



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS REGISTRATION BOARD NEWSLETTER

Produced by the Occupational Therapists Registration Board of Western Australia **ISSUE No. 9**
PO Box 1182 West Perth WA 6872 Phone (08) 9481 6599 Fax (08) 9321 2119 **December 2000**

BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Helen Morton Dip (OT) WAIT 1970
Chairperson and General Manager at
Armada Health Service
*Nominated by the Permanent Head of the
Health Department of Western Australia*

Ms. Sally Wojnar-Horton B App Sc (OT) WAIT
1974; Grad Dip Health Science 1981; Masters Health Science 1991
Head of Department at Princess Margaret
Hospital
*Nominated by OT Australia (Western
Australian Branch)*

Ms. Linda Ruth Mason B App Sc (OT) WAIT
1978; MHSc (OT) Sth Aust 1996
Lecturer, School of Occupational Therapy,
Curtin University of Technology
*Nominated by Curtin University of
technology*

Mr. K.R. Jones B App Sc (OT) WAIT 1978; Grad Dip
Hlth Sc Ed (Curtin) 1985
Private Practitioner
*Nominated by OT Australia (Western
Australian Branch)*

Dr. R. Chandler MBBS (West Aust) 1977; FRACGP;
D Obst, R.C.O.G.; Post Grad Dip Hlth Sc (Curtin) 1995;
Master of Science (Curtin) 1999;
Medical Practitioner
Nominated by the Minister for Health

INCORPORATION OF COTRB

On 1 January 2000 the Council of Occupational Therapists Registration Boards (Australia and New Zealand) Inc (COTRB) was incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1985.

The Council was established for the consideration of matters of joint or common concern or interest to the various Occupational Therapists Registration Boards in Australia and New Zealand. In addition, the COTRB is responsible for the assessment of overseas qualified occupational therapists, following the devolution of the assessment process by the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR).

A Services Contract has now been drawn up between the COTRB and the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs detailing the devolution process.

OVERSEAS QUALIFICATIONS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The COTRB is the body responsible for assessing occupational therapy qualifications for recognition in Australia. The Council is located at:

PO Box 229
TORRENSVILLE PLAZA
SA 5031

and contact details are as follows:

Tel: (08) 8443 9669
Fax: (08) 8443 9550
Email: cotrb@senet.com.au
Website: <http://www.cotrb.com>

The Overseas Qualifications Assessment Committee (OQAC) of COTRB is responsible for the administration of the assessment procedures and liaises with registration boards, OT Australia and others as required.

The OQAC and COTRB assess overseas OT's to determine their eligibility for migration as an occupational therapist by checking that they are recognised as an occupational therapist in their country of origin or education, and that their professional education is of a standard that would adequately prepare them for practice in Australia.

Overseas educated OT's whose qualifications have been assessed as suitable to apply for migration will be recognised by COTRB as eligible to apply for registration in relevant States and/or membership of OT Australia. Their registration will be conditional on their agreement to undertake a practice audit during their first year of employment or self-employment as an OT in Australia and granting of full registration will be conditional upon successful completion of such a practice audit.

The Board will be actively involved in overseeing the practice audit of overseas qualified occupational therapists wishing to practice in Western Australia.

The following minimum criteria applies:

- Have completed a WFOT approved tertiary level education program leading to an award in occupational therapy, that is equivalent to an Australian Bachelor degree.
- Are registered, licensed or otherwise officially recognised and in good standing as an occupational therapist in the country in which they were educated or practised; and
- Have English as a first language, or have satisfactorily passed occupational English testing.

Specific details of the examination process and schedule of fees can be obtained from COTRB direct.

CRIMINAL RECORD SCREENING

In the near future the Board will be entering into an arrangement with the Health Department of Western Australia to conduct criminal record screening of all registered occupational therapists.

In the initial stages, all new applicants will be required to be screened at the time of applying for registration, and over a period of four (4) years, all those occupational therapists currently on the Register will be required to complete the screening process. Repeat screening of all occupational therapists will be required every four (4) years.

When you are selected to undergo the process, the Board will forward to you an information sheet and a Consent Form, which will need to be completed and forwarded to the Criminal Record Screening Support Unit accompanied by your payment of \$27.50.

The criminal screening process will be compulsory, and all occupational therapists will be required to comply.

RESEARCH GRANTS

As no applications for research grants were received this year, no further funds have been expended.

The Board will once again consider applications from registered occupational therapists for research grants for 2001. Application forms can be obtained from the office of the Board and should be lodged prior to 28 February 2001.

Reports have been received from previous research recipients as follows:

Annette Barton and Vera Riley
Research project titled "Assessment of motor and process skills of patients having stereotactic neurosurgical intervention to determine changes in functional capacity"

A report describing the research outcome of a pilot study carried out in the Occupational Therapy Department of Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital over a period of almost 2 years has now been submitted to the Board.

The study was added to an ongoing study at the Australian Neuromuscular Research Institute. Patients involved in the study had a diagnosis of either Parkinson's disease or essential tremor and were assessed pre and post stereotactic neurosurgery. The OT assessment used was the Assessment of Motor and Process Skills, an objective observational assessment of the patients performing a chosen standardised ADL task.

Patient numbers were low, 6 community-living patients were part of the study. Neurosurgical interventions including pallidotomy, thalamotomy, thalamic and pallidal stimulators.

The results of the pilot study showed that all tasks chosen by the patients pre and post surgery were completed independently, without assistance. The AMPS scoring allowed assessment not just of independence of performance but also of safety, efficiency and effectiveness.

Numbers of each stereotactic neurosurgical intervention in the study were low, limiting clinical conclusions,

but overall changes in ADL performance were demonstrated using the AMPS with patients pre and post surgery. Indications of sensitivity of the assessment, in addition to the AMPS being standardised and objective, makes it an ideal research tool.

**Caroline Matthews,
Sally Wojnar-Horton,
Margaret Duckworth and
Janet Summers**

Research project titled "OT Paediatric Services in WA: - a demographic survey of staffing patterns and service delivery"

Data analysed to date was presented at the Occupational Therapy State Conference held in August 2000. The preliminary findings were presented in a twenty-minute session and Sally Wojnar-Horton and Caroline Matthews presented the session.

The research project continues with more data requiring analysis. A researcher with the School of Occupational Therapy at Curtin University has offered to take on the task of further data interpretation to assist the project reach a completion.

The report highlights the need for occupational therapy services in the community, as numbers on the wait lists range from low to extremely high.

Therese Trouchet
Research project titled "The effect of pre and post operative exercise on functional and health outcomes following Total Hip Replacement"

The preliminary findings of the research project were presented at Sir Charles Gairdner Grand Round on 16 November 1999 by Dr. Wang, Helen Gilbey and Therese Trouchet. Preliminary results on the first 68 patients were also presented at the State OT Conference in August 2000.

Terri Richardson, an OT, has been assigned to perform the ADL assessments for research purposes from Hollywood Private Hospital, and Felicity Mercanti continues with SCGH assessments. Professor David Wood is supporting the study by seeking further

funding to expand the research, especially focussing on the effects of pre-operative interventions on outcomes.

The research continues with plans to analyse and present the total findings in coming conferences and the information is also being used at the School of OT in training of undergraduate students.

Dr Margaret Ross
**Research project titled
"The Occupation of Quilting"**

Two hundred surveys were distributed during July, August and September and the researchers now find themselves in the unusual situation of having received back approximately 210 completed surveys, being an indication of the enthusiasm with which the surveys were received by the community of Western Australian quilters. Many of the women who completed surveys commented that it made them reflect on their lives, how they think of themselves and the occupations that they think are important to them on a day to day basis.

Data entry began in October and is progressing, albeit slowly. It is anticipated that this phase will be completed by the end of November and that the analysis will occur over the following two months. It is already clear that exploration of some of the findings using focus groups would considerably enhance the project but as most quilting groups close down for the summer it is unlikely that these can take place until February 2001.

PROSECUTION OF AN OT BY THE PHYSIOTHERAPISTS REGISTRATION BOARD

An occupational therapist was recently prosecuted by the Physiotherapists Registration Board of Western Australia for using the term "physical therapy" and for using ultrasound in the treatment of patients. This matter went before the Full Bench of the Supreme Court on appeal and the conviction was upheld.

The Board reminds occupational therapists that they are not entitled to use the term "physical therapy" or to use ultrasound or any other Proclaimed Method of Physiotherapy in the treatment of their patients.