

Dear Employer:

**College of Occupational Therapy of Nova Scotia (COTNS) Launches a Continuing Competency Program.**

*...Commitment to lifelong learning and ongoing evaluation of practice standards to protect public interest.*

The College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia (COTNS) is a governing body established by the provincial government to regulate the practice of Occupational Therapy in Nova Scotia. The mandate of the College is to protect the public's interest. This is done by setting standards for practice, establishing programs to ensure that occupational therapists practice safely, ethically and competently, and investigating concerns raised about practice.

Given the complex and rapidly changing healthcare climate, health care professionals are faced with the challenge of keeping abreast of new knowledge and developments in healthcare. This challenge calls for a commitment to continuous learning and ongoing evaluation of practice standards. COTNS has introduced a Continuing Competency Program as a mechanism for assessing the professional competence of occupational therapists.

The COTNS Continuing Competency Program is designed to ensure therapists remain competent, provide safe, effective, and ethical services that meet or exceed established professional standards. The program provides the structure whereby therapists demonstrate they have the knowledge, skills, and judgment required to practice in any given role or setting.

The Continuing Competency Program is made up of two related components: The Continuing Competency Portfolio which provides structure and tools for therapists to keep themselves current and competent through assessment and professional development activities; and Peer Assessment which is the evaluative component of the Continuing Competency program. It provides an audit/review process to ensure that members maintain their competency. Each year a percentage of eligible therapists are selected for mandatory audit/review.

The Continuing Competency Program is linked with COTNS's registration process. All practicing therapists are required to declare on the annual registration form that they have complied with the program in the previous year and undertake to continue to comply with the regulations regarding the Continuing Competency Program.

The therapists working within your program/facility appreciate your ongoing support as they strive to maintain their continuing professional development to ensure safe, ethical and competent practice.

For more information about the program, contact the College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia by phone at (902) 455-0556 or e-mail at [admin@cotns.ca](mailto:admin@cotns.ca).

Sincerely,

Pauline Cousins, Chair to Board

Dorothy Edem, Chair to Continuing Competency Committee

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