Hello and welcome to the New Graduate Bulletin.

For those of you who haven’t had the bulletin before, quarterly publication is aimed at supporting new graduates by keeping you up to date with news, resources, and opportunities and helping you make the most of your membership.

First, let me introduce myself. My name is Amie Mowlam-Tett and I am the new Education Liaison Officer here at the Royal College of Occupational Therapists. I was born and brought up in Essex and discovered occupational therapy by chance 3 years ago. I then went onto being an occupational therapy assistant and starting my MSc at the University of Essex. While studying I became president of the occupational therapy society, Eastern Region RCOT student rep, started fire juggling and picked up archery. What can I say, I enjoy unique occupations. I finished my final placement on November 3rd and am currently going through the process of HCPC registration.

So, this month I feel it is time for celebration, like many of you I am celebrating my first full time job outside of university. And, while I struggle with trying to learn the names of everybody here at the RCOT offices, I can understand the daunting task of trying to find your place within a new team. To all my fellow 2017 graduates, whether you have your first qualified role or are taking a well-deserved rest after the last few months of placements and dissertations, I think we all deserve a pat on the back. And for those of you who graduated last year, I hope your time so far as qualified occupational therapists has been an exciting, challenging but enjoyable experience.

But, there’s more to celebrate, this month was the deadline for conference submissions for 2018. With the numbers matching last years’ It is fantastic to see so many qualified professionals and students vested into building the evidence base of the profession. With Belfast also being named Lonely Planet’s best region in the world to visit, #RCOT2018 is going to be a great experience.

And finally, thank you to those of you who have shared their #OTweek2017 activities on twitter and put so much effort into cakes, decorations and activities to promote the profession as well as all the success stories you have shared. You made the first month in my new role very exciting.

Amie Mowlam-Tett
Education Liaison Officer
INTRODUCING THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

The new Career Development Framework: guiding principles for occupational therapy offers a structured process to support you with your learning and development, regardless of your work setting, level of experience or area of practice.

The Career Framework is aimed at supporting everyone who works in the occupational therapy profession from support workers to students and qualified professionals. It helps you to identify strengths, potential learning needs, learning opportunities and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities across all areas of practice.

The emphasis is on developing your professional self across the Four Pillars of Practice: Professional Practice; Leadership; Facilitation of Learning; and Evidence, Research and Development, reflecting the multi-faceted nature of the occupational therapy profession. Within each of the Four Pillars are nine Career Levels to help guide thinking about your own developmental needs.

As a newly qualified professional, the Career Framework can support you through this transition period and along your path as a qualified professional. You can:

- Map your current skills and experience to highlight your abilities
- Use the principles to articulate transferable skills and abilities for CV and job applications
- Identify learning needs and help shape CPD and learning opportunities
- Use it to maintain an occupational therapy identity if you work in a generic role or diverse setting
- Articulate your lifelong career pathway within the profession.

The Career Framework can be used alongside your preceptorship, where applicable, to help shape your learning and development.

For more information on the Framework including an Implementation Guide, which includes examples from professionals and those who helped to co-create it, go to: https://www.rcot.co.uk/career-development-framework. Members can also access tools to support them to use the Career Framework in practice.

We’d like to hear your thoughts on the Career Framework, including any other tools that we can develop to help you use it in practice so please share your thoughts with us at www.RCOT.co.uk or www.twitter.com/theRCOT using #RCOTCareerFramework.

Remember that CPD isn’t all about courses and study days. Recently Jonathan Jones from HCPC sat down with RCOT’s Education Manager Dr Stephanie Tempest and Professional Advisor, Anne Keen to dispel some of the common myths around CPD. In the video they discuss the everyday nature of CPD, giving guidance and practical advice on making CPD a truly tailored and personal experience. ‘Let’s talk CPD’ is available at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/learning-zone/toolkit-self-directed-learning
Occupational therapists are known to be at the forefront of encouraging people to engage in meaningful activities that improve their own health and wellbeing. Yet, there are currently few occupational therapists that know about, or are involved in the social prescribing movement.

With increased focus on finding solutions to reduce the pressure on the NHS, healthcare services are looking at non-medical alternatives to improve both health and wellbeing. As a profession that advocates for taking a holistic approach to health, it is vital to emphasise the value of occupational therapy within these areas.

The need to advocate for the added value of occupational therapy within the social prescribing movement.

Occupational therapists are known to be at the forefront of encouraging people to engage in meaningful activities that improve their own health and wellbeing. Yet, there are currently few occupational therapists that know about, or are involved in the social prescribing movement. With increased focus on finding solutions to reduce the pressure on the NHS, healthcare services are looking at non-medical alternatives to improve both health and wellbeing. As a profession that advocates for taking a holistic approach to health, it is vital to emphasise the value of occupational therapy within these areas.

For some, the term social prescribing would be alien, yet the act of social prescribing is a core component of occupational therapy. The term itself refers to primary care sectors, such as GPs and nurses, signposting and encouraging patients to get involved in non-medical and local groups activities. This approach takes into consideration the impact of social, economic and environmental factors on health and wellbeing.

Moving Primary care beyond the medical

Two years after its launch and the ‘Improving Lives, Saving Money’ campaign is going strong. The campaign drives to promote the value of the profession and prove why occupational therapists are essential in 3 key service areas:

- Keeping people out of hospital
- Reducing pressure on primary care
- Addressing over reliance on social care

To date three reports have been published:

- Reducing the pressure on hospitals: the value of occupational therapy
- Living not Existing: putting prevention at the heart of care for older people
- Fire and Rescue Services: the value of working in partnerships with occupational therapists

With increased funding demands on the NHS and care services it is critical to clearly demonstrate the key role occupational therapists have in improving lives and saving money.

The campaign has now reached high level stakeholders as members are using the online toolkit to influence at a local level. For more information on the toolkit or to download data impact tabled detailing your service go to: http://cotimprovinglives.com/get-involved/

To download the reports and read examples showcasing the benefit of occupational therapy in improving lives and saving money go to http://cotimprovinglives.com/value-of-occupational-therapy/
News

One Kingdom: Four Nations: Different ways of working
Getting to grips with the policy and legislation that dictates how you work

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- Did you know that the laws, regulations and guidance directing how you work differs across the UK?
- Have you thought about the fact that if you move to a new job in a different country within the UK then you may have to amend your practice to make sure you comply with that country’s laws, regulations or guidance?
- Have you looked into the policy and legislation that directs how you do your job?

England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales all have their own governments and health departments which are responsible for healthcare. This is because health is a devolved power, meaning that each country has autonomy over how healthcare delivered. Each country also has its own budget for health and social care and is able to spend this in the way they think is best for their population.

The legislation that governs how health, housing and social care services are delivered can vary between nations in the UK. But this does not mean that it is always different. Often laws are relevant for more than one country; for example, England and Wales share a lot of legislation, however, most of the regulations and guidance which support the implementation of this legislation are different. NICE guidelines may be automatically transposed to other nations, or separate guidelines – such as the SIGN guidelines in Scotland – can be developed.

Occupational therapists are crucial to the delivery of modern health, social care and housing services, and it is vital for you to be aware of the laws, regulations and guidance which dictate how you work. If you’re not quite sure, the following links provide a good place to find more information about the health policies within the governments of the UK:

- Northern Ireland: https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/health-policy
- Scotland: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Services
- Wales: http://gov.wales/topics/health/?lang=en

The RCOT takes feeding into policy and legislation seriously across the UK. We believe that occupational therapy services are the best way to save money and improve lives across the system, and we work to explain this to politicians and policymakers. You can find out more about how the RCOT is influencing on behalf of your profession here.

If you have any questions, or if you’re interested in being more actively involved in influencing policymakers, please get in touch with practice.admin@rcot.co.uk
Resources

NEW NEONATAL GUIDELINES AVAILABLE

Last month saw the publication of *Occupational therapy in neonatal services and early intervention (2017)*.

This provides specific evidence-based recommendations which describe the best and most effective practice for occupational therapy for high-risk infants in neonatal and early intervention settings.

As members you will be able to access practice guidelines as they become available.

For more on the neonatal guidelines go to: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/rcot-publications/downloads/neonatal-services.

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE ON THE END OF THE LINE

The Professional Practice Enquires Service is another valuable membership benefit providing information and support for all practice and work based enquires.

The in-house team works on answering questions and queries about practice. Whether you are starting out in a new setting or have a question about your current setting the team are here to help, reassure and point you in the right direction.

For more information of the Professional Practice Enquiries Service go to: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/professional-practice-enquiries-service/about-professional-practice-enquiries-service or read some of the most frequently asked https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/professional-practice-enquiries-service/professional-practice-faqs

To contact the team email: professional.enquiries@rcot.co.uk or telephone: 020 7450 2330.

Interested in research?

If you are interested in keeping up to date with research and research opportunities, sign up to the R&D@RCOT fortnightly bulletin. To sign up contact lesley.gleaves@rcot.co.uk with your BAOT membership number to be added to the mailing list.
Engage

Social media is becoming an increasingly popular way for professionals and students to connect with one another and potential service users. Here at the Royal College we want to hear from you and get those within the profession talking, you can connect with us on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn and SoundCloud to name a few.

However, as much as social media is good, it is important to be aware of the pitfalls with presenting yourself online and how this impacts on the profession. In university, they focused on the need for privacy settings on social media accounts. But, we don’t often talk about what we are writing, how easily tone and meaning can be misunderstood and the audiences our words and private opinions reach.

When you identify yourself as being part of the profession, such as using ‘OT’ within your name or profile, you become the face of the profession to the general public. We need to be aware of how our opinions are read, interpreted and shared online.

For more information on using social media including our guide to social media go to: https://www.rcot.co.uk/promoting-occupational-therapy/using-social-media

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITIES THERE ARE IN YOUR REGION?

When you become a member of the RCOT you are allocated to an RCOT Region based on your registered postal code.

Regions are run by committees of volunteers who aim to provide support and learning opportunities through networking and events.

All regions regularly hold CPD events such as Roadshows, study days and networking events, they give you access to grants and give you insight into what’s happening locally.

Get involved in your Region and take advantage of opportunities to build strong networks, further your own professional development and the growth of the profession as a whole.

To find out more about your Region visit: https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/regional-and-local-groups/join-local-or-regional-group

STAY SMART ONLINE

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RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

Have your chance to build on the professional evidence base by submitting your research proposal for 2018.

The UK Occupational Therapy Research Foundation (UKOTRF) aiming to support research in priority areas within the profession and build research capacity and capability within occupational therapy. The deadline for receipt of grant proposals by RCOT is 5.00pm Wednesday 14 February 2018.

For more information on the two research grants available and eligibility criteria, contact RCOT Research and Development administrator, Lesley Gleaves at: lesley.gleaves@rcot.co.uk or see our webpage: https://www.rcot.co.uk/news-and-events/awards-andfunding/ukotrf-research-grants

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Find out more about events and learning opportunities near you go to our events page: https://www.rcot.co.uk/events

How much do you know about the opportunities there are in your region?
And Finally...

The secret of getting ahead is getting started.
The secret of getting started is breaking down complex overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.

— Mark Twain

Thank you for reading this issue of the New Graduate Bulletin, I hope you have found some of the items useful. Please get in touch if you have any feedback on email amie.mowlam-tett@rcot.co.uk or twitter @RCOTStudents.

Issue 10 of the New Graduate Bulletin will be out in February, until then keep shouting about the profession and celebrating the fantastic work you are doing.

Amie Mowlam-Tett
Student Education Liaison Officer