



College of
Occupational
Therapists



New Graduates Bulletin

Issue (5) November 2016

Carpe Diem ... 'seize the day' ... so says the framed quote on my office wall. It's a good principle to work with, I believe. Life is for living and I would much rather be shaping my life the way I choose to than having someone or something else do the shaping for me.

My name is Jo Watson. I'm the new Associate Director: Education and Research at the College of Occupational Therapists. When I set out as a new graduate, in much the same way as you are now, I could never have imagined that I might find myself here. For a start, I was born, grew up and completed my pre-registration studies in Melbourne, Australia, but that aside, who would have thought it? I guess that's the point really. We don't know what opportunities are going to come our way or where they might lead, and for the most part, each of us is capable of a great deal more than we imagine.

The best advice that I can offer to you is to be proactive and make sure that you get into the drivers' seat of life; take control and invest in you and in your career as an occupational therapist. Don't just be open to opportunities, actively *create* them. Build networks with the people you admire and those who are further along the trajectory you are aiming for. Make really good use of supervision and any mentorship that you have access to, but remember that like a gym membership, you will only get out of it what you put into it and that includes taking responsibility for *making* changes, not just talking about them. In life generally, and in your career, you will need to develop your capacity to 'hold', or live with, uncertainty. You can't always see how things will develop, but sometimes you just need to trust the future and your own capacity to learn, grow and cope and allow things to unfold in their own time.

So, don't impose constraints upon what you think can achieve, and don't allow others to do that to you either. None of us know where our limits are unless we test and push against where we imagine them to be. Try saying yes to opportunities that come your way, even when it's scary and even you aren't quite sure how it will work out. You just never know where it will take you...

Dr Jo Watson,

Assistant Director: Education and Research
College of Occupational Therapists



Support

The Professional Practice Enquires Service

The Professional Practice Enquiries Service is a member benefit and deals with enquiries relating to all aspects of professional practice in the workplace. There are two members of staff dedicated to enquiries – Anne Keen (Professional Advisor and occupational therapist and Kewcha Ambrose (Enquiries Coordinator/Information, Guidance and Advice Practitioner).

COT Members can contact the Professional Practice Enquiries Service by phone or by email. The types of enquiries we receive are varied. This keeps our role interesting, rewarding and demanding (at times!).

The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct is the “go to” guide for all aspects of practice. Some people are not clear why they are contacting the College - they just need help and advice and often the initial enquiry is not really the issue. With occupational therapy practice being so diverse there is often not a definitive answer; so it is always essential to refer back to local policies and guidelines. Many members are not aware of what resources are available on the website and we often act as a guide.

Useful links for you:

- The Professional Practice Enquiries page of the COT website: <https://www.cot.co.uk/professional-practice/professional-practice-enquiries-service>
- Frequently asked questions: <https://www.cot.co.uk/professional-practice-enquiries-service/faqs>
- Returning to Practice resources: <https://www.cot.co.uk/return-practice>
- Email: professional.enquiries@cot.co.uk or telephone: **020 7450 2330**

Anne Keen

Professional Advisor – Professional Enquiries Service
College of Occupational Therapists



Connect

Have you visited our New Graduates page?

There is a page on the COT website dedicated to all of you! If you haven't visited it yet- follow the link below. We have the list of occupational therapy graduates 2015-2016 published on this page. If that's you, then take a look and find yours and your classmate's names and give yourselves a well-earned round of applause...You have earned it!

If you haven't found a job yet and need some inspiration on where to look we've also included some useful links to help you in your quest. This page is also packed full of brilliant ideas on how to continue to make the most out of your COT membership as a newly qualified occupational therapist. There's some useful links to resources that will support you in your practice such as links to our; SPeAR Topics, publications, and Evidence Fact Sheets, also including resources to support your professional development and avenues to expand your professional network.

<https://www.cot.co.uk/become-ot/new-graduates-2016>

OT Week 2016 #OTweek16



Earlier this month it was OT week. A week where occupational therapists, students and anyone involved in the profession shout from the rooftops to raise awareness about what occupational therapists do. A week when occupational therapy is in the limelight, and what a week it was.

Everyone participating in OT week was encouraged to use the hashtag #OTWeek16. Check out some of the amazing activities which took place. What stood out was the variety of ways in which people chose to celebrate OT week:

@Claire_OT_ - Used the power of an informative stand to promote #OTWeek16 and occupational therapy



@CovOTSociety used the power of furry otters!



And @ChloeWoodleyOT used the power of extremely yummy looking cakes!



Whatever way you chose to promote occupational therapy in #OTWeek16, a huge round of applause from all of us at the College for your efforts in helping us to raise awareness of the role of occupational therapists, and inform others about why we are so valuable in today's healthcare system!

New location, new venue, new structure...

It's the COT Annual Conference 2017!

For the first time The COT Conference will be at the prestigious International Convention Centre (ICC) in the centre of Birmingham. The Conference structure has been compressed into two days, 19th and 20th June 2017, same content for less time away from work or studies: great value for all delegates.

Confirmed speakers, so far!

Professor Winnie Dunn, one of the most recognised and respected names internationally in occupational therapy. She is the author of the Sensory Profile and the Infant/Toddler Sensory Profile and co-author of the Adolescent/Adult Sensory Profile.

Paul McGee, a personal development pioneer whose distinctive and effective principle - SUMO (Shut up and move on)- will help you think differently about everything you do. Be prepared to learn how to seize opportunities and reach your potential in your professional and personal lives.

Dr Jennifer Creek, a celebrated occupational therapy researcher and author whose publications have been essential reading for occupational therapists at all stages of their career.

Tina Coldham has campaigned for a better understanding of mental health issues. She has enduring mental health issues, and uses her personal experience to inform and influence health and social care professionals.

The Specialist Section – Older People Annual Conference 2017

Running alongside the College's Annual Conference, hear the latest developments in this area of practice.

Call for papers

The abstract system will open this month. Deadline for submitting abstracts is 20th January 2017.

When can I book my place?

Book your conference place from the 31st December 2016

Visit www.cotannualconference.org.uk



Vandita Chisholm

Marketing Manager,
College of Occupational Therapists

Engage

An opportunity to work with our Chief Executive, Julia Scott, to develop 2018-2023 Strategic Plan

Since October 2013, we at the College have been working towards 3 strategic intentions:

1. **Serving members well**
2. **Being the voice of the profession**
3. **Ensure that the British Association of Occupational Therapists is an economically sustainable business**

Read more about our 2013-2018 Strategic Intentions here:

<https://www.cot.co.uk/strategic-plans/strategic-intentions>

Now the time has come to begin thinking about our new Strategic Plan which will commence in 2018. For us to develop our new five year vision, we want to speak to you! We want you to tell us what it is that you want from your professional body. In 2017 the College will be holding a number of meetings with members to inform the development of the next Strategic Plan

If you would like to host a meeting with Julia Scott, please email her at ceo@cot.co.uk

The Elizabeth Casson Trust, Professional Leadership Project, in collaboration with The College of Occupational Therapists.

As part of its strategy, the Elizabeth Casson Trust (ECT), working with the College of Occupational Therapists, is exploring the need for an occupational therapy specific, professional leadership programme. The first part of the project was to ensure that the College of Occupational Therapists (COT) was able to become a key partner in facilitating the development of the project. A discussion paper was presented to the Council of COT on 18 October 2016 and Council agreed to support the first scoping phase of the project.

The scoping phase of the project involves organising a number of focus groups, probably by conference call, aimed at understanding the state of play regarding professional leadership and occupational therapy and looking at ways to implement and support ongoing professional leadership over time.

It is in regard to the focus groups that you are being contacted. The ECT and COT would like to invite you to be a member of a focus group interview. More detailed information about the project is appended to this e mail. The interview itself will most likely be by conference call and should take about an hour of your time. If you are willing to be involved, it would require COT to share your contact details with the ECT secretary, Pamela Anderson, along with the ECT Consultant who will be undertaking the interview. This will mean that you can be contacted directly to arrange a date and time when the focus group will take place.

If you would be willing to take part in the Scoping phase of the project, please could provide the information below by email to Pamela Anderson, ec.trust@btinternet.com prior to 7 Dec. 2016:

Name:

E mail:

Telephone number where you can most easily be contacted:

Geographical area of work or study:

Representing: (please indicate one of the following groups): Student; Academic; Fellows; Independent Practitioner; Regional groups; Specialist Sections; Consultant Occupational Therapist, Other (please state...)

I sincerely hope you will choose to be involved and thank you in anticipation.

Prof. Annie Turner,
Chair, Elizabeth Casson Trust.

Julia Scott,
Chief Executive
College of Occupational Therapists



The reports are live... Reducing the pressure on hospitals- the value of occupational therapy

The Improving Lives, Saving Money campaign launched a year ago to make the case for occupational therapy in key pressure points across health and care:

1. Keeping people out of hospital
2. Reducing pressure on primary care (e.g. GP services)
3. Addressing over reliance on social care (e.g. long term care and residential care homes)

The College is proud to publish its first campaign report - '**Reducing the pressure on hospitals – the value of occupational therapy**' in each nation of the UK. The report marks the end of phase 1 of our Improving Lives, Saving Money Campaign. There are **4 reports** for each country in the UK - England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales - with an additional report available in the Welsh language.

Hundreds of members have supported the campaign, by pledging their support on our microsite www.cotimprovinglives.com taking part in UK roadshows and sending in examples of their own service and how it improves lives and saves money. This has all been critical to the campaign. The reports prove that occupational therapists are critical to emergency and urgent care, both preventing hospital admissions and shortening the time people spend in hospital unnecessarily.

Earlier this month, the College presented each report to government ministers in each country to increase the call for more investment in occupational therapy. New Graduates, we need you to share the outcomes of these reports. Help us be loud and proud about the value of occupational therapy! Share these reports with your peers and your multidisciplinary teams.

Get involved in the campaign and read the full reports by signing up to our microsite www.cotimprovinglives.com, and by using the hashtag

#ValueofOT

Nurse and Allied Health Professionals Internship Scheme 2017

If you are a recent graduate student with either an upper second or first class degree in occupational therapy you could be eligible to apply for this exciting opportunity! If you are interested in clinical research about the personal impact of Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Diseases (RMDs) then this internship scheme is perfect for you.

Five international research institutions renowned for RMDs research (Universities of Leeds, Oxford, Salford, Southampton and the West of England, Bristol) are recruiting interns for the next Arthritis Research UK Internship Scheme.

The Arthritis Research UK Internship Scheme provides you with opportunities to:

- Obtain first-hand experience of working in a Centre of excellence of RMDs research
- Be one of six placements nationally on this prestigious project (eight weeks from June 28th 2017)
- Work alongside some of the UK's leading nurse and allied health researchers
- Use state-of-the-art equipment and evidence-based effective practice
- Receive formal education, supervision, evaluation and mentoring in research
- Be involved in a self-contained research study and data collection process
- Experience the research governance process
- Participate in multi-professional seminars and workshops
- Become part of a specialist network of new researchers and intern alumni
- Apply for further research posts e.g. Research Fellowships

The Arthritis Research UK Internship project aims to address existing deficiencies in RMDs clinical research by bringing together experts in Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Occupational Therapy and Nursing to develop the next generation of RMDs researchers and clinical specialists. Successful interns will be at the forefront of research into musculoskeletal health underpinned by health promotion and public health principles. The placements are unpaid but each intern will receive £1000 towards costs.

"In relation to my career plans, my expectations have completely changed...The scheme has provided me with the skills, knowledge and contacts I need to build my profile and apply for future research opportunities" (Quote from Intern, 2016).

For further information about the Internship Scheme and how to apply contact:

Mary Fry (MSc) - Project Manager m.l.fry@soton.ac.uk (02380 594023)

Application deadline: Wed 21st Feb 2017 (17:00hrs)

Interview date: Weds 5th April 2017

Scheme dates: Weds 28th June – Tues 22nd Aug 2017

Coming soon

Mental Health: The value of occupational therapy

The COT publication *"Recovering Ordinary Lives –the strategy for occupational therapy in mental health services 2007-2017"* finishes next year. For almost ten successful years it has helped shape practice and drive leadership across the UK. You have told us the strategy has been extremely useful for marketing and promoting the value of occupational therapy for people with mental health problems. You have also told us that further work to continue this promotion to those outside of the profession is required.

COT are therefore excited to announce plans to replace the strategy with four new documents, one per Country, for the purpose of marketing and promoting the profession's impact and value in mental health to be launched in 2018. These will build on the work already started by the COT campaign *Occupational Therapy –Improving Lives, Saving Money* where members sent examples of their practice to COT for inclusion in new campaign publications. This new project is called *"Mental Health –the Value of Occupational Therapy"*.

COT are working closely with relevant Specialist Sections, Country mental health managers groups and consultants who have formed an external reference group to guide the project. Your contribution will be vital too. These promotional tools need to showcase the breadth and diversity of mental health occupational therapy, across all ages and in each of the four nations; England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. They present a unique opportunity to be loud and proud about your practice. This is your chance to say "This is what I do and here are the results". If you ever wanted to shout from the roof tops about why your work matters, get involved now.

To register your interest please email Ashleigh.Watkins@cot.co.uk.

Genevieve Smyth

Professional Advisor –Mental Health and Learning Disabilities
College of Occupational Therapists



***I hope you have enjoyed reading this issue of the New Graduate Bulletin!
Please email or tweet me any feedback that you have.***

***Look out for the next bulletin issue coming into your inboxes' in
February 2017!***

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