

College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia

2013-2014 Annual Report

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MISSION: The College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia regulates the provincial practice of occupational therapy by ensuring safe and ethical service in order to protect the public interest.

VISION: The College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia strives to effectively regulate the practice of occupational therapy and values continuous quality improvement.

VALUES: The College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia is committed to demonstrating:

- Fairness and equity in business interactions with the public and with the registrants
- Accountability for decisions and actions
- Respect for both public and professional perspectives
- An open honest communication process
- Accessibility to services provided
- Efficiency of business practice

Strategic Plan 2013-2018

Responsive and Accountable Leadership

- Board will demonstrate strong leadership through best practice governance
- Board will adopt a risk management framework with respect to its operational activities
- Assures sufficient financial and human resources to meet its mandate
- Exemplifies good management practices to meet the evolving needs of the College
- Supports its committees to optimize their contribution towards the role of the College
- Enhances the Public's awareness of its role in protecting the public's right to safe ethical occupational therapy

Supporting and advancing Quality Regulation

- Ensures regulatory excellence by keeping its regulations current and demonstrating compliance with the Nova Scotia Fair Registration Practices Act
- Advances quality regulatory programs and services
- Collaborates with other regulatory bodies to ensure best practice in regulation
- Employs innovation to fulfill its regulatory commitment while being more responsive to the challenges facing occupational therapists
- Promotes public awareness, input and access to information by developing a public awareness strategy

Monitoring and Supporting Quality Practice

- Will implement a Continuing Competence Program to ensure the ongoing quality of occupational therapy practice in Nova Scotia
- Provides support to occupational therapists in Nova Scotia to meet the essential competencies for practice

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2014

The Board of Directors of the College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia (COTNS) is pleased to announce that the **2014 Annual General Meeting (AGM)** will be held as follows:

DATE:	Thursday, June 19th, 2014 4:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
LOCATION:	IWK Health Centre Parker Reception Room 5850-5980 University Avenue Halifax, NS

Please note: A quorum of 10% of the membership is required to conduct business as per the regulations. The Board of Directors would encourage those unable to attend to issue a proxy by filling out the information below and having the person, who you assign to vote on your behalf, bring it to the AGM.

If you are unable to travel to the meeting, and would like to participate by videoconferencing, please contact the COTNS Office by **May 31, 2014**, and arrangements will be made. **More information regarding videoconferencing sites will be forwarded via email in due course.**

We request that all members RSVP by calling (902) 455-0556 or 1-877-455-0556 (NS only) by May 31, 2014, or by sending an email to admin@cotns.ca.

CHAIR'S REPORT

PAULINE COUSINS, CHAIR

During the past year the Board has worked with its committees to support the great work they do, including developing practice, credential and continuing competency documents to support occupational therapy practice. Committee members have worked diligently on moving our competency program forward and developing a Code of Ethics for Nova Scotia occupational therapists.

As was presented at the last AGM, the Board has developed a strategic plan to guide COTNS over the coming years. The focus will be on ensuring our sustainability through a sound organizational structure, ensuring compliance with the Act and core regulatory requirements, and developing our professional identity. During the past year the Board has been focusing on our top priority – succession planning – as we realize our organization is at risk, in that our information is tied to a small number of people. We have made great gains in the past year in identifying our risks and possible solutions with the help of a consultant.

Recently I attended the CAOT conference in Fredericton. Attending this national conference gives one the perspective that no matter where or how one practices occupational therapy the issues are still the same. Everyone is struggling with funding and timing issues – there is no time, and it is necessary to do more with fewer resources. As such, we need to take every opportunity that arises and make the most of it. Last year at the AGM there was discussion about continuing education to ensure competency. What is continuing education? Is it the traditional way of attending a course and passively assimilating the information presented, then returning to practice and attempting to put that information into practice? Or is it being a preceptor to a student and learning from one another in the context of practice? Or is it being a mentor or being mentored by another colleague? Or is it reading a best practice guideline, discussing an article, completing a research study, or writing an article or guideline?

The way we define continuing education in these times of fiscal and resource restraint needs to change. Over the past year the Continuing Competency Committee has worked to better understand what competency is and to identify a way to move forward to ensure all occupational therapists in Nova Scotia are competent to practice. The challenge for each therapist is to take an active role in ensuring competency in practice.

As the CAOT president defined it at the conference, our professional identity is more than a job title. It is a contract with those we serve. Our roles may change but our profession does not.

REGISTRAR'S REPORT

GAYLE SALSAMAN, REGISTRAR

Last year, the College embarked on a new 5 year strategic plan set by the Board. As I mapped out the work ahead, I was struck by the growth of the College over the past 12 years that I have been Registrar. Our membership has doubled and the demands placed on the College by government have increased as well. As a result of this growth, the strain placed on the College's human resources is beginning to become too much to overcome. In order to responsibly manage the College's resources the Board has contracted HRPros to provide an analysis of the College's current and future resource needs and to provide the Board with recommendations for appropriate staffing levels, training needs and succession planning to allow the College to best utilize its resources while fulfilling its obligations. This work will be completed shortly and will likely result in significant changes to the way the College does its work.

In the meantime, we are working diligently to meet the strategic goals set by the Board. Throughout this report, you will learn of the work being completed by our Committees. In addition, I have had a busy year working with our partners on several projects in order to continue to demonstrate the collaborative spirit envisioned by the Board.

Nova Scotia Regulated Health Professions Network

In 2012, Nova Scotia became the first province to introduce legislation enabling regulated health professions to work together more efficiently and effectively in the public interest. This new legislation, entitled the Regulated Health Professions Network Act, will enable the 21 regulated health professions in the province to voluntarily collaborate, when deemed appropriate, in regulatory processes related to the investigation of complaints, interpretation and/or modification of scopes of practice, and review of registration appeals. On behalf of the College, I have been a member of the working group which sought to bring this legislation forward and for the past year, I have been a member of the first executive committee for the Network.

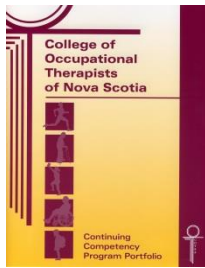
I believe this formal recognition of collaborative self-regulation will build upon and enhance the regulatory system already in place. In addition, it is also my belief that it provides members with an opportunity to collaborate at the regulatory level in a manner that compliments and supports the delivery of safe, quality health care provided by interprofessional collaborative practice teams.

Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO)

For the past 3 years, I have had the pleasure of serving in the role of vice-president for ACOTRO. I have assisted in the review of the organizational framework including the development of governance policies and in ACOTRO's transition to the new federal Not For Profit Corporations Act currently underway. I have also assisted in the planning of two leadership forums in partnership with the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs at the annual CAOT conference and assisted in the planning for the ACOTRO Sponsored Sessions.

In addition, in 2010 ACOTRO secured over \$2 million of funding for a five-year project from the Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition program. This funding allows us to complete our Harmonization Project aimed at implementing a common assessment approach for qualification and competence based assessment of Internationally Educated Occupational Therapists (IEOTs). Creating a national assessment process advances COTBC's ability to provide transparent, objective, impartial and fair assessment of IEOTs wishing to practice in NS. As a member first the project council and now the implementation committee I have learned a great deal and am excited to continue learning.

Regardless of what shape the College may take in the year to come, I am committed to the Board's strategic vision and to strengthening the future of OT regulation in Nova Scotia.



Continuing Competency Committee

DOROTHY EDEM,
CONTINUING COMPETENCY COORDINATOR

Mandate

The mandate of the committee is to develop, implement and evaluate the Continuing Competency Program for Occupational Therapists in Nova Scotia. The committee reports to the COTNS Board.

Focus of work for the past year:

The committee continues to explore the most effective and efficient way to structure the Continuing Competency Program (CCP).

At the June 2013 AGM, the committee presented a revised Continuing Competency Program Framework. The framework outlines the CCP purpose, goal, guiding principles, and three components.

The three CCP components are:

a) **Competence Maintenance:**

This is the **reflective** component of the Continuing Competency Program. This component describes the basic activities required by all members to demonstrate that they are engaging in reflective practice and complying with regulatory requirements.

b) **Competence Evaluation:**

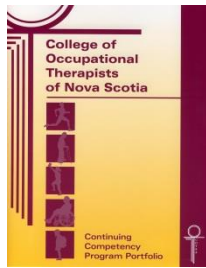
This is the **evaluative** component of the Continuing Competency Program. This involves a three -step review. i) **evaluation** of compliance with continuing competency requirements; ii) assessment of skills, knowledge and judgment of selected members (those doing clinical work); and iii) onsite **assessment** of few members by an assessor

c) **Competence Improvement**

This component is the **improvement** component of the Continuing Competency Program. It is designed to **improve** competencies of members identified through Competence Review as having competence level below acceptable standards.

The committee's activities in the past year include but not limited to the following:

- Holding meetings to explore and develop the most effective plan for the design and implementation of the Continuing Competency Program Framework.
- Consulting with other occupational therapy colleges to learn about their Continuing Competency Program and how they assess competence of their members.
- In October 2013, some committee members attended a symposium on *Continuing Competence: Improving Outcomes through Evidence*. The symposium was part of a conference hosted by the Canadian Network of National Associations of Regulators (CNNAR) in Toronto. There were several presentations on effective continuing competence programs. Some topics included design, tools for assessing competence, program evaluation, and promoting collaboration within and across continuing competence programs. The committee members who attended found the conference very valuable. They also made contact with continuing Competence experts/researchers.



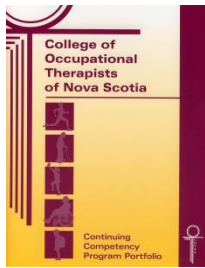
Continuing Competency Committee

(continued)

- In November 2013, the committee held a 3-hour meeting where they reviewed several consultation and conference materials. The committee came to a decision to explore creating a unique and specific COTNS blueprint for Competence Review instead of adapting from other colleges. The blueprint could include the integration of practice hours, jurisprudence requirements, career pathway, and standards for clinical care.
- The Committee recommended to the COTNS board to seek the service of a qualified consultant to work with the committee to develop evidence-based recommendations for the assessment and improvement of continuing competence of members.
- In April 2014, a Request for Proposal (RFP) was developed and circulated to qualified consultants. Three proposals were received.
- A request was sent to COTNS membership requesting interest to partake in the proposal review process. The committee put together a selection panel consisting of members of the Committee and two community members of COTNS.

The RFP Selection Panel consisted of:

- Joanne Comeau, CC Committee chair
 - Karen Roberts-Small, CC Committee member
 - Allanna Jost, CC Committee and COTNS Board member
 - Diane Mackenzie, School of Occupational Therapy, Dalhousie University faculty member
 - Sue L. Street, occupational therapist & private practice Consultant
 - Dorothy Edem, COTNS Continuing Competency Program Coordinator
-
- The committee developed a proposal review guideline to guide the review process. The guideline outlines some basic guiding principles and three review steps: i) Written Proposal Review - to evaluate received proposals that meet the RFP criteria and screen the proposals to next steps; ii) Reference checks - to verify the consultant's experience with similar projects and iii) Interview with Selection Panel - to further investigate consultant's experience and interest in the project; and to determine if the consultant is a good fit for the project.
 - In May 2014, the committee sent its recommendation to the Board for consideration.
 - The selected consultant will be announced at the AGM.
 - The committee was contacted by Newfoundland & Labrador Occupational Therapy Board (NLOTB) to explore partnership potential. The collaborative partnership is being explored with other Atlantic Provinces who may want to share/link with COTNS Continuing Competency Program.



Continuing Competency Committee

(continued)

2014/2015 Work plan:

The committee will continue to work on following:

- To work with the consultant to develop evidence-based recommendations for the assessment and improvement of continuing competence of members of the College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia (COTNS). This will include recommendations for structure and tools.
- To work with a qualified vendor (through RFP process) to develop and implement tools to support the Continuing Competency Framework.
- To explore the opportunity to work with other Atlantic Provinces as partners in the development of COTNS blueprint for Continuing Competency Program.
- To explore the development of Online Self-Study Learning Modules and E-portfolio.
- To engage members, keep them informed and updated on CCP development.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Edem
Continuing Competency Program Coordinator

Complaints and Investigation Committees

The College's mandate includes a responsibility to investigate all written complaints against Occupational Therapists. The College's formal complaints process consists of two steps established by legislation. First all written complaints must be assessed by an Investigation Committee, which has both public and professional members. This committee has broad powers of investigation and dispositions include providing advice to members, dismiss the complaint, reprimand the member or refer the matter to the Hearing Committee.

There was one written complaint received by the College this year. The investigation committee completed a thorough investigation of the matter and with a thoughtful decision making process, dismissed the complaint.

In addition, this year the College received several informal complaints related to the College's regulations around advertising. These complaints were resolved informally and therefore not referred on to the Investigation Committee. The College has determined, however, that education around the advertising regulations is required and COTNS will be releasing a guide to assist members in the Fall.

Practice Committees

The College is committed to developing standards that are concise, practical and supportive while promoting good practice. It is a fundamental responsibility of all occupational therapists to be familiar with these documents. When an occupational therapist has questions about his or her practice, it is the hope of the College that occupational therapists will turn to these documents for guidance.

The drafting and maintenance of practice guidelines, guidance documents, policy statements and standards documents are the work of the College's practice committees.

The practice committee with the assistance of Corina Walsh has reviewed and recommended a new code of ethics for the College. A survey of the membership is underway to ensure that the new code meets the needs of registrants.

In addition, the revised practice guideline: Assigning Service Components to Occupational Therapy Support Personnel is ready for distribution and a new practice guideline: Informed Consent will be sent out to key stakeholders for feedback in the Fall. Two other guidance documents: Guide to the Personal Health Information Act and Guide to the Personal Directives Act are almost complete.

The new redesign of the website will allow the College to improve the resources available to occupational therapists. The Practice Committees will be developing a resource outline in the upcoming year.

Credentials Committee

It is the core responsibility of the College to ensure the public that only qualified, competent and ethical occupational therapists are licensed to practise in Nova Scotia. The Fair Registration Practices Act (FRPA; the Act) applies to 50 regulatory bodies in Nova Scotia. FRPA governs the process a regulatory body follows to register a person who applies to practice as a member of that occupation. FRPA states that registration must follow a fair procedure and be transparent, objective, and impartial.

In 2013, a review of 5 volunteer regulatory bodies was conducted. The reports identified several key issues for improvement. The most often cited area for improvement related to increased clarity of websites, use of plain language on all communications and in particular recommended a step by step process outlining the registration process be identified.

As a result, the College has embarked on an overhaul of its website. A new platform has been developed and the content is currently being populated. The College hopes this new website will meet the needs of internationally educated occupational therapists as well as new Canadian occupational therapists looking for information on registration. The official launch of the new website will take place in September 2014.

Registration Statistics

Total Number of Registrants

2014	466
2013	472
2012	459
2011	434
2010	414
2009	385

Number of New Applicants:

2013	37
2012	43
2011	37
2010	53
2009	40

Occupational Therapist Workforce Profile, Nova Scotia, 2008 and 2012

		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Employed in Occupational Therapy		355	100	381	100	391	100	404	100	411	100
Per 100,000 Population		38		40		41		43		43	
Full-Time Equivalent		0.96		0.95		0.95		0.94		0.94	
Sex	Female	331	93.2	353	92.7	362	92.6	373	92.3	381	92.7
	Male	24	6.8	28	7.3	29	7.4	31	7.7	30	7.3
	Missing Values	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Average Age	Years	37.8		37.9		38.4		39.1		39.7	
Age Breakdown	< 30	67	19.0	79	20.8	76	19.5	66	16.4	59	14.4
	30-59	278	79.0	293	77.3	308	79.0	331	82.1	343	83.7
	60+	7	2.0	7	1.8	6	1.5	6	1.5	8	1.9
	Missing Values	3	0.8	2	0.5	1	0.3	1	0.2	1	0.2
Full-Time/ Part-Time Status	Full Time	271	76.3	288	75.6	310	79.3	308	78.4	301	77.8
	Part Time	84	23.7	93	24.4	81	20.7	85	21.6	86	22.2
	Missing Values	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	11	2.7	24	5.8
Employer Type	Hospital	191	53.8	194	50.9	208	53.2	252	62.4	248	60.3
	Community	51	14.4	45	11.8	50	12.8	43	10.6	43	10.5
	Professional Practice	36	10.1	45	11.8	41	10.5	37	9.2	49	11.9
	Other	77	21.7	97	25.5	92	23.5	72	17.8	71	17.3
	Missing Values	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Area of Practice	Direct Service, Mental Health	77	21.7	79	20.7	81	20.7	82	20.3	80	19.5
	Direct Service, Physical Health	162	45.6	169	44.4	180	46.0	181	44.8	181	44.0
	Direct Service, Other Areas	33	9.3	35	9.2	30	7.7	35	8.7	42	10.2
	All other areas of practice	53	14.9	76	19.9	76	19.4	80	19.8	80	19.5
	Vocational Rehabilitation	30	8.5	22	5.8	24	6.1	26	6.4	28	6.8
	Missing Values	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Position	Direct Service Provider	284	80.0	292	76.6	300	76.7	317	78.5	318	77.4
	Manager/Professional Leader/Coordinator	44	12.4	49	12.9	51	13.0	54	13.4	57	13.9
	Educator/Research	18	5.1	24	6.3	25	6.4	20	4.9	19	4.6
	Other	9	2.5	16	4.2	15	3.8	13	3.2	17	4.1
	Missing Values	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Multiple Employers	Single	308	86.8	326	85.6	363	92.8	366	90.6	367	89.3
	Multiple	47	13.2	55	14.4	28	7.2	38	9.4	44	10.7
	Missing Values	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Source of Funding	Public/Government	278	78.8	293	76.9	309	79.0	319	79.2	317	77.7
	Public-Private Mix/Private/Other	75	21.2	88	23.1	82	21.0	84	20.8	91	22.3
	Missing Values	2	0.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.2	3	0.7
Highest Education in Occupational Therapy	Diploma/Baccalaureate	318	89.6	321	84.3	316	80.8	321	79.5	325	79.1
	Master's/Doctorate	37	10.4	60	15.7	75	19.2	83	20.5	86	20.9
	Missing Values	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Location of Graduation	Canadian-Trained	339	95.5	367	96.3	379	96.9	389	96.3	399	97.1
	Internationally Educated	16	4.5	14	3.7	12	3.1	15	3.7	12	2.9
	Missing Values	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Board and Committee Members and College Staff

2013-2014 Board of Directors

Pauline Cousins, Chair
Allanna Jost, Treasurer
Victoria Apold, Secretary, Public Member
Stephanie Anthony-Brown, Vice-Chair
Brian Bailkowski

Credential's Committee

Nancy Littler, Chair
Nicole Boudreau
Scott Thieu
Christine Marchessault
Annette Fraser

Practice Committee (Halifax)

Jennifer Finlayson
Kristy Spear
Natalie O'Mara
Brian Bailkowski
Jocelyn Brown
Phyllis Williams, Committee Resource

Practice Committee (Cape Breton)

Sheila Poulton, Chair
Amanda Burlock
Raylene Morykot
Karen Kendall
Leslie Greencorn
Angela Stairs
D. Nadine Wadden

Continuing Competency Committee

Joanne Comeau, Chair
Karen Landry
Karen Roberts-Small
Jennifer Saunders
Allanna Jost
Dorothy Edem, Coordinator

College Staff

Gayle Salsman, Registrar
Brittany McKinnon, Office Manager
Joy Moulton, Finance Coordinator
Dorothy Edem, Continuing Competency Coordinator

AUDITOR'S REPORT

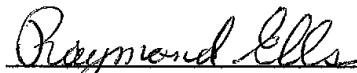
**College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia
Balance Sheet
March 31, 2014
(with comparative figures for 2013)**

	<u>Assets</u>	
	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
Current Assets		
Cash - Current Account	\$ 2,610.59	\$ 5,731.84
- Savings Account	89,475.17	58,247.39
Investments	350,839.49	343,621.23
Accounts receivable	2,822.98	4,244.50
<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$ 445,748.23</u>	<u>\$ 411,844.96</u>
	<u>Liabilities and Equity</u>	
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$ 5,607.35	\$ 1,701.61
Deferred Revenue	0.00	375.00
	<u>5,607.35</u>	<u>2,076.61</u>
Other Funds		
Special Projects Fund	59,896.49	59,896.49
Continuing Competency Fund	66,898.82	66,898.82
Hearing Fund	200,000.00	200,000.00
	<u>326,795.31</u>	<u>326,795.31</u>
Members Equity		
Balance, April 1, 2013	82,973.04	51,025.48
Add: Excess of Income over Expense	30,372.53	31,947.56
Balance, March 31st	113,345.57	82,973.04
<u>Total Liabilities and Equity</u>	<u>445,748.23</u>	<u>411,844.96</u>

Auditors Report

The above Balance Sheet and attached Statement of Income and Expense were prepared from information supplied by the College Accountant and my audit of the records.

In my opinion, these statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the College at March 31, 2014 and the result of its operations for the year then ended.


Raymond Ells
Auditor

AUDITOR'S REPORT

(Continued)

College of Occupational therapists of Nova Scotia
Statement of Income and Expenses
For the Year Ended March 31, 2014
(with Comparative Figures for 2013)

<u>Income</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
Membership Fees	\$ 185,625.00	\$ 177,375.00
Interest Earned	8,516.54	9,640.98
Administration Charges	3,180.00	3,345.00
Total Revenue	\$ <u>197,321.54</u>	\$ <u>190,360.98</u>
<u>Expense</u>		
Administration	\$ 35,716.15	\$ 29,828.87
Board & Committees	12,888.77	10,312.75
Collaborative Partnerships	1,221.50	1,187.00
Continuing Competency	20,401.13	16,074.14
Legal & Audit	4,774.88	12,120.75
Property	15,352.95	15,439.26
Public and Member Education	1,856.69	1,035.00
Salaries and Benefits	<u>74,736.94</u>	<u>72,415.65</u>
Total Expense	<u>166,949.01</u>	<u>158,413.42</u>
Excess of Income Over Expense	\$ <u>30,372.53</u>	\$ <u>31,947.56</u>

COTNS

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