

Volume 5, Issue 1

February 2008

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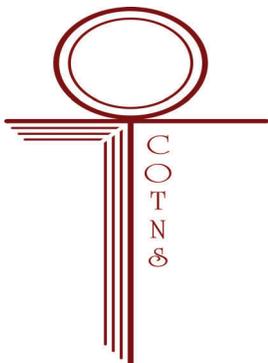
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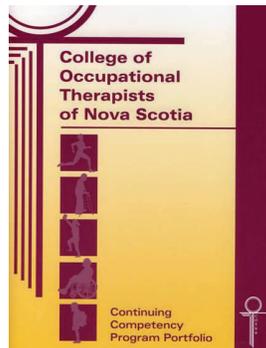
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COTNS NEWS



Continuing Competency Portfolio: A Portrait of Personal and Professional Growth

By now, you have received your Continuing Competency Portfolio package which was distributed in July 2007. It is hoped that you have had an opportunity to review the package and have started or completed compiling required materials into your portfolio. Maintaining your Portfolio is a mandatory licensing requirement in accordance with regulation changes passed by the Government of Nova Scotia in June 2007. According to the regulations, all therapists have to declare on their annual registration form that they are participating in the Continuing Competency Program which includes maintaining a Continuing Competency Portfolio. You will be required to make this declaration in 2008 as part of the renewal process.

The Continuing Competency Portfolio is more than a static profile of your current capacity as a therapist; rather it is a dynamic tool that represents an evolving collection of materials and reflections that links your past practice to the present, and the present to the future.

Developing your portfolio presents you with an opportunity for demonstrating personal and professional growth.

You are strongly encouraged to gather required and relevant materials to complete your portfolio. If you are starting today, you will have enough time to compile your portfolio before the 2008 registration period.

Tips on Completing Your Portfolio:

- Start one section at a time – spend a few hours to gather relevant information and place them in your portfolio.
- Spend some time on self reflection of your practice and accomplishments. You will be pleased with what you have achieved over the years!
- Update your portfolio as you complete each professional activity.



Tips on Completing Your Portfolio:

- Organize a “Portfolio Party” with colleagues and peers to reflect on and celebrate your accomplishments.
 - Organize learning sessions in your work area to facilitate completion of your portfolio. Preparing your portfolio in a group format is a learning process in itself.
 - Organize resume writing workshops.
 - Download required documents from the COTNS website – www.cotns.ca
 - Keep your portfolio in an accessible place – at work or at home – wherever you are most likely to record and file your continuing competency activities.
 - Have Fun completing your portfolio.
- ◆ *It has been an excellent opportunity for reflection on my career as you do forget some of the many courses attended and presentations presented in the past! But it also reinforces one of my strongest beliefs, the importance of continued learning and skill development as well as sharing those opportunities with others. This portfolio will allow peers to systematically review a standardized document, yet allow for the individual to highlight professional achievements and plan future goals. It is wonderful to have a binder which allows us to pull everything together- it becomes a place to not only store legal documentation but to also allow time to think about our growth as clinicians, our contribution to the profession, specific goals to continue the development and what competency really means. It really is about our personal journey through our profession! - Brenda Baxendale*

◆ *I feel more organized with my binder. I know most of my OT relevant information is in one place. As I find more I can easily add to it. I look over my OT documents more now as they are easy to find. Joanne Comeau.*

◆ *When I heard about the implementation of the Continuing Competency Portfolio, I have to admit that I was less than excited. I dreaded the time that I would have to take to put this together; I thought “I don’t have time for this”. When I finally sat myself down to focus on the project, I came to the realization that it wasn’t going to be as time consuming as I initially thought. I managed to pull the whole thing together in just a few short hours. Without realizing it, I had already started a filing system for my certificates from various courses – however these courses that I spent my time and money on were not being proudly shown anywhere. Instead, they were sitting in a file in a drawer, completely forgotten about. As I began to dig through my files looking for additions to my portfolio, it brought back fond memories and instilled a sense of pride in my accomplishments to date.*

We all keep items that show our accomplishments and the portfolio has proven to be an excellent resource for me. I only wish it had arrived a little sooner as some of my informal feedback that I’ve received over the years was recently abandoned in an effort to be more organized. This portfolio would have been a perfect organizational tool. Now I have a quick and easy way to look back on and show what I have done. Candy Miller.

◆ *I really enjoyed the process of putting together my Professional Portfolio. It has helped me to reflect on my years of practice and see how I have developed as an Occupational Therapist. The portfolio is now a tool I have for reviewing and organizing my professional documents. Although the initial organization of my portfolio took some time, I believe it will save me much time in the future locating and organizing my documents. Overall it has been a fun and rewarding experience so far. Leticia White.*

◆ *I found the process of preparing my portfolio both challenging and rewarding. Challenging, because I had just changed positions and discarded several valuable pieces for the portfolio. Rewarding, as it allowed me to reflect on my career to date and in spite of not having hard copies, the memories are still vivid. My advice is to start slow with the required pieces and gradually contribute your more personal accomplishments. - Carmel O’Keefe*

Consultation and Education Session:

The Continuing Competency Committee and the COTNS Board are pleased to announce that they will be holding a series of education sessions in each Region. The focus of the education/consultation will be to educate and inform members about the Continuing Competency Program and other College matters. Detailed information and dates will be circulated in January 2008. If you want to host a specific education session in your area of practice, please contact the College for arrangement.

Development of Section 2 of the Continuing Competency Portfolio:

The first draft of Section 2- Assessment of Current Practice and Professional Development is completed. A pilot test will be conducted in the early spring of 2008. **Please contact the college to express your interest in participating in the pilot test.**

National Continuing Competency Conference:

The Continuing Competency Committee will be presenting a workshop and a Poster presentation on the development and implementation of the Continuing Competency Program at the National Continuing Competence Conference in Toronto from Nov 1-3, 2007.

Stay tuned for further news as the Continuing Competency Program continues to evolve. The committee will continue to maintain communication with members. If you have questions or feedback, please contact Dorothy Edem through e-mail at daedem@eastlink.ca. If you are interested in participating as a volunteer, please contact the College to express your interest.

Submitted by Dorothy Edem

Continuing Competency Program Coordinator

Mutual Recognition Agreement Regulations Approved

In June 2007, the Government approved the proposed changes to the College's Registration Regulations. Occupational therapists working in other provinces, who wish to move to Nova Scotia, may now apply for membership under the Mutual Recognition Agreement. This agreement was signed by all 10 ACOTRO members in 2001 and confirmed in 2006. In order to enact this agreement, the College required a specific regulation to allow for application under this agreement. Now that this regulation change has been approved, Nova Scotia is able to accept applicants under this agreement which is meant to streamline the application process.

Application forms will be available on-line. If you are a member of COTNS and looking to move to another province, please check with the province to which you are moving to ensure they are able to accept applicant under the Mutual Recognition Agreement.

2008

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

The College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia and the Nova Scotia Society of Occupational Therapists will be holding their Annual General Meetings on June 21st, 2008, at the IWK Auditorium.

More Details to follow in your 2008-2009 Renewal package in the spring.

HOLD THE DATE - JUNE 21st, 2008

COMMITTEES:

PRACTICE

Denise Bond—Chair

Nancy Garber

Jennifer Finlayson

ADVISORY

David Myatt—Chair

Janet de Saint-Sardos

Jennifer Scott

Gayle Salsman

CONTINUING

COMPETENCY

Joanne Comeau—Chair

Karen Landry

Susan Sparkes

Jennifer Saunders

Dorothy Edem -

Co-ordinator

NOMINATIONS

Lygia Figueiredo

Neil Morris

INVESTIGATIONS

Colleen Shubaly

David Myatt

Ruth Duggan

Meet the Board of Directors for the year 2008-2009

LETICIA WHITE—CHAIR

Leticia is originally from St. John's, NL. As a graduate from McGill University's B.Sc.(OccTher) class of 2003, she has over four years of clinical practice in a variety of practice settings. Her experience began in the small community of Sioux Lookout in Northwestern Ontario. After two and a half years working in a general practice setting, Leticia ventured to Nova Scotia and began working in a manufacturing environment. Since then, Leticia has worked in private consulting/disability management and she is now working as a Case Coordinator/Occupational Therapist with the Nova Scotia Teachers Unions Early Intervention Program for Teachers.

Leticia joined the College in 2006 as the recording secretary and has moved to the Chair position for her 2007-2008 term. She has also been involved with the NSSOT since 2006.

PHYLLIS WILLIAMS—VICE-CHAIR

A graduate of McGill University in 1977 with a BSc (Occ Ther), Phyllis has been working in the province of Nova Scotia ever since. She was employed at the Halifax County Regional Rehabilitation centre from graduation through June 2002 as a sole therapist and later a department head. With the closure of the rehabilitation centre, employment was offered with Quest—A Society For Adult Support and Rehabilitation.

As the occupational therapist with this agency, her responsibilities include providing service to the eleven clients at the regional rehabilitation centre site as well as a member of the Community Behavioural Support Service, a multi-disciplinary team which provides service to clients in the Department of Community Services, Community Supports for Adults program who are displaying behavioural difficulties. She has previously served two terms on the board of what was then NSAOT and two terms on the executive of NSSOT. She has always been interested in the role of a self-regulating professional body.

Meet the Board of Directors (cont'd)

KRISTA BALDWIN— SECRETARY

As a 2001 Dalhousie graduate, I have 6 years of clinical experience in the long term care continuum. Working at an enhanced care facility, the clients range in age from 23-103 and there is a large population of young adults with varying diagnoses (multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, stroke, traumatic brain injury, etc.). I have further contributed to the profession as an educator in pressure relief and wound care management and am Leader of the Wound Care Team of Excellence at my facility.

I have had the honor of working with a strong interdisciplinary team to produce Best Practice Guidelines for Least Restraint, which has been recognized by Nova Scotia Association of Health Organizations, as well as across Canada. The Best Practice Guidelines for the Prevention and Treatment of Skin Breakdown and Best Practice Guidelines for Pain Management, both of which I assisted in authoring, are nearing completion. I am the proud recipient of a September 2006 Nova Scotia Education and Research Fund Grant to further my education in pressure reduction and wound care by attending the University of Toronto's International Inter-professional Wound Care Course and becoming an opinion leader in this field. I was honored to co-present a two-day workshop with Linda Norton at the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists annual conference in June 2007.

In my spare time, I love to sing, play music instruments, read, and spend time with my extended family. Laughter, love, and music are my passions.

CHRISTINE MARCHESSAULT— TREASURER

After a year in the physiotherapy program at McGill University, Christine "saw the light" and transferred to Occupational Therapy, graduating in 1983. She began working at St. Mary's on the Lake in Kingston, Ontario and then moved on to a French psychiatric day centre in Valleyfield, Quebec where she became more fluent in her second language. In 1986 she began private practice in Ottawa that covered a variety of clients, and then she switched to Home Care for over 2 years. In 1997 she moved with her family to Halifax and began working at the IWK where she is today - with a brief sojourn in Saint John, New Brunswick working for Extra Mural. She works in a variety of areas at the IWK and also does some private work in the Halifax area. She was involved with the committee that brought the CAOT conference to Kingston and serves on various committees at the hospital.

VICTORIA APOLD—GOVERNOR- IN-COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

I am delighted to have recently joined the Board of the College of Occupational Therapists of Nova Scotia. I am a Dalhousie law school graduate and practised litigation law in Halifax for a number of years. I received my Master of Laws with a specialization in Health Law in 2005. I am currently doing research in the health law field at Dalhousie, with an emphasis of neuroethics.

2007 AGM WORLD CAFÉ

A world café was hosted during the AGM in June 2007 under the guidance of Ravi Tangri from Chrysalis. Three questions were posed; What are the greatest challenges you are facing in your work today?, How could the College and /or the Society support you in addressing your challenges? and The College and Society are driven by volunteer support from the membership. How could you support the College and Society in supporting you and your fellow members?

Common themes emerged from the questions. In response to the question “How could the College and/or the Society support you in addressing your challenges?”, the common themes were to

- 1) increase advocacy for the profession with the public, other health care professionals, funders and insurers,
- 2) provide increased educational opportunities,
- 3) increase peer networking and support,
- 4) review the regulations, in particular, the licensing regulations to reflect non specific OT roles and specialization,
- 5) develop standards and provide education regarding same, and
- 6) provide currency hours for volunteerism within the profession.

In response to the question about supporting the College and Society, the common themes were:

- 1) have time limited, specific tasks for volunteers,
- 2) increase face to face contact with members via rotation of meetings throughout the province,
- 3) increase communication with the members,
- 4) provide incentives to participate, and
- 5) tie volunteering for the profession into continuing education credits.

The world café proved to be a fun and efficient method of obtaining feedback from the membership and all feedback will be considered by both the College and the Society.

Thank you for your participation.

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

On January 17, 2008, the Board approved the terms of reference for the Credentials Committee. In accordance with the Occupational Therapists Act, the Credentials Committee shall review and evaluate the eligibility of licensure of new and returning applicants. The formation of this Committee will not only streamline the process, but allow the Board to act as the appeal process for any applications which are refused by the Credentials Committee. This is an important part of the process which will serve to improve the fairness of the College's registration process.

The key functions of this Committee will be:

- To consider the application in accordance with the Act.
- To make such inquiries or demand such further information as the committee sees fit.
- Where the applicant requests the opportunity to appear before the Credentials Committee, this request shall be granted and the applicant may appear with or without legal counsel.
- To submit a report for inclusion in the Annual Report.

Membership on this Committee will consist of a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 voting members. The College would like at least one public member on this Committee but has not made this a requirement given the difficulty in obtaining public members. The members will be appointed by the Board for a term of 2 years. The registrar will be an ex-officio member of this Committee. College legal counsel will be available at any time to this Committee.

This Committee will meet once per month either in person or via teleconference as desired by the Committee members.

Anyone interested in serving on this Committee is urged to contact the Board. Members outside of Halifax should note that involvement in this Committee lends itself well to participation via teleconference.

ACOTRO SPONSORED SESSION AT 2007 CAOT CONFERENCE

Continuing Competency Programs: Trends, Relevance and Challenges

The topic of ACOTRO's sponsored session caught many delegates' interest. Presenting in a room filled to capacity, panel members included:

- ◆ Dr. Susan Glover Takahashi, Director, Education and Research at the University of Toronto's Post Graduate Medical Education Program, where she is responsible for accreditation, curriculum and program development workshops, and web-based resources on teaching and evaluation;
- ◆ Barb Worth, Registrar of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario; and
- ◆ COTBC Registrar Kathy Corbett who facilitated the session as Chair of ACOTRO.

Barb Worth began the session by outlining the role of regulatory organizations in continuing competency and reviewing the current status of competency programs across all jurisdictions. Dr. Susan Glover Takahashi continued with a presentation covering definitions, models, factors affecting therapists' competence and methods of evaluating competence. Her presentation was energetic and she presented the complexities of competence simply, clearly, yet comprehensively.

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY REGULATORY ORGANIZATIONS (ACOTRO)

At its recent two-day business meeting in July, ACOTRO received the report of its commissioned project *Occupational Therapy Substantial Equivalency Competency Evaluation: Report of Stage I*. Funded by the Manitoba Immigrant Integration Program, Dr. Vivien Hollis and other researchers from the University of Alberta conducted a literature search to provide in-depth information about the substantial equivalency requirements and processes of various health professions. The project included a review of scholarly literature and information from twelve professions across eight countries. ACOTRO is reviewing the report, and will be considering the next project needed to advance the ACOTRO goal of adding competency-based assessment to the processes by which registration and/or licensure in any jurisdiction is confirmed. ACOTRO remains focused and involved in several initiatives to enhance our ability to recognize internationally educated occupational therapists and sustain a health, competent occupational therapy workforce.

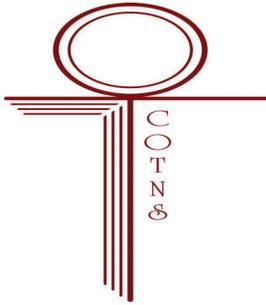
Both ACOTRO articles written by:

Cathy Corbett

COTBC Registrar and ACOTRO Chair

PROJECT REVIEW

The Practice Committee of the College is in the process of reviewing our Code of Ethics. This is a large undertaking and we need many volunteers to help. If you can help with this project, please call the office at (902) 455-0556 or 1-877-455-0556.



**COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPISTS OF NOVA SCOTIA**

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Visit our website

www.cotns.ca

OFFICE STAFF

Gayle Salsman Registrar

Joy Moulton Office Manager

OFFICE HOURS

Monday–Thursday

9 am–1 pm

REMINDERS

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.

BOARD MEETINGS

Members of the College are permitted to attend any Board meetings if they call in advance so room may be made available to accommodate them.

The next Board meetings are scheduled for:

February 28, 2008

March 27, 2008

GET INVOLVED

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The College urgently requires volunteers! Please consider getting involved with your College.