

3:00 P.M.
Room 1613, Veteran's Memorial Building
Halifax, Nova Scotia
June 16, 2004

Present: Cherie Lewis, Chair
Ruth Duggan, Treasurer
Megan Russell, Secretary
Gayle Salsman, Registrar
Joy Moulton, Office Manager

Denise Bond	Diane Smith	Jennifer Scott
Pauline Cousins	Kimberley Martin	Kim Hansen
Phyllis Williams	Shirley McCarthy	Mary Ellen Sullivan
Candy Baggs	Alexandra Yip	Michelle Richards
Jo Yazer	Nicole Works	Michelle Eaton
Donna Stevenson	Nancy L. Littler	Karen Pratt
Liz Townsend	Karla Moore	Cynthia Stilwell
Kathryn Parsons	Shirley Anderson	Richard Pingert
Lynda Pingert	Norma Lewis	Alison Mansfield
Carolyn Discher	Carolyn Kelly	Shannon Hickey
Ann Moore	Tobi Flewwelling	Elizabeth McLean
Colleen Shubaly	Sheila Banks	Reg Urbanowski
Elaine Handrahan		

Proxies:

Jennifer Mason	M. Carol Bowlby Sifton	Susan Doble
Karen Landry	Phyllis Spurway	Greg Parsons
Paula Rushton	Anne Marie Brousseau	Miranda Yan
Mary Beth Fleming	Diane MacKenzie	Sharon Geleyn

Via Tele-Conference:

Due to technical difficulties, the members from the Cape Breton site, Truro site and Springhill site could not be linked.

Regrets:

Monique Yazbek	Lana Meagher	Sandra Taylor
Stacey Ackroyd		

Michael O'Hara, COTNS legal counsel and David Myatt, Chair and public member, Advisory Committee to the Investigation and Complaint Procedures of College were also present.

1.0 Call to Order

Cherie Lewis, Chair of the Board, called the Annual General Meeting of the College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia (COTNS) to order at 3:18 p.m.

2.0 Approval of Agenda

It was moved by J. Yazer, seconded by E. Handrahan, that the Agenda be approved as circulated. Motion carried.

3.0 Approval of Minutes

It was moved by C. Discher, seconded by D. Bond, that the Minutes be approved as circulated. Motion carried.

A call was made for volunteers to review the Minutes of the 2004 Annual General Meeting. Cynthia Stilwell and Kim Hansen volunteered to proof this year's minutes.

4.0 Chair's Report

Cherie Lewis reviewed the College's Strategic Plan that included activities of the College during the past year. Highlights included:

- A proposed change to Registration Regulation 51(1)(2) regarding Area of practice was shown on overhead. This proposed change has been passed by the Board and must be sent to the Governor-in-Council for approval.

It is proposed that existing Sections 51(1) and (2) of the Registration Regulations would be repealed and replaced with the following:

51(1) *Subject to 51(2), no occupational therapist shall use or condone the use of any terms, titles or designations indicating specialization or expertise in any branch of occupational therapy, or with respect to any particular aspect of occupational therapy.*

51(2) *For greater clarity, an occupational therapist may indicate:*

- the type and/or amount of experience he or she has in occupational therapy;*
- his or her preferred areas of occupational therapy practice; and*
- his or her areas of training which may or may not include the institution or organization which provided the training.*

provided that in all cases:

- the information provided is accurate and truthful, and the onus of proving that the information is accurate and truthful shall be on the occupational therapist, in any proceedings under the Act or otherwise.*

In response to a request, the current regulation was read aloud. It was noted that this is not a specialist regulation as there currently is no specialist register; thus the reason it was called "Area of Practice" document. This is factually based, not holding anyone person better than anyone else. L. Townsend was concerned about the removal of titles, designations from this document such as PhD or Doctorate. The "Area of Practice" document does not take away from university degrees. It is meant to lessen the restrictions that currently exist. It is currently the College's policy that the term "Doctor" referring to someone with a PhD would simply be stating a degree and this policy would not change under the proposed change.

In response to a question concerning the Board's motivation for changing the regulation, the Chair responded that it was felt that the current regulation was too restrictive and therefore prevented the public from making an informed choice when selecting an occupational therapist. However, there is concern regarding the use of terms and titles, which the public would perceive as the College designating someone a specialist. If the College is designating someone as a 'specialist' then there must be clear competencies associated with the relevant specialty in order to ensure that the individual meets a higher standard than that of an occupational therapist. As there are no nationally recognized occupational therapy specialties and corresponding competencies do not currently exist, the Board has chosen not to develop a specialist register at this time.

A question was asked about being able to describe your job such as could you say that you are a case manager. Case manager is a job title that has been designated by an organization, it does not imply that the College has designated that the individual is a specialist in case management. When referring to your job title, it should be clear to the public that you are not a specialist and that this is your position as designated by your employer.

Another question was posed which asked whether or not the College would publish some interpretation of this? In response, the Registrar agreed to publishing the College's interpretation of both the current and proposed changes in an upcoming newsletter, including the difference between job title and specialization.

- G. Salsman thanked Michael O'Hara for preparing the documents outlining the interpretation of PIPEDA for the use of occupational therapists. These documents are available through the College and are posted on the website.
- It was noted that Kendra Rex was not here as she has just had a baby. Connie Morrissey, the College's sole public member has resigned upon completion of her two year term. This means we are looking for 3 governor-in-council members. The NS Government continues to advertise in the newspaper for members from the public for our Board and others. If anyone is aware of someone who might be interested, please contact the College and they can be provided with further information as to how to apply for these positions.
- Priorities for the upcoming year included:
 - Establishing the Peer Assessment Program
 - Revising the Defined Register Regulations as required by government
 - Completing Policies and Procedures around Complaints Process
 - Complete Practice Guidelines on delegation of occupational therapy components to non-regulated support personnel

- Select Governance Model for College and use to revise role descriptions for College Staff, Board and Committee members
- Implement Annual Review for College staff and Board members
- Review and Revise College Policies around Registration
- Identify methods for recruiting Board and Committee members
- Publish Practice Guideline: Client Records

5.0 Registrar's Report

G. Salsman presented an overview of Registrar's report. The Registrar's Role includes acting as a liaison with other organizations. Some of these include:

The Nova Scotia Health Regulators Network, which consists of other health regulatory bodies in the province. The focus of this organization is to work in a collaborative manner on issues facing health regulators. One such issue this year has been the government announcing that it is considering "umbrella legislation" for the province. This organization has met with government officials and has submit a joint response outlining the concerns of the various Colleges with moving in this direction. The representatives from the Department of Health indicated that their primary motivation for moving forward with such changes revolved around difficulty getting on the legislative agenda for all changes and the difficulties in dealing with the numerous organizations waiting to become self-regulating. The College's feel that these difficulties can be solved in other ways. The concern of the Regulators is that umbrella legislation would increase bureaucracy and would be costly especially for smaller Colleges as regulatory bodies would be required to have similar programs

Upcoming activities include sponsoring a joint educational event in May 2005.

Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO) – This year ACOTRO published The Essential Competencies Performance Indicators, which members should have recently received. They will now be looking at how to utilize performance indicators for credentialing review for foreign graduates, registrant activities and complaints activities. Other activities include a review of the mutual recognition agreement, a review of the current credentialing processes used in the various provinces as well as linking with CAOT and ACOTUP on various issues.

6.0 Treasurer's Report

R. Duggan corrected two mistakes in the AGM Report. They were:

- Page 9, under balance sheet should have read: (with comparative figures for **2004**)
- Page 10, under Expenses add: **Education/Training – 2004 – 588.45 – 2003 – 00.**

R. Duggan presented an overhead of budget versus actual in the treasurer's report. She also reviewed and explained some of the items in the budget.

- Equipment budget is high because we have purchased a printer, photocopier, fax and scanner - all in one.
- Member Incentive Expense is too get more people involved from outside this area. She was disappointed that member incentive wasn't used. This extra money was there so more voices could be heard from outside the Halifax Municipality.

- The Peer Assessment Committee is organized and plans are being made. She noted that committee members would now receive a stipend at the end of the year. Members outside metro could be compensated for travel, etc. Michael O'Hara stated that it is very important that we communicate that compensation can be made to members serving on board or committees outside metro.
- Ruth also noted that funding is in place if needed for umbrella regulations down the road.

R. Duggan made a motion to accept Raymond Ells as auditor, seconded by A. Moore.
Motion carried.

7.0 Practice Committee Report

D. Bond mentioned that the Practice Guidelines – Client Records have been adapted from the Ontario College to meet the requirements of our Act and Regulations. COTNS members in varying practice settings have reviewed the proposed Practice Guideline. The Practice Committee received feedback from members and revised the guideline accordingly. The guideline is being submitted to the Board for approval.

They are also in the process of developing a Practice Guideline on the use of Support Personnel using CAOT Guidelines, as well as Guidelines from British Columbia, New Brunswick and Ontario. Once the draft is approved in principle by the Board, it will be sent out to a selection of OT's for comments.

The Committee is also working on a document for Provisional registrants and their sponsors to assist both in determining their roles and responsibilities in the sponsorship process.

The Committee continues to work on improving the College's Refresher Education Program and is looking at partnering with Dalhousie for the supervised practice requirement. Dr. E. Townsend expressed her concerns that it is very difficult to attract people to Dalhousie University who are qualified for academic work and are still licensed as Occupational Therapists. Individuals with PhD's in Canada are scarce and they are not people who typically retain their licence. Dalhousie University would like to continue with its current mandate that individuals teaching and completing research at the University be licensed. However, there are concerns with ensuring that these individuals can become licensed. She requested that the committee strive to ensure refresher education is not only in clinical areas so that these individuals can seek re-licensure.

She thanked all the members of this committee including Gayle Salsman and Dave Brannen. They are looking for more committee members, anyone who is interested can contact the office.

8.0 Advisory Committee for the Investigation and Complaint Procedures

Dave Myatt, Chair, made mention that he has been involved with the College for 15 years. This committee has had 15 meetings and an average of 5 members. Referred to Report in AGM and outlined what this committee has done and where they are now. They feel good with their progress but there is still work to be done. Two members are leaving this committee and he asked for members to volunteer for future complaints committee. This committee is to protect the College and public at large.

Dave Myatt thanked the committee members and noted that since November they have been having pizzas at their meetings.

G. Salsman noted that this committee has done a fabulous job and that there were two members from the public on this committee, Gerald Cameron and Dave Myatt, which is a great service to the College. More public members would be welcome to this committee.

9.0 Peer Assessment

R. Urbanowski stated that this committee has been very busy meeting monthly and sometimes every two weeks. They are currently in the process of devising a method to build a portfolio. They are meeting the end of month to finish off building the portfolio. Open to any kind of input, lots of work, fun, meetings are at lunch times, very flexible. Thanked all committee members.

A. Moore asked if all Occupational Therapists would be required to keep a portfolio. Once the portfolio is in place, it will be a requirement of the College and therefore every occupational therapist will be required to keep one.

Question about what the process might look like. R. Urbanowski responded that it would probably be similar to the Quality assurance procedures for hospital. It was mentioned that members would like to see that it incorporates client feedback as well as peer feedback.

Dr. E. Townsend stated that she would like to express her concern that continuing competence programs often do not apply to individuals working in non-clinical settings. She expressed concern that, in her opinion, the Essential Competencies document does not capture policy research and other areas of non-clinical practice. She requested that when developing the peer assessment program, the committee commit to ensuring there are criteria for competencies in the area of research and policy development.

In addition, Dr. Townsend recommended that the Board have a clear position which supports the ability of occupational therapists working in non-traditional areas to maintain licensure with the College.

Ruth Duggan stated that there had been only her and Reg Urbanowski on this committee initially and one of the priorities was to get more members. They now have five plus one pending – 6 on the committee. They are gathering information as to what other licensing bodies have in place such as quality improvement and strategies. They are hoping to get the ball rolling in the fall and have something in place by next spring. The committee will need members involved at arms-length to join the committee to do runs on pilot testing.

10.0 Nominations Committee

J. Yazer and E. Handrahan mentioned that they had two other nominations for board members aside from Phyllis Williams (whose biography was included in the AGM Report). Kim Kelly, a new grad would like to offer and was excited about this opportunity and Karey Rushton-Fleming also agreed to let her name stand. As these were last minute nominations and were not here to speak, it was decided that elections for the Board would be done in a mail out.

It was noted that R. Duggan and M. Russell terms were completed on the Board and they were not reoffering for the Board. They both will be involved in committees of the Board though.

A call for Nominations went out three times. No other offers.

J. Yazer and E. Handrahan reoffered to sit on the Nominations Committee for 2004-05.

12.0 New Business

1.0 Dr. E. Townsend read a letter dated June 7th to Dalhousie University School of Occupational Therapy from the NS department of Education. The letter indicated that while financing for the new Masters Level Entry program was not yet approved, the School could go forward with its planning, pending financial approval.

2.0 Brainstorming session- lots of work to be done, big projects, few volunteers. How does the College get its membership involved? Some ideas included:

- Think outside the box. Work outside meetings, have items typed and sent around for input without having a meeting. Assigning work outside. Structure work done outside. Paid positions promote use of an individual to do a task. Documentation, questions, jot down thoughts and email when you can get them together. Get everybody's ideas and then send out to other members. Only meet 2 or 3 times a year.
- Regions – make sure e-mails and technologies work.
- Use website.
- Advocate with work places re technology. Actively make sure technology works.
- Teleconference – hold meetings outside Halifax.
- Holding the meetings in the middle of a work day not always in the best interest of working occupational therapists especially those outside HRM.
- Do a day and half.
- What would it take to get members more involved? Move a committee to another region. Members of Board go around to other areas. Do a draw for a weekend.
- Working on Board committees could count as currency hours or continuing education hours.
- Incentive – interest free incentive for someone in an isolated situation to buy a computer. Partner with IBM, etc. for some kind of deal. This would be so that people could have use of modern technology.
- Have a contact person at each work place when committees are available.
- Peer assessment focus groups worked well. Reg went to different areas.
- Suggestion was made to have AGM in Dartmouth next year.
- Suggestion to have AGM on a weekend.
- M. O'Hara suggested a business meeting with an overnight including a social and education component or a spa. Making it on a weekend.
- COTNS partner with NSSOT for AGM and include education events.

Tentative Date for 2005 AGM

It was suggested June 15th, 2005, from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

It was also suggested that the Board consider some of the above ideas before confirming a place and date.

It was agreed that an apology to the teleconference sites be sent.

C. Lewis thanked everyone for coming and the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Submitted,

Joy Moulton
Office Manager