Hello readers and welcome to the 10th edition of the New Graduate Bulletin.

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

Now the New Year has been and gone it’s time to reflect on the last month and start thinking about where to go from here. By the end of the year what is it that you want to have achieved professionally? Do you wish to develop your professional practice, knowledge of research or leadership skills but not sure where to start? Whether you’re one for making yourself a list of goals or not, the New Year welcomed in the career learning and development resolutions.

This simple tool, used alongside the Career Framework can help you select the areas you wish to target, set goals and plan how to achieve them, making the process of goal setting easier. To see more on the learning resolutions, including examples take a look on the resources page.

In January I started visiting universities, for a girl that’s never ventured far from home (Essex) I’ve been to Cardiff, Edinburgh, York, Sheffield and Bristol to name a few. It’s great to meet students and the occasional graduate across all stages of their occupational therapy journey. But like most jobs, it has taken some time to get used to.

Everybody reacts differently to new environments, some like to have done extensive research in the field, others like to get in on the first day and see how the team work. Yet, sometimes, like placements, you can be so willing to jump in and get involved with everything that you forget about yourself. For those starting out in their first qualified role and those of you already settled into a team don’t forget to take time for yourself, engage with occupations you enjoy and limit how much work you take home with you. When you walk out the door at the end of a shift work what strategies do you have to help you relax? Do you listen to music? Relax with a cup of tea? Read a good book? If you’re looking for some more tips and ideas take a look at the transcript from @OTalk on 13th Feb 2018.

And finally, a belated happy new year, a belated St Dwynwen’s Day and happy Valentine’s Day to you all. Keep sharing what you love about occupational therapy, what makes you smile and keep on doing the amazing work you are doing and helping people achieve their goals.

Amie Mowlam-Tett
Education Liaison Officer
CEO, JULIA SCOTT’S LETTER TO JEREMY HUNT

In response to Jeremy Hunt’s new expanded role as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care our CEO, Julia Scott, wrote an open letter on how Mr Hunt could better align the two professions.

The letter detailed three key messages around: IT systems, use of Allied Health Professions (AHPs) and celebrating success.

Focus was given to the NHS crisis. Julia referenced that solutions focused on employing and training more doctors, yet pointed out that AHPs such as occupational therapists make up nearly 30% of the workforce. This was emphasised by the positive impact occupational therapists and paramedics working together in East Lancashire have had in reducing up to 76% of hospital admissions from 999 calls as a result of falls.

Finally, Julia talked of the need to celebrate the healthcare system and recognize the good work that is being done, highlighting the case of one 80-year-old lady in Norfolk. The lady had previously called 999 twenty times in one year, yet after occupational therapy intervention, she has needed to call only twice and has not been admitted to hospital on either occasion.

The letter ends with hope, hope ‘to create the conditions in the NHS where collaboration and sharing is nurtured and celebrated’. Julia states that by creating this, the answer to health and social care integration will naturally follow.

The full letter is available at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/news/open-letter-jeremy-hunt

Has #OTWeek changed your local service?

November saw members over the UK hosting stands, selling cakes, tweeting and promoting the profession for Occupational Therapy Week.

Now we are gathering information on the direct and indirect impact the activities you took part in over #OTWeek have had on local services.

Our goal is to highlight the impact (and cost savings) of the profession within health and social services.

So, have you had extra funding, new resources or staff as a result of your activities during OT Week? Can you track any improvements to local occupational therapy services to the awareness created over OT Week?

If you have a good news story that has come about as a result of OT Week please get in touch. Email us at marketing@rcot.co.uk

WE’RE COUNTING DOWN TO CONFERENCE

Last month occupational therapists on twitter were sharing their excitement in being accepted for RCOT2018.

The event will be hosted together with Specialist Sections: Children, Young People & Families and People with Learning Disabilities.

For the first time in 20 years the event will be held in Belfast, 11-13 June, to recognise the growing membership in Northern Ireland and work being done in this region. We’re also welcoming the Association of Occupational Therapists of Ireland (AOTI) to join the conference.

For information and tickets go to: https://rcotannualconference.org.uk/ (early bird tickets are available until 27 April 2018).
LET’S TALK ABOUT EMBRACING RISK

The RCOT has recently published a new guidance document ‘Embracing risk; enabling choice.’

This essential guidance challenges you to think and respond differently about risk and explains how the management of risk can be used to enable choice and being about a positive outcome. It provides occupational therapists with a broad understanding of the principles and process of risk management and positive risk taking. It also highlights factors related to the management of risk at an organisational level.

As an occupational therapist, you should embrace and engage with risk to help service users to:

- Reach their chosen goals
- Participate fully in life
- Take opportunities and not to see risk as another barrier.

The guidance replaces the 2010 document on ‘Risk Management’ and is free for members to download at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/rcot-publications/downloads/embracing-risk

Print versions can be ordered (an order form is available on the webpage).

To understand how the guidance is being used in practice I spoke to occupational therapists in different settings about the importance of embracing risks and how the guidance has or will help to shape their practice.

Embracing risks in practice

Alex Hadayah - Head of Integrated OT Services, London

“I manage the Integrated Occupational Therapy (OT) service and oversee OT provision in the community, which has OTs in many different services. I’ve shared the ‘Embracing Risk’ guideline with the Adult social care improvement board as a tool for guidance and with the Integrated Head OT’s (iHOT) within the borough. Every OT takes risks on a daily basis; mine are no different but perhaps at a different level to those dealing with service users on the front line. The population is East London is diverse and the challenges are bespoke as home environments can be small and overcrowded.

Balancing risk and wellbeing and the prevention triangle is very tricky. It’s about balancing all the elements in a way that is beneficial for the service users outcomes – we need to move away from ‘what happens if’. If we are clear in clinical reasoning and justify our actions it’s up to us to be as creative as possible to enable all those we see.”

Ann Grange —Occupational Therapist, Care Farm, Derbyshire

As you would imagine on a farm activities come with a number of risks, from watering plants and horticulture and feeding the animals. Talking about managing risks and the need to consider the benefit of risk taking, Ann says:

“We assess hazards and mitigate risks to enable participation of attendees rather than allow risk to be a barrier to their purposeful involvement. In an outdoor environment which changes with the weather we adopt a dynamic approach to risk assessments”

Elizabeth Meatyard—Advocate

For some managing risks is part of helping someone to maintain their independence and sense of identity. Elizabeth reminds us of the importance of sharing risks:

“I am a former Nurse and comment from an advocates perspective. My sister and I advocate an Aunt who suffered a massive haemorrhagic stroke which has left her requiring all care. Our aim has been to improve her quality of life where possible but generally to try to prevent unnecessary deterioration in her quality of life, by encouraging those involved to manage risk more effectively by sharing risk with us, her family and advocates.”
THE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT RESOLUTIONS

We challenge you to set yourself one goal for each Pillar of Practice using the Career Development Framework.

Before starting you will need to know which level you are currently on and where you wish to be in 12 months. Then use these 4 simple steps to create and track your learning and development goals for 2018:

1. Download and fill in our Career Learning and Development Resolution template.
2. Take a picture of your resolutions and share them with us on Facebook or Twitter using #RCOTCareerFramework if you are happy to: we would love to hear all about your learning plans for the year ahead!
3. Refer back to your resolutions regularly to ensure you are on track to meet your goals before the end of 2018! And let us know how you are getting on too.
4. We will check back in with you in January 2019 to hear how you got along!

Current student Mark Whiteman (twitter:@mrkwhtmnOT ) shared his learning goals pictured above. Mark wants to facilitate learning by developing a CPD resource to use. He aims to achieve this by looking at models of reflection, identifying a network (a specialist section) and contribute in some way to the profession.

To download the career development framework and learning and development resources go to the learning zone: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/toolkit-self-directed-learning

Latest guidance on total hip replacement published

The new guidelines: ‘Occupational Therapy for adults undergoing total hip replacement’ were published in December.

This evidence-based resource aims to support the practice of occupational therapists with recommendations for those currently working in this speciality. It is essential reading for graduates, especially those working on Trauma and Orthopaedic wards.

It can also be used to inform service users and carers, together with other health professionals, managers and commissioners working in trauma and orthopaedics, about the roles and responsibilities of the occupational therapist in this clinical area.

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.

As part of your membership you have access to online resources including: hOT topics, evidence fact sheets, quick facts and over 50 ejournals and 100 ebooks.

- Start with looking at the hOT topics which provide an overview of key reading in a subject area. The new hOT topics on ‘Dementia’ and ‘Cardiac rehabilitation’ are available at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/hot-topics
- Evidence Fact Sheets provide facts and evidence on key service areas. The latest fact sheet on ‘Adult Mental Health’ is available at: www.rcot.co.uk/about-occupational-therapy/ot-evidence-factsheets
- The ‘Quick Facts’ provide concise information about particular outcome measures with signposting to the relevant manuals, and where appropriate websites, for further information. They are available at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/assessments-and-outcome-measures
- The latest ejournal to be added to the collection is ‘Leadership in Health Services’ found under ‘Additional RCOT ejournals’. For more information and to see the list of available ejournals go to: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/journals-and-e-journals and ebooks at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/e-books

More information about library resources is available at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/about-library
Every year the RCOT Roadshows focus on an important topic for students, qualified professionals and support staff. These events are free to attend and spaces are filled on a first come, first served basis.

This year the RCOT regions invite members to learn more about ‘Leadership – Working to the top of your game’. This session is designed to ensure that occupational therapy staff feel confidence and equipped to engage with the ‘Occupational Therapy Improving Lives, Saving Money’ Campaign. The event hopes to cover key areas of the campaign, recommendations, next steps and talk about creating change by maximising skills and competencies.

By the end of the roadshow you will:

- Be aware of RCOT’s view on leadership and the positioning of the profession to address current policy and health and social care priorities
- Be able to use the RCOT campaign materials for local influencing with commissioners, managers and service users
- Understand how the Career Framework can support professional development and their career.

To find out when the event is close to you go to the region page and find the region you are in: https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/regional-and-local-groups/

SEE YOURSELF AS A PUBLISHED AUTHOR, BUT DON’T KNOW WHERE TO START?

As a newly-qualified practitioner at the start of your exciting new career journey you may feel that you lack the knowledge and experience to contribute a published article to your member magazine, either as an individual or co-author.

Only a handful of recent graduates take up the opportunity to share the fruits of their work in the magazine during that transitional period from occupational therapy student to fully-fledged practitioner. But the wider occupational therapy community wants to hear what innovative new services and projects new graduates are involved in - be it a service development journey, an award for you or your team’s hard work, a volunteering project, or even further study - so be proud of yourself and get writing, it’s not as daunting as you think.

Contributing an article to OTnews will raise your profile with potential employers as you move up the career ladder, add to your CPD portfolio and potentially introduce you to a wide range of members working in your field, who will be able contact you for networking opportunities after your name appears in print. For guidance on how to contribute to OTnews visit: https://www.rcot.co.uk/news/otnews or email: editorial@rcot.co.uk.
And Finally...

‘Choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life’

— Confucius

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

Amie Mowlam-Tett
Student Education Liaison Officer