicants, members of the public and other health professionals.

If you have a question about an ethical, regulatory or clinical issue, please contact practice@coto.org or 416.214.1177/ 1.800.890.6570 x240.

What's in a Title?

Use of Title, Credentials & Certifications

What does the title occupational therapist mean to you? What does it mean to the public? And how does this change when you combine this title with different credentials and certifications? Is the outcome clarification or confusion, and is there any risk or benefit to the public?

The College is committed to exploring use of title, credential and specialization issues with OTs, members of the public and key stakeholders such as other regulators and professional associations. Use of Title has been identified as a 2014-2017 strategic priority.

In a response to an inquiry from the Ontario Society of Occupational Therapists (OSOT), Elinor Larney, College Registrar, addressed the current expectations of the College and identified a number of issues that require considerable thought. To learn more about the issues, you can review the letter from OSOT and the College's response at www.coto.org.

What titles and credentials can I use today?

In determining how to refer to your professional credentials it is important to consider what a title implies and how that title or any additional credentials may be interpreted by your audience. The College's **Guide to Use of Title** provides helpful

information about important considerations when using title in your practice.

The Occupational Therapy Act, 1991 defines the restricted title of occupational therapists. As a registrant of the College, you are expected to **use the title 'Occupational Therapist' or the designation OT Reg. (Ont.), which indicates you are a regulated health professional** who meets the minimum requirements for practice and are accountable to the College for ongoing competence. **Your title is intended to provide clarification to the public about your accountability to the College.**

Continuing education and professional development credentials and certifications provide important information about an OT's training and experience. However, **credentials and certifications differ from restricted titles as they are not defined in the legislation and do not have any specific criteria the public can use to verify or validate the quality of those credentials or certifications.** Lack of consistent practices regarding confirmation or verification of these credentials may result in different interpretations by different audiences.

Occupational therapists are permitted to express credentials and certifications when they are confident the intended audience is able to accurately interpret or understand those credentials. For example, an OT applying for a job in a hand therapy clinic could include certified hand therapist

(CHT) credentials on a resumé or curriculum vitae. Similarly, an occupational therapist who practices in the area of hands and publishes an article in the Journal of Hand Therapy could include certified hand therapy credentials as the intended audience would recognize and understand these credentials.

In marketing services to referral sources that require specific certifications such as Certified Life Care Planner (CLCP), an OT may share this information. However, including credentials such as CHT or CLCP in communication with the public may result in confusion as these credentials may be misunderstood or misinterpreted. A member of the public may assume there is a formal mechanism in place to validate and verify the credentials.

Regulated health Colleges in Ontario, across Canada, and internationally, have adopted different approaches to manage credentials, certifications and specializations. The College will be **evaluating different approaches to this issue and we** look forward to hearing from you throughout the process.

Access the Guide to Use of Title and other College resources online at www.coto.org/resource

Change to OT Use of Psychotherapist Title



On April 1, 2015, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care announced the proclamation of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists. The controlled act of psychotherapy has not yet been proclaimed and there

are significant implications for occupational therapists (OTs).

Title

With the proclamation of the College of Registered Psychotherapists, the use of the title “psychotherapist” is now restricted to registrants of the College of Registered Psychotherapists. **Occupational therapists are NOT permitted to use the psycho-therapist title at this time** as use of title for occupational therapists is directly linked to OT authority to perform the controlled act.

Practice

Occupational therapists are permitted to continue practicing psychotherapy within the OT scope of practice and in accordance with the Standards for Psychotherapy.

Next Steps

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has asked the six regulatory Colleges (OTs, psychotherapists, psychologists, physicians, nurses, social work and social service workers) impacted by the psychotherapy legislation (Section 33.1 of the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*) to collaborate to further define this controlled act and ensure the meaning of psychotherapy activity or service is transparent to members of the Colleges and the public. The goal is to have resolution and direction on any outstanding issues by the end of this calendar year.

Contact

For questions or clarification regarding psychotherapy, please contact the Practice Resource Service at Practice@coto.org, 416.214.1177/ 1.800.890.6570 x240.

We will continue to post updates on www.coto.org.

“We recognize this is a difficult change that affects our members. We are working with the Ministry and other Colleges to develop a clear definition of the controlled act. The goal is resolution by the end of this year.”

- Occupational therapists cannot use the title psychotherapist at this time.
- Occupational therapists can perform psychotherapy.

Increasing Public Information About OTs: What You Need to Know About the College Bylaw Consultation

Gillian Slaughter, Manager, Investigations & Resolutions

In October 2014, Ontario's Minister of Health and Long-Term Care asked us, and all regulatory health Colleges, to share more information to help the public make informed decisions about their health care. The Colleges were also asked to work together to improve transparency about College processes and decision-making.

What is the College proposing to do?

We propose to publish more information about you and your practice on our public register (OT Directory) and our website. This information would include criminal findings, bail conditions, and information about any discipline hearings about our members.

This proposal may affect you if, for example, you are convicted of a crime, have a bail condition placed on you, or have a discipline history with a regulatory body in or outside of Ontario on or after January 1, 2016.

Other proposed Bylaw changes include asking OTs to inform us, within 30 days, of changes to important registration information.

Why does the College want to publish more information about OTs?

We are responding to the public's increased demand for transparency. Being honest and

open about our processes and decision-making helps people understand our work, find practitioners, and make informed decisions about their health care.

When is this happening?

The proposed changes to our Bylaws would make this information public on or after January 1, 2016.

How you can submit your feedback?

There are four ways you can comment on the changes posted under Consultations at www.coto.org:

- online survey
- mail to the College
- fax to 416-214-1173
- email transparency@coto.org

Before we can make these changes, we would like to hear from you. The consultation is open until midnight on May 31, 2015.

Informing the College

The College proposes to require that all OTs inform the College in writing about changes in their registration information within 30 days of the change happening. This includes information such as:

- Registration with another regulatory body, including any details about misconduct, incompetence or incapacity found by that regulator
- Criminal convictions
- Bail conditions
- Email address

Increasing Public Information About OTs: The Details

Criminal Convictions

Information about criminal convictions is already publicly available, in the courts and sometimes in the media.

We are proposing to publish information about OTs convicted, in or outside of Ontario, of (i) a criminal offence, (ii) a drug-related offence or (iii) an offence that relates to the practice of occupational therapy.

This does not apply to convictions under the *Highway Traffic Act* (like parking tickets), or to convictions for a bylaw offence (such as a signage violation). We propose to publish information about OTs who have been convicted, on or after January 1, 2016.

If the conviction is overturned on appeal, or if the OT is pardoned, information about the convictions would be removed from the register (OT Directory).

Conditions

Information about bail conditions is also publicly available. We propose to publish information about OTs who have bail conditions imposed by courts or other lawful authorities.

A bail condition is when a person who has been charged with a crime is released from jail before being tried in court or sentenced. If the bail conditions relate to or impact an OT's ability to practice, we think that the public should be informed.

When the bail conditions are changed, the register (OT Directory) would also be changed. When the bail conditions are removed (such as after trial), they would be removed from the register. If the bail conditions are under a publication ban (an order by court which prohibits anyone from publishing information about them), then we would not publish such information.

Discipline History in Other Jurisdictions

If you are an OT who has a license with another regulatory body in or outside of Ontario, the fact of your license will be made public. For example, this would apply to OTs who are also teachers licensed to teach in Alberta, or are engineers that are regulated in England.

In addition, we propose to publish information about OTs who have a discipline history with another regulator, in or outside Ontario. Any discipline findings made by a regulatory body on or after January 1, 2016, would be published.

Similarly, we would publish information about members who have been the subject of fitness to practise hearings (also known as incapacity hearings) at other regulatory bodies, in or outside Ontario. Any incapacity findings made by a regulatory body on or after January 1, 2016, would be published.

Within 30 days of the change, **registrants are already required to notify the College** of changes to:

- Name
- Business Home Address
- Employer and employment status
- Nature of practice
- Legal authorization to work in Canada

Comment on the changes posted under Consultations at www.coto.org by:

- online survey
- mail to the College
- fax to 416-214-1173
- email transparency@coto.org

Deadline for feedback is midnight on May 31, 2015.

Introducing an Interprofessional Record Keeping Resource

Occupational therapists (OTs) practice in a variety of clinical settings and we often receive questions about expectations for record keeping in interdisciplinary environments. Different practices can affect a team's ability to work collaboratively and effectively, so the College was excited to accept an invitation to explore this issue with other regulators.

The Health Regulators for Collaborative Practice is a voluntary group representing six regulatory Colleges whose members work together in practice:

- audiologists and speech-language pathologists
- chiropractors
- kinesiologists
- massage therapists
- occupational therapists
- physiotherapists

The group is dedicated to developing an inter-college approach to practice expectations so that practitioners can meet their respective College's professional standards with clarity and confidence, when working in interdisciplinary settings.

The purpose is not to achieve identical standards or create a single standard for seven professions.

Rather, the group works to:

- identify similarities and differences in professional expectations

- provide practical advice on how to resolve differences
- facilitate implementation of a collaborative approach at the point of care

The group started with the expectations related to record keeping as this area causes confusion and anxiety among practitioners, especially when they work together. Many believe there are vast differences among the Colleges' standards, and yet, as a thorough review showed, this is not the case.

The Process

The working group conducted a line-by-line review and comparison of each College's expectations for record keeping, as described in regulations, standards and policies. We identified similarities, discussed differences and devised practical solutions through a process of consensus. Often what looked different on paper was not actually different in practice.

Results & Benefits

The outcome is an online interprofessional record keeping resource where the results have been compiled into a user-friendly format with links to important source documents and resources.

Occupational therapists will have access to the interprofessional record keeping resource later this year. The College will post a website update when the resource is available.

“This was a truly collaborative effort among the six Colleges, which holds enormous promise for interprofessional collaboration among regulated health care providers — and by extension, the quality of care provided to patients.”

Winter Poll Results

Do You Use The OT Directory (Public Register) to:



27% check OT registration status

18% search for an OT who works in a certain area of practice (for example, vocational rehabilitation or geriatric care)

5% search for an OT by language

13% find an OT who practices in a certain area of Ontario

37% I have never used the OT Directory

The OT Directory contains all of the publicly available information about registered OTs in Ontario. Check your information in the online OT Directory at www.coto.org.

Click on “Have Your Say” on the home page to participate in the next poll.

30 Days to Make the Change

Don't forget to keep your information up-to-date!



You must update your personal and employment information within 30 days of a change (as per the College Bylaws). Full contact details of employment are required to be listed on the public register (OT Directory). If you are self-employed and work from home you may

choose to have a PO Box set up as your employment address.

To update your home or employment information, please visit the “Registrants Only” section of www.coto.org. To update your name, please contact the College at registration@coto.org.

If you hold a Certificate of Authorization for an Occupational Therapy Professional Corporation, full details are also listed online and must be updated within 30 days of a change. You may also choose to have a PO Box as the professional corporation address. To update professional corporation information, please contact the College at registration@coto.org.

Required Updates

You need to notify the College about updates to these items, within 30 days of the change:

- name
- home address
- business address or business phone number
- employer and employment status
- nature of practice
- legal authorization to work in Canada

It's time to renew your registration!



Spring is here and it's time to renew your Certificate of Registration for the 2015-2016 College registration year.

All occupational therapists holding a Certificate of Registration **must renew or resign before June 1, 2015**. Renew online through www.coto.org.

Please note: You may **complete the annual renewal process prior to completing your annual quality assurance tools**.

Don't delay! Visit the Registration Renewal section of www.coto.org for further renewal details.

May 31 Deadline for QA Tools

May 31 is approaching fast.

Don't forget to:

- complete your **2014-2015 Professional Development Plan**
- complete your **2015 PREP Module**
- establish goals for **2015-2016 Professional Development Plan**, and
- complete your **2015 Self-assessment Tool** (if required this year)

All Quality Assurance (QA) tools must be **completed in the practice development portal** by the deadline of **May 31, 2015**.



Create Your Fresh Start: Tips for Effective Goal Setting for Your Professional Development Plan

Spring brings new beginnings and the time to establish new goals for your annual Professional Development (PD) Plan. Here are some helpful tips to jumpstart your year and make the most out of your PD Plan.

Complete your self-assessment (SA) tool and PREP module first

If it is your year to complete the SA Tool, be sure to complete it and the PREP module prior to setting your goals. You can send learning goals directly from your SA tool and the PREP module to your PD Plan.

Customize transferred goals

Once a goal is transferred from either your SA Tool or PREP module, you can customize the goal to reflect your learning needs. Delete the statement that was transferred and enter in your new personalized goal.

Set SMART goals

Make sure your goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-specific.

Detail your strategies for achieving the goals

Outline how you plan to reach your goals. There may be multiple strategies needed to complete a single goal – include them all along with the expected timeframe for completion.

Leave your PD Plan “in progress” for the year

You can return to your Plan as often as you want! Revisit your Plan anytime to add or remove goals, indicate completed goals, and enter evidence for goal/strategy completion.

Enter your evidence and mark your goals/strategies “complete”

Before May 31 the following year, enter what you were able to successfully complete to meet your goals (provide evidence). If you were unable to complete a goal, enter

why the goal was not achieved.

Place a checkmark at the strategy and/or goal level to indicate that it has been completed.

Mark the PD Plan “complete”

Once all your information is entered, click “exit”. You will be prompted to “save your changes?” – select “yes”. You will then see two options within a box. The bottom option “completes” the tool and changes it to “read only”. You can mark your PD Plan “complete” even if there are outstanding goals.



Exploring Clinic Regulation Through College Collaboration

Elinor Larney, Registrar

If you work in a private clinic, have you ever been asked or told to do something that, as a regulated health professional, you don't feel comfortable doing?

“Have you ever thought the billing processes used by your employer were unclear or unfair? Did you contemplate leaving your employment because the clinic practices were unprofessional? Have you felt the services provided to patients were compromised or that you were asked to compromise your quality of care or integrity?”

If you answered yes, you are not alone. Professionals working in clinics are raising these concerns. While the percentage of OTs working in private clinics tends to be lower than in some other

professions, the outcomes and pressures can be the same.

Regulated health professionals are subject to strict rules and professional standards. The same is not always true for employers at the clinics where they work. If employers are not health care professionals, they may have a limited understanding of the requirements for quality care and ethical service. Gaps in the current oversight system place some regulated health professionals in positions that could compromise their ethics and the quality of care offered to patients.

“The College is working with a group of Ontario's health regulatory Colleges to explore new ways to ensure the public interest is protected by the clinics employing our members.”

The group will be taking a closer look at how regulation of clinics could ensure ethical practices, quality of care, compliance with

“Hearing from our members is an important step in this work. We expect consultations will take place later in 2015. If you have any ideas or opinions about this topic, please email me at elarney@coto.org.”

general health and safety standards and existing rules and regulations.

The public puts a great deal of trust in Ontario's health professionals. The collaborative group is exploring how to work with members, government, the public, and other stakeholders to ensure clinics employing health professionals offer safe, competent and ethical care.

District Elections Go Digital



No more envelopes, mail, or counting ballots – this fall, nominations for Council positions will take place online, with online voting to follow.

In March 2015, Council approved changes to the College Bylaws that facilitate online Council elections. Bylaws that pertain to the election process do not need to be circulated to registrants and stakeholders for feedback. However, the College is currently circulating Bylaw amendments that will require all OTs to have an email address, which will be used to enable online participation.

Voting will be as simple as a click of a button and results will be electronically tabulated.

The new electronic election process will use email to notify registrants of the candidates running in each district.

We hope to increase voting participation and decrease spoiled ballots, while reducing costs.

Stay tuned for more information about this process. The next election will be for District One, Toronto and area – our largest district – in early 2016.

Let us know what you think of the move to online elections. Send an email to communications@coto.org.

Cross Canada Assessment Process for Internationally Educated OTs

A national approach to the assessment of internationally educated OTs is now in effect. The Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO) has launched a competency-based assessment process for graduates from OT programs that have not been assessed and deemed substantially equivalent to an OT program delivered in Canada.

The new competency-based* assessment includes:

- a review of the attended educational institution’s curriculum;
- education about Canadian jurisprudence followed by an online test; and
- an interview by a trained OT assessor focused on OT processes.

*All of these competencies align with the Essential Competencies for Practice for Occupational Therapists in Canada, 3rd Edition.

“The goal of ACOTRO is to create a common set of standards and tools in order to recognize and evaluate the qualifications and competencies of internationally-educated occupational therapists (IEOTs).”

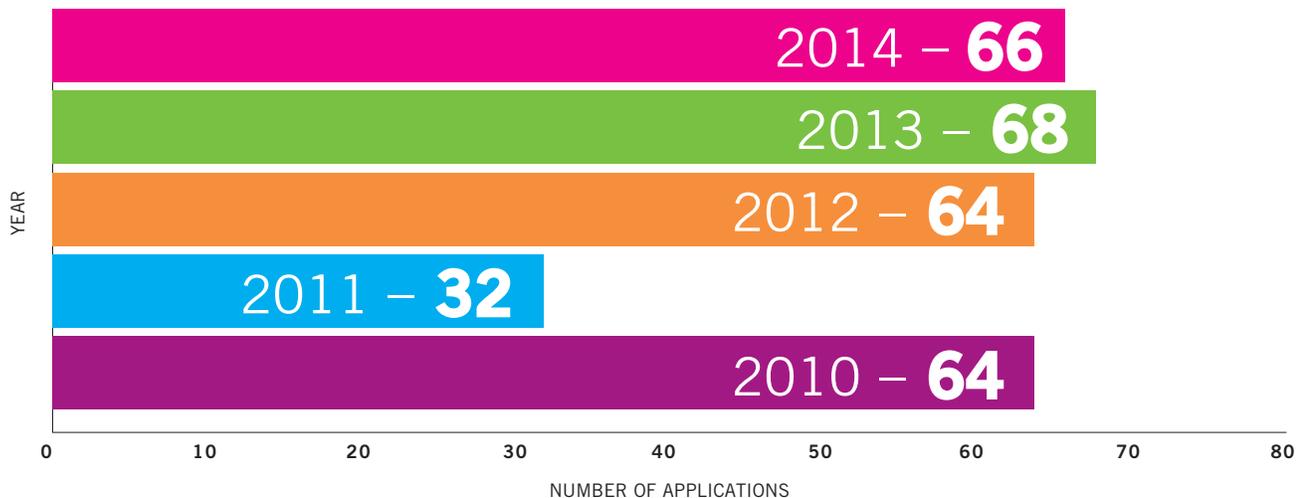
Did You Know?
Ten provincial regulatory bodies make up the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO).

“Consistent standards ensure registrants have demonstrated or met the standard of competencies and requirements in order to enter practice.”
www.acotro-acore.org

“Knowing these professional standards have been met builds greater confidence with the public and other health care providers.”

Learn more about the assessment process at www.acotro-acore.org

NUMBER OF REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS FROM IEOTs BY YEAR



District 3, 5 & 6 Council Election Results

College Council

The Council is the governing body or board of directors of the College. Together, the Council sets the strategy for the College and makes decisions to ensure the public receives ethical, competent care from Ontario's OTs. Learn more about Council at www.coto.org/about.



District 3

Jane Cox Re-Elected

Jane is Manager, Occupational Therapy Practice – Leadership at London Health Sciences Centre and has been on College Council since 2009, serving as Council President in 2014.

*On March 26, Jane was re-elected President of College Council for 2015. See p. 21.

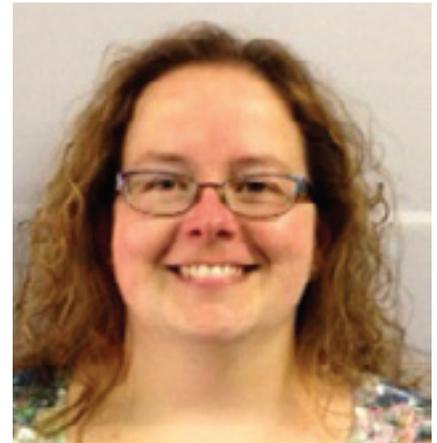


District 5

Shannon Gouchie Re-Elected

Shannon is Occupational Therapist Clinical Lead, Pediatric at Health Sciences North-Children's Treatment Centre in Sudbury and has been on College Council since 2009, serving as Council Vice-President in 2014.

*On March 26, Shannon was re-elected Vice-President of College Council for 2015. See p. 21.



District 6

Laurie Macdonald Elected

Laurie is an Occupational Therapist/Professional Practice Leader (OT) at St. Joseph's Care Group in Thunder Bay and served as a Non-Council Member on the College Quality Assurance Committee from 2010-2013.

Welcome to our New Public Council Members

It gives us great pleasure to announce the appointment of two new public members to our Council:

Dr. Winston Isaac

Mr. Kurisummoottil S. Joseph

We look forward to introducing our new Council members to you in our next issue of *On the Record*.

Q&A

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Meet Laurie Macdonald, our new Professional Council Member



Q: Tell us a little about your occupational therapy experience.

A: I have been working as an occupational therapist since graduating in 1995. I worked in acute psychiatry for about eight years, and then later transitioned to older adult mental health rehabilitation and dementia care. Currently, I am also the OT Professional Practice Leader for St. Joseph's Care Group in Thunder Bay - and have been in this role for several years.

Q: How did you get involved with the College of Occupational Therapists? Why is it important to you?

A: After volunteering as a board member with the Ontario Society

of Occupational Therapists, I felt compelled to volunteer in a different capacity. I decided to put my name forward to the College and have since spent the last four years as a Non-Council Member of the Quality Assurance (QA) Committee.

I feel it's important to be involved in my profession and take this responsibility seriously. I want to make a difference in the lives of our clients and my colleagues, as well as health delivery overall.

Q: Why did you decide to run for Council?

A: I can honestly say that I loved the work of the QA Committee! I felt that we made a difference, not only to the public, but also to the working lives of occupational therapists. I learned a great deal, and also developed a deeper appreciation for the College and its role. Becoming a Professional Council Member was my next step to contributing further to the profession.

Q: You recently attended your first Council meeting. What were your impressions?

A: The meeting was certainly impressive! The topics and discussions were thoughtful and in-depth, with tremendous dedication from everyone seated around the table. I felt honoured to attend - and to be a part of the incredible work that is happening at the College.

Q: What is one misconception about the College?

A: There is fear surrounding any form of involvement with the College. Unfortunately, I think this fear stems from the misconception that the College is not concerned about the overall well-being of occupational therapists.

The College supports occupational therapists to ensure that they are able to practice as safely and effectively as possible.

Q: In a few sentences, how would you simply define the role of the College and Council?

A: The role of the College is to protect the public interest by

ensuring that occupational therapists in Ontario have, and follow, standards guiding our work. Stated simply, the Council is there to guide the work of the College.

Q: What would you like the public to know about the College and the profession?

A: I hope there will soon be a greater understanding and awareness of our profession, and the life-changing work performed by occupational therapists every day.

I think over time, the public has become more aware of the College and its purpose – but it is often associated with the policing of negative issues or problems. In reality, the work of the College is largely balanced with positive innovations and effective leadership, all working together to continually improve the profession and its role in health care.

Q: What do you hope to bring to Council or achieve in your role?

A: As with everything I do, I will bring all my energy and passion for our profession to my role as a Council member. I hope to make a difference in many ways, including enhancing the relationship and engagement between occupational therapists and the College.

Council Highlights

March 26, 2015 Meeting

- Council approved the circulation of proposed amendments to the College Bylaws related to transparency initiatives. The proposed amendments would make additional information about registrants available on the public register (OT Directory).
- Council approved circulation of proposed amendments to the College Bylaws that would require registrants to provide a preferred email address to the College.
- Council approved the implementation of online Council elections and related Bylaw changes.
- Elinor Larney, Registrar, reported on the status of the 16 initiatives from the 2014/2015 Operational Plan.
- Council reviewed and approved the January 2015 Financial Report and January 2015 Balance Sheet.
- Election of Council Executive took place following the Council meeting. The meeting was chaired by Julie Maciura, of Steinecke Maciura LeBlanc.

The Chair declared the results of the meeting as follows:

Jane Cox, President
Shannon Gouchie, Vice-President
Jeannine Girard-Pearlman, Member at Large Finance
Maria Lee, Member at Large Education

About the College

The College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario is the organization established by the provincial government to oversee the practice of occupational therapists in Ontario. The College is responsible for protecting the public interest by setting standards for practice and having programs in place to see that occupational therapists practice safely and effectively.

The Mission

The College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario is the self-regulatory body that, in the interest of public protection, supports registered occupational therapists to ensure that they are competent, ethical and accountable.



Upcoming Council Meetings

June 18, 2015,
9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

October 29, 2015,
9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

January 28, 2016,
9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Council meetings are open to the public. Please email astanier@coto.org if you wish to attend. Space is limited.

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Please check Contact Us at www.coto.org
for a complete staff listing.

Council Officers and Chairs

Jane Cox, President

Shannon Gouchie, Vice-President

Maria Lee, Member at Large, Education

Jeannine Girard-Pearlman, Member at Large, Finance

Julie Entwistle, Chair, Discipline Committee

Julie Chiba Branson, Chair, Fitness to Practise

Marie Eason Klatt, Chair, Inquiries, Complaints & Resolutions

Jennifer Henderson, Chair, Patient Relations

Angie Mandich, Chair, Quality Assurance

Carol Mieras, Chair, Registration



