

Volume 2, Issue 1

December 2003

Upcoming Board Meetings

January 14, 2004
 February 11, 2004
 March 10, 2004
 April 14, 2004
 May 12, 2004

Meetings are held at the Board Office at 5:30 pm. Please call ahead if you wish to attend.

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COTNS NEWS

AN INTRODUCTION TO “PIPEDA”

The new federal privacy law, the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (“PIPEDA”), has wide ranging implications for the handling of personal information.

Beginning in January 2004 PIPEDA will apply to all provincially regulated businesses engaging in commercial activities that collect, use or disclose personal information.

PIPEDA defines personal information broadly to include information about an identifiable individual (such as age, race, religion, financial information, social insurance number). Information gathered prior to PIPEDA becoming law is also subject to PIPEDA.

PIPEDA applies to all “commercial activity” using personal information which includes any transaction or conduct of a commercial character. This will include many occupational therapists.

PIPEDA outlines Key Principles around Accountability and Access; Consent; Use, Disclosure and Retention; and Safeguards.

The College’s legal counsel, Mr. Michael O’Hara, is currently in the process of putting together some information for occupational therapists in the province. This info will be posted on the College Website in January 2004. This, however, is not meant to provide specific legal advice and each occupational therapist is encouraged to obtain their own legal counsel should they feel this is required.

You can obtain further information through the **P r i v a c y C o m m i s s i o n** at http://www.privcom.gc.ca/information/guide_e.asp.

In addition, the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario have an update on their website. It can be located in the Summer 2003 “On the Record” at www.coto.org.

Essential Competencies Performance Indicators Project

The Essential Competencies for Occupational Therapy Practice in Canada was published by the Association of Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO) in December 2000. These were subsequently adopted by COTNS in May 2002 as the standards of practice for occupational therapists in Nova Scotia.

In April 2002, ACOTRO began the next step of developing performance indicators for the Essential Competencies. Each competency describes an essential knowledge, skill or behaviour required to practice safely, ethically and effectively. The performance indicators help to further define each competency. A performance indicator is defined as “specific behaviour indicator of the enabling skills, knowledge or attitudes necessary to demonstrate an essential competency”.

The performance indicators document has been validated nationally and was signed off by ACOTRO in June 2003. This document will be used in all

aspects of College work, including entry and re-entry to practice standards and all quality assurance programs.

This project had five major funding partners which included the regulatory bodies in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba. The remaining regulatory bodies provided “in kind” contributions

At the December 10, 2003 meeting, the Board approved the use of “The Essential Competencies of Practice for OT’s in Canada—2nd Edition” copyright 2000 ACOTRO (which includes the performance indicators), as the new Standards of Practice for occupational therapists in Nova Scotia.

The new document will be provided to all members in 2004 and will be posted on our website in January.

COTNS BOARD MEMBERS

Cherie Lewis—Chair
Connie Morrissey—Vice
Chair
Ruth Duggan—Treasurer
Megan Russell—Secretary
Kendra W. Rex

PRACTICE COMMITTEE

Denise Bond—Chair
Cynthia Stilwell
Diane MacKenzie
Dave Brannen
Paulette Langdon-Upshall
Krista Boychuk

INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE

David Myatt—Chair
Cheryl Billard
Janet de Saint-Sardos
Shirley Anderson
Gerald Cameron
Colleen Shubaly

PEER ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Reg Urbanowski—Chair
Ruth Duggan
Joanne Comeau
Anne Hache
Karen Landry
Sharon Geleyn

Shared Spaces and Common Grounds for COTNS/NSSOT

Saturday, the 4th of October, we were listening to the sound of chain saws everywhere we turned and as such it would not be the day of our first meeting between NSSOT and COTNS. Rescheduled to the 31st of October, the Executive of the College and the Society met at our shared offices to brainstorm how we can form stronger alliances to mutually venture forth and attain some common goals (if any). Following introductions, each group had the opportunity to review roles and responsibilities as well as present the current state of affairs and activities. It was quickly determined that the majority agreed there are indeed areas where the College and the Society could benefit from joint efforts.

It was no surprise to hear that we share the challenge of motivating members to participate on organized committees. It was very interesting to hear that BC holds a combined AGM yearly with great success. Education surrounding Essential Competencies is the role of both the College and the Society. And let's not forget the Masters Level Entry issue of great interest to all of us but what is the College's position versus the Society's opinion on this?

Overall, a very positive, successful meeting was held and we are pleased to let members know that both COTNS and NSSOT will be navigating the future with stronger alliances!

PEER ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Under Regulation (64) the College is required to develop a Peer Assessment Committee and to develop a peer assessment process for people registered under the Act. The peer assessment process is intended to be a quality assurance process whereby the continued competency of occupational therapists is demonstrated. The Peer Advisory Committee has been meeting since last spring.

The committee has been holding focus group meetings in various locations in the province. Three have been held so far and two more are scheduled for Truro and Sidney in early December. The committee will meet in early January to discuss the results of the focus group meetings.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR CLIENTS RECORDS

The Practice Committee is currently preparing practice guidelines on client records for occupational therapists. Guidelines are issued by the College for the assistance of the professional. They represent guidance from the college on how members should practice. Guidelines are intended to support, not replace, the exercise of professional judgement by the therapists. The guidelines are based, in part, on Section 39 of the OT Act and Section 57 of the Registration Regulations. They are being adapted from the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario Practice Guidelines: Client Records in order to meet these provisions of our Act and Regulations.

Copies of the proposed Practice Guidelines: Client Records have been distributed to occupational therapists in different areas of practice for feedback. We are grateful for the input we have received thus far and look forward to the remaining responses.

SPECIALIST REGISTER COMMITTEE

This committee was established in March, 2003 under direction of the Board of Directors to review the Registration Regulation 51(1) which restricts members from indicating any type of specialty in their practice, determine the benefits and limitations of establishing a Specialists Register, and the feasibility of establishing such a register.

This committee has submitted their recommendations to the Board. The Board will carefully consider these recommendations and will seek legal advice prior to making any proposed changes.

Any proposed changes will be presented at the Annual General Meeting in June 2004.

Annual General Meeting Update

The annual general meeting was held on June 12, 2003 at the Halifax Infirmary Site. We had a good turnout of 38 members and additionally had two phone-in sites with 10 members. Due to technical difficulties a third site was unable to connect. The College will work hard to resolve issues around teleconferencing prior to the next meeting. The date for the next AGM has tentatively been set for June 17, 2004.

Strategic Direction

The College Board presented an updated strategic plan at this year's AGM. This plan is available on our website at www.cotns.ca.

The Strategic Plan identified the following Broad Goals:

The College proactively educates its registrants and the public about accountable occupational therapy practice. In order to meet this goal the College has been working hard to get a website up and running that would provide access to regulating procedures and would keep registrants up to date with current happenings at the College. In addition, the College has added a newsletter to its yearly agenda.

Other plans to address this goal include revision of the Refresher Education Program, development of a practice question referral system and development of information sessions to educate members on the Essential Competencies for Occupational Therapy Practice in Canada.

The College takes a proactive approach to addressing complaints.

The Investigation Committee has been hard at work, reviewing the current complaint process to provide recommendations for early resolution of complaints and a more transparent process. They will also develop a series of fact sheets related to the complaints process for use of all parties.

In addition, the Peer Assessment Committee will develop and implement a peer assessment process to assist in the early identification of therapists who may require additional support and training in order to prevent complaints.

The College develops and maintains partnerships that enhance its key functions.

To this end, the College has held a joint meeting with NSSOT in November in order to identify key areas of partnering. In addition, the registrar attends bi-annual meetings with other provincial health regulators and maintains its participation in ACOTRO. The College continues to develop other key partnerships that will serve to enhance the working of the College

Also integral in this goal is the partnership with its members. The College continues to look for ways to include its members by way of committees, annual meetings, focus groups, the website and the newsletter.

The College operations are technologically smart, current, efficient and reflective of organizational values.

This goal has been high on the College's priority list with the improvement of the College database, the development of a website, a new 1-800 number for use within the province and most recently, the purchase of a lap top computer for use of the registrar or during presentations or meetings.

The College will continue to monitor its ability to perform its operations in a timely, cost effective

Welcome New Occupational Therapist Board Representative

Kendra Walker Rex

Kendra graduated from the University of Manitoba in 2002 with a Bachelor of Medical Rehabilitation in Occupational Therapy. Since moving to Halifax in August of 2002 she has worked at the QEII Health Sciences Centre, gaining experience in the occupational therapy practice areas of geriatrics, long-term care, amputees, and chronic pain management.

Prior to earning her Bachelor degree Kendra was involved with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet for 10 years, as both a dancer and teacher.

The College thanks
all Committee
Members

*Get
involved!*

*The College
always welcomes*

Volunteers

Members

Incentives available

*Call for
details*

COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS OF NOVA SCOTIA

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We're on the web!

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Office Staff

Gayle Salsman Registrar

Joy Moulton Office Manager

Office Hours:

Monday 9:00–2:00

Tuesday 9:00–2:00

Wednesday 9:00–2:00

Thursday 9:00–2:00

WEBSITE

Please visit us at our website: www.cotns.ca. Here you will find dates for our Board Meetings, updates and news, information about our committees as well as important documents including the Essential Competencies of Practice, Code of Ethics, our Strategic business plan and more.

We hope to have the Registration section of our website up and running to help assist you with this upcoming registration in May 2004.

OT ATLANTIC

COTNS would like to congratulate the Nova Scotia Society of Occupational Therapists on hosting a wonderful OT Atlantic 2003 conference. OT Atlantic was held September 25-27, 2003 at the beautiful Oak Island Resort & Spa on the South Shore.

Gayle Salsman attended as a representative of COTNS. The College of Occupational Therapists was proud to sponsor a morning nutrition break and refreshments for Friday September 26th. On display at OT Atlantic was the new COTNS placard. This eye-catching sign outlines the mission, vision, and values of the College.

OT Atlantic will not be held next year as Charlottetown, PE, will be hosting the CAOT National Conference on June 25-26, 2004. It will be hosted by New Brunswick in 2005.

Reminders

Malpractice Insurance Update

Most of our members carry their malpractice insurance through CAOT which expires in the middle of our registration year. In the past, CAOT has provided us with a list of members purchasing malpractice insurance through them. However, with the onset of the Privacy Act, CAOT is no longer able to provide us with that information. It will now be up to each individual member to provide the College with proof that he or she has renewed his or her insurance. An original or photocopy received by mail or fax would be accepted.

Proof of malpractice insurance renewal must be received in the College office no later than January 31, 2004.

Update the College!

Each member is required to update the College of a change to any information contained on their annual registration forms.

These may include:

1. Change of Home Address or Phone
2. Change of Employment Information
3. Change of Practicing Status
4. Change of e-mail address
5. Change of Name

Please note that while the College shares office space with NSSOT, we act as separate and distinct entities. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the individual OT to update both offices of information changes as required.