



# NEWSLETTER

Issue 12

Produced by the Occupational Therapists Registration Board of Western Australia • PO Box 959 South Perth WA 6951 • Phone (08) 9368 2655 • Fax (08) 9368 2677

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

### **Ms Joanna Riches ( Chairperson )**

The Permanent Head of the Health Department of Western Australia

*Nominated by OT Australia WA and appointed by the Minister for Health*

### **Mrs Heather Freegard**

Curtin University of Technology

*Nominated by OT Australia WA and appointed by the Minister for Health*

### **Mrs Thelma Burnett**

Occupational Therapist

*Nominated by OT Australia WA and appointed by the Minister for Health*

### **Ms Sally Wojnar-Horton**

Head of Department (OT), Women & Children's Health Service, Princess Margaret & King Edward Hospitals

*Nominated by OT Australia WA and appointed by the Minister for Health*

### **\*Mr Kerry Jones**

Occupational Therapist

*Nominated by OT Australia WA and appointed by the Minister for Health*

### **Dr Robert Chandler**

Medical Practitioner

*Nominated for appointment by the Minister for Health*

### **Mr Lawrence Farrow**

Occupational Therapist

*Nominated by OT Australia WA and appointed by the Minister for Health*

\* Term of office expires 30 November 2003

## ADMINISTRATION/CONTACTING THE BOARD

<b>Kim Bradbury</b>	Registrar
<b>Kerry Hoppenbrouwers</b>	Administration
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	Office hours are Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5.00 pm.

## REGISTRATION NUMBERS

At the beginning of December 2003, the number of registered occupational therapists in Western Australia was 1203.

## FEE SCHEDULE

The following fees are stipulated in the Act:

### **Registration Fees (GST Exempt)**

Application Fee	\$60
Annual Practising Fee	\$60
Restoration – following voluntary removal from the Register	\$20
Penalty Restoration – following involuntary removal from the Register	\$35
Fine for Penalty Restoration – payment of each year's practising fee that the OT has been removed from the Register	

### **Administrative Fees (GST Exempt)**

Change of Particulars	\$10
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## RESEARCH GRANTS

The Board will once again consider applications from registered occupational therapists for research grants for 2004. Application forms and information concerning the conditions for the grant may be downloaded from the website at [www.otbwa.com.au](http://www.otbwa.com.au) and should be lodged prior to 28 February 2004.

Two applications were approved for 2003, and Research Grants awarded to Dr A Passmore for a research project titled **“Enhancing mental health competencies through participation in the “Kids Can Network” for young people who have a mother with a neurological disorder”** and also, Ms C Elliott towards her proposed research project titled **“Investigation into the efficacy of lycra arm splints on impairment, activity and participation in children with cerebral palsy”**.

Reports for ongoing research projects are itemised below:

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### DOES THE USE OF NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFLUENCE VARIATION IN POSTURE AMONG ADULTS?

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Ms Marina Wise, Curtin University of Technology,  
School of Occupational Therapy

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have become integral to many tasks within work, leisure and instrumental activities of daily living. This study is investigating if the postures and muscle activity in adults are more monotonous when performing activities that are computer or electronics based compared to non-ICT activities.

Adult subjects are being directly monitored using surface electromyography (SEMG) over the bilateral upper trapezius muscles and the forearm extensors of the dominant hand to record information on the muscle activity in each of these muscles during various activities. Information regarding posture of the head, upper torso and dominant upper arm is recorded with digital inclinometers. This information is collected over a consecutive 12-hour period while the subjects participate in their typical work and after-work activities. Simultaneously, the researcher is directly observing the subjects to complete a detailed time stamped task analysis to match against the recorded muscle activity and postures.

Data collection with adult subjects, who are Curtin University staff employed in office-based work, has commenced and is due for completion early in 2004. Funding from the OT Registration Board has enabled the hiring of a research assistant to help with the 12-hour observations and document the task analysis. Progress on the data has been delayed due to technical problems with the sensitive direct monitoring instrumentation. Analysis of the data and subsequent reporting of findings is expected to be completed by September 2004.

The study is gaining local and international interest. The research project was featured in an article in the Medicine and Health section of the West Australian newspaper on October 22, 2003, to highlight research being undertaken by occupational therapists, as part of Occupational Therapy Week 2003. Additionally the researcher has recently presented the study to leading researchers in the area of electromyography at the department of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Lund University Hospital in Sweden, and at the Danish Institute of Occupational Health and Safety in Copenhagen.

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### “THE EFFECT AND PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF NIGHT TIME POSITIONING FOR MANAGING POSITIONAL DEFORMITY IN CHILDREN WITH CEREBRAL PALSY”

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Ms Emily Crawford, Occupational Therapist,  
Therapy Focus

The results of the reliability study to establish the inter and intra-rater reliability of the measuring board for the Goldsmith Index of Body Symmetry, were presented at the Curtin School of Occupational Therapy Research Seminars in March 2003. Results demonstrated inter & intra-rater reliability for the measuring board with no significant differences found between testers, or within results obtained by the same tester.

Completion of the reliability study raised further issues with validation of the Goldsmith Index in relation to the clinical significance of the results of the measures taken, as there is no system to classify the range of indices obtained in relation to the degree of asymmetry. Therefore investigation into the relationship between the Goldsmith Index and the current postural assessments used by clinicians has commenced to determine:

- Are there common functional seated posture patterns that can be associated with the indices obtained by the Goldsmith Index?
- What are the typical patterns of functional seated posture present for different index levels?
- What is the implication of the Goldsmith Index in terms of functional seated posture?

Data collection for this phase is in progress with recruitment of school aged children from Therapy Focus who have been identified as being at risk of developing postural deformities. It is anticipated that data collection will be complete by December 2003, with final results available by April 2004. Due to the change in focus of the study, results will be presented under the title “The relevance of the Goldsmith Index of Body Symmetry to functional seated posture.”

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### Progress Report:

#### ENHANCING MENTAL HEALTH COMPETENCIES THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN THE “KIDS CAN NETWORK” FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE A MOTHER WITH A NEUROLOGICAL DISORDER

Dr Anne Passmore, Curtin University of Technology,  
School of Occupational Therapy

There is little evidence about the effects a disability or chronic illness has on a mothers' ability to parent, or on the consequences for their children. The limited literature available consistently suggests that the

presence of a parent with a disability has detrimental effects on the mental health and development of children and young people (Ianni, 1997; Jacobs, 1998; Lewandowski, 1992). A pilot study conducted by this research group shows strong indicators of a range of concerns reported by mothers' with a neurological disorder about parenting and of the detrimental effects on their children, including concerns about their emotional well-being and added responsibilities in home activities. This was not in any way a reflection of poor parenting, but an expression of concern regarding the impact of their illness on their children (Passmore, 2002). The aim of this project is to promote mental health, coping and competence in children and adolescents who have a mother with a neurological disorder through the design and implementation of a program, to be known as the “Kids Can Network” in which young people, the consumers, are active participants at all stages. The program will serve as a preventative and early intervention strategy for these young people who are at risk for mental and developmental problems. To date recruitment of participants is underway via the Neurological Council WA, and interviews and measurement of young people has commenced.

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### Progress Report:

#### INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFICACY OF LYCRA ARM SPLINTS ON IMPAIRMENT, ACTIVITY AND PARTICIPATION IN CHILDREN WITH CEREBRAL PALSY.

Ms Cathrine Elliot, Occupational Therapist,  
Princess Margaret Hospital

This research aims to provide objective data on the efficacy of lycra arm splints. It aims to answer the question; Do lycra arm splints have an effect on body function, activities and participation in children with cerebral palsy. The PhD research and ethics proposal for this project has been accepted by the Board of Postgraduate studies at The University of Western Australia. Over the past 9 months the main study data collection has been completed. The subjects were 18 children with cerebral palsy between the ages of 5 to 15. All children were assessed using 3D kinematic motion analysis (Vicon), 2D motion analysis (siliconCOACH), The Melbourne Assessment of Unilateral Upper Limb Function, WeeFIM, Goal Attainment Scaling, Parental and Teacher Questionnaire and the ICF Checklist. The children were assessed 7 times and completed the same testing protocol for each session. Selected aspects of data reduction and analysis is currently taking place and it is anticipated that this will be completed by October 2003.

PRACTICE NAME POLICY	USE OF THE TITLE "ACC OT" OR "ACCREDITED OT"
<p><b>Section 40(3) of the Act states</b>            "No registered occupational therapist shall carry on the practice of occupational therapy under any name other than his own, unless he has the approval of the Board."</p> <p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Until more recent years, a significant percentage of the profession have been employed by health care services such as the Health Department of WA, hospitals, disability services and other similar organisations. Occupational therapists employed by these institutions have not been carrying on the <b>practice</b> of occupational therapy, but rather are <b>practising</b> occupational therapy. In these situations, Section 40(3) does not apply and the individual occupational therapist is not required to do anything.</p> <p>As the profession has developed, an increasing number of occupational therapists are carrying on the practice of occupational therapy in private practice. Many of these occupational therapists are trading under business names, ie. a name other than the name that appears on the register.</p> <p>Where an occupational therapist practices under his/her own name, Section 40(3) does not apply and the individual occupational therapist is not required to do anything.</p> <p>However, where an occupational therapist practices under some other name, then he/she is required to have Board approval pursuant to Section 40(3) and the following policy will be applied by the Board.</p> <p><b>Policy</b></p> <p>An occupational therapist practice name must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. include the word "occupational therapy",</li> <li>2. Not be misleading or deceptive or likely to mislead or deceive,</li> <li>3. Not be vulgar or sensational such as would be likely to adversely affect the standing of the occupational therapy profession,</li> <li>4. Not be linked to a product, and</li> <li>5. Not make the occupational therapist appear to have occupational therapy qualifications they do not hold.</li> </ol> <p><b>Summary of Scenarios</b></p> <p>The following are the typical scenarios that will occur. The fictitious name "Mary Stewart" has been used, "Mary Stewart" is a registered occupational therapist and this is the name that appears on the Register.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Mary Stewart – Occupational Therapist". No action is required to be taken by Mary.</li> <li>2. "West Perth Occupational Therapy Services". Mary will need to obtain Board approval.</li> <li>3. "ABC Services Pty Ltd", being a company which employs Mary Stewart as an occupational therapist to provide occupational therapy services and the company charges a fee for Mary's services. <b>The Board will not approve this name.</b></li> <li>4. ABC Services Pty Ltd trading as "ABC Occupational Therapy Services" where Mary is employed to provide occupational therapy services and the company charges a fee for Mary's services. Mary will require Board approval to practice under the trading name.</li> <li>5. "XYZ Pty Ltd" employs Mary to assist in the delivery of occupational therapy services, where those services are not on a fee for service basis. No action is required to be taken by Mary.</li> </ol> <p><b>Suggestion</b></p> <p>The Board suggests that prior to registering a business name at the Ministry of Fair Trading, occupational therapists who wish to use a practice name should contact the Registrar, who will be able to provide the appropriate guidance.</p>	<p>The Board wishes to remind occupational therapists that they are unable to use the title "Accredited O.T" or the abbreviated form "Acc OT" on any stationery or practice signage.</p> <p>The primary objective of the Occupational Therapists Registration Act 1980, which the Board administers, is the protection of the public. The Board supports the principle that continuing education undertaken by members of the profession should be encouraged, as ultimately, the public will be the beneficiaries of any improved knowledge and expertise. As an example of this support, the Board has provided funding to members of the profession for research into areas of occupational therapy practice, for the last 5 years.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the Board's desire to encourage continuing education and the maintenance of standards of practice, the Board is required to administer the Act. The Board has sought legal advice that confirms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Section 40(5) of the Western Australian Act applies and states:           <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>"No registered occupational therapist shall in relation to occupational therapy use or notify in any name-plate or sign or in any advertisement or notice published by or for him any title, words, letters, addition or description, either in full, or in abbreviation or in combination, other than those shown in the Register in relation to his registration".</i></p> </li> <li>2. The accreditation course organised by OT Australia does not constitute an approved educational qualification from an educational institution recognised by the Board. As such, it is not a registrable qualification; that is, it may not be entered on the Register.</li> </ol> <p><b>From this it follows that occupational therapists may not use the title "Accredited OT" or "Acc OT" in the manner outlined in point (1) above. Any occupational therapist who used these terms, as outlined above, in their practice as an occupational therapist would be liable for prosecution.</b></p> <p>Separate consideration has been given to the display of certificates within practice locations. The Board supports the concept of occupational therapists being involved in ongoing education and personal development through an OT Australia sponsored process or through another reputable organisation's process. If occupational therapists receive certificates for their participation in these</p>

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS WORKING WHILST UNREGISTERED

A very strong case can be made for the importance of registration. For one thing, it allows the regulatory body to monitor and provide consistent standards of education and practice. Registration eliminates unqualified and unprofessional or incompetent persons practising as occupational therapists, thereby protecting the public.

What is not often realised by the profession, is that the Board exists primarily to protect the public. It is a common misconception among the profession that the Board represents and protects the interests of registered members. While in its ambit of protecting the public, the Act administered by the Board also protects all registered occupational therapists, it is the professional bodies, the Associations established by therapists, that represent their interests. The Associations, however, are not empowered to take action against unqualified persons who may set up a practice, or to prosecute registered occupational therapists who have breached the Act.

Probably the most important repercussion of non-registration is that the public is not protected. The accountability of a therapists' employer will also come into question, should there be instances of professional misconduct or should inappropriate treatment be administered by an unregistered occupational therapist. Under the Act, a registered occupational therapist who knowingly employs an unregistered occupational therapist would be liable to be prosecuted. From an employer's perspective, the lack of a process or systematic check of current registration may be viewed as the employer not taking enough steps to ensure that they do not employ unregistered therapists.

**It cannot be overemphasised that registration is the responsibility of the individual.**

- ✓ Keep the Board informed of your current address. This may easily be managed by
  - emailing [enquiries@otbwa.com.au](mailto:enquiries@otbwa.com.au) , or
  - faxing the notification to **9368 2677**, or
  - mailing the notice to the Board at PO BOX 959, SOUTH PERTH WA 6951.
- ✓ Make a note on your calendar at work or at home that **31 December** of each year is the end of your licence to practise.
- ✓ Pay your renewal regardless of whether you have received notice from the Board.

The Board's reminder is a courtesy, not an obligation. The obligation rests with you.

If you employ occupational therapists – fax or e-mail a list of your employees to the offices of the Board. Staff will be happy to confirm their registration status. Alternatively, you are now able to search for a registered occupational therapist on our Website: [www.otbwa.com.au](http://www.otbwa.com.au)

## LOOK WHAT'S NEW

- EFPTOS facilities now available at our office
- BPAY available for payment of renewals
- Introducing Registration Cards  
This year the Board has introduced a wallet sized Registration Card to be issued with your current practising certificate. You will receive your new registration card, which is valid for 12 months, upon payment of your annual registration.
- Search for a Registered Occupational Therapist on the website [www.otbwa.com.au](http://www.otbwa.com.au) and follow the links

## TEMPORARY REGISTRATION

An occupational therapist with overseas qualifications may obtain Temporary Registration as a first step towards obtaining full, unconditional registration. In order to be granted Temporary Registration, the occupational therapist would be required to arrange a suitable practice audit, submit this plan to COTRB, and COTRB would request that the Board administer the plan, at which time Temporary Registration would be granted.

Policy – Overseas-Trained Applicants is available from the Board office and also from the Website [www.otbwa.com.au](http://www.otbwa.com.au)