Hello and welcome to the New Graduate Bulletin.

For those of you who haven’t had the bulletin before, the 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.

Spring is finally here, and with the sunshine and flowers comes the start of graduation season and settling into your first occupational therapy role.

There are a number of you donning caps and capes at the moment at ceremonies across the UK to celebrate the achievements of your hard work. Don’t forget to share photos of your special day with @theRCOT or @RCOTStudents on twitter; we love to share this success with you.

Whether you are just graduating or have been in your job for over a year, being an OT can be both an exciting and nervous adventure. Don’t forget that the RCOT are always here to support you, should you need us. With your membership comes learning and CPD opportunities, resources and more.

On page 3 we have an update on the ‘Improving Lives, Saving Money’ campaign and RCOT strategic intentions going forwards. Take a look to see how this can add value to the service you are in.

This time of year is always a busy time here in London, with a busy and exciting time ahead of us.

Next month we have the annual conference. Take a look at page 2 for more information on what you will find there and what to look out for during the day. Don’t forget, if you aren’t going to be in Belfast, you don’t have to miss out on what’s going on. Be sure to follow #RCOT2018 on twitter to get a feel for what is happening.

In July, we have the Learning Together event for new graduates, which replaces the former New Graduate Day. This year’s theme is around career planning. For more about this fresh approach to the new graduate day and what to expect, check out the article on page 5.

I hope that you spend time over the next couple of months celebrating your achievements, looking back at how far you’ve already come, and enjoying some of the sunshine that has finally arrived.

Amie Mowlam-Tett
Education Liaison Officer
News

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN BELFAST!

With conference less than 3 weeks to go, the final countdown to #RCOT18 is underway.

Whether you are attending for the first time or have attended conference before, take some time to start thinking about what you want to gain from the experience and how you’re going to spend your time, with the help of the RCOT Annual Conference website: https://rcotannualconference.org.uk/

You’ll find the full conference programme on the website and can begin to mark out the sessions of interest.

On the programme itself you will find information about each session, the authors/presenters and learning outcomes. You will also find details about the plenary speakers, keynote addresses, posters displayed around conference, and the RCOT and AOTI Insight sessions. Don’t forget to use the conference programme alongside the session timetable so that you don’t end up double booking yourself for sessions.

While at conference, consider attending a mix of sessions and don’t forget to check out the occupation stations, chat to other attendees about what they are doing, check out the RCOT library’s information drop-in sessions, and of course, pick up as many free pens and goodies as you can carry back home with you.

And last but not least, don’t forget to enjoy yourself!

If you have any top tips for first time conference attendees, share them with me on twitter @RCOTstudents or via email: amie.mowlam-tett@rcot.co.uk.

UPDATE YOUR DETAILS

While you are logged into your account, why not check the details we hold for you? Keeping your details current will ensure you receive regular information from RCOT, so please make sure they’re up to date.

Member logo launched

For the first time, members of the RCOT are able to use a logo to show membership of the professional body that sets the professional and educational standards for occupational therapy in the UK.

The logo launched at the end of February was designed to be simple, versatile and distinctive and can be used on marketing materials, stationery, websites, email signatures and digital media.

Julia Scott, RCOT chief executive, urges members to promote themselves and their profession more widely by using the Member of RCOT logo and on their communications: ‘We recognise how proud our members are of their Royal College and are delighted to provide, for the first time, a membership logo for their use. The logo demonstrates RCOT membership, and membership illustrates an individual’s commitment to ongoing personal development and the highest standard of ethical and evidence informed practice.’

The Member of RCOT logo, for use by individual members only, not to represent entire practices or premises, is available to download, subject to terms and conditions.

For more information and to download the logo, sign in and go to your account page of the website.
Against a backdrop of increasing pressures on mental health services in England, a new report from the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) highlights the importance of prevention and early intervention in tackling mental health issues.

Current statistics show that 85% of people first disclose mental health problems to their GP – yet less than 5% of mental health professionals such as occupational therapists work in GP services. This means that the majority of people with mental health problems have to reach crisis before they can access any kind of help.

‘Getting My Life Back: Occupational therapy promoting mental health and wellbeing in England’, the latest report from the RCOT’s ‘Improving Lives, Saving Money’ Campaign, reveals a range of innovative occupational therapy services that focus on prevention and early intervention in mental health services. The report shows that occupational therapy has life-changing effects on people with mental health conditions; from stress and anxiety to depression, psychosis and self-harm.

The RCOT recommends occupational therapy as one of the lead professions in designing and delivering services for the future, in four key areas:

- Occupational therapists should be routinely helping young people with mental health problems to achieve their full educational potential
- Occupational therapists should be supporting people with mental health issues into employment
- Occupational therapists should be involved in plans to improve the physical health of people with serious mental health problems, incorporating and promoting healthy occupations
- Occupational therapists should lead innovative service delivery that improves access to mental health support in primary care.

Working in collaboration with the RCOT Specialist Section—People with Learning Disabilities, and members, the RCOT will promote the campaign by:

1. Providing information about the campaign and actions for members via relevant special interest groups/networks, newsletters and websites.
2. Encouraging members to use person-centred approaches when developing multidisciplinary care plans that include the reduction of medication, where possible.
3. Supporting members to have confidence to explore the rationale for using medication or challenge its use when necessary.
4. Promoting the Five Good Communication Standards to members so they can empower people with learning disabilities and their carers to understand and be involved in decisions about their medication.
5. Promoting the contribution that members make when delivering therapeutic interventions that support people during the reduction of psychotropic medication.
6. Advocating the use of SNOMED outcome measures to monitor the effectiveness of their interventions while decreasing medication.

On Thursday 17th May, RCOT launched the new Strategic Intentions in the presence of our Patron, HRH The Princess Royal, and members involved in developing the new intentions, at an event in London.

The Strategic Intentions are to:

- Position the profession, and our members for the 21st century
- Enhance the profile of the profession to a range of audiences
- Ensure RCOT is a thriving membership organisation within which members flourish

These will guide RCOT’s work for the next 5 years and were developed alongside members across 13 roadshows, 4 countries and 4053 miles. They represent our response to the challenges of the changing landscape of health and social care.

We want these intentions to position occupational therapy as a key contributor to the health and wellbeing of everyone in the UK and to provide a framework for how we support you, our members, and the wider profession.

Part of our Strategic Intentions is RCOT’s commitment to encourage innovative practices and forward thinking and define the meaning of occupation in the 21st Century. We want to empower our young people to choose occupational therapy as a rewarding career path ensuring a sustainable and effective workforce for the future; and we want to enable you to practice at the very highest level of your profession, giving you access to cutting edge research, guidelines and resources. Take a look at the video for more: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFF5PoVngKM

But, we can’t do this alone! We ask that you support us in delivering RCOT’s Strategic Intentions by making a pledge towards achieving our goal. You can pledge your support at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/governance/ipledgedo

And finally, here at RCOT we thank you for your support in helping us all secure the future of occupational therapy.
Resources

As part of your membership you have access to a variety of 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. You can find the new hOT topics on adult learners and chronic fatigue and myalgic encephalomyelitis is available at: [https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/hot-topics](https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/hot-topics)

- **Evidence Fact Sheets** provide facts and evidence on key service areas. Check out the latest on: ‘Adult Mental Health’ at: [www.rcot.co.uk/about-occupational-therapy/ot-evidence-factsheets](http://www.rcot.co.uk/about-occupational-therapy/ot-evidence-factsheets)

- **The ‘Quick Facts’** documents available at: [www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/assessments-and-outcome-measures](http://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/assessments-and-outcome-measures). These documents provide concise information about particular outcome measures (with signposting to the relevant manuals and, where appropriate, websites, for further information). The first three documents, which were published in August, are on the: Assessment of Motor and Process Skills (AMPS); Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM); and Therapy Outcome Measure (TOM).

- **The list of available ejournals** can be found at: [https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/journals-and-ejournals](https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/journals-and-ejournals) and **ebooks** at: [https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/e-books](https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/e-books)

---

**Occupational therapy and Complexity defined**

This publication aims to describe and define contemporary occupational therapy, and explores, expands and illustrates the unique complexity of the profession. It is clearly based upon, but goes beyond, previous work in this area and sets this within contemporary health and social care contexts.

**Occupational therapy and complexity: defining and describing practice** will be launched at RCOT Annual Conference on 11 – 13 June 2018. Pre-ordering is available. Pick up your copy, signed by Dr Duncan Pentland at Conference, or have the publication sent to you from 11 June 2018. It will be free for RCOT members to download from 4 June 2018.

---

**SPEAR TOPIC RECALL**

**RCOT has decided to review its suite of evidence-based resources. This is an important process to ensure that the resources we offer are fit for purpose and will best meet members’ needs. As part of this process we have reviewed the remit of the Supporting Practice, Evidence and Resources (SPEAR) topics.**

Whilst we recognise that the SPEAR topics contain some useful information, the information in them can quickly become outdated. As many of the SPEAR topics contain out of date materials and have broken hyperlinks, we have decided to withdraw them and focus our attention on developing a new and more comprehensive resource. The SPEAR topics were withdrawn on 1 May 2018 and are now archived in the RCOT library, where they may be accessed on request.

---

**New journal title available**

‘Annals of International Occupational Therapy’ is now available to access within the suite of RCOT ejournals.

To access this title, and all the ejournals available, log onto the website and go to ejournals, select ‘Access ejournals’ and then click ‘Additional RCOT ejournals’ to navigate to this title.

---

**Dementia researcher site**

NIHR has launched **Dementia Researcher**, a new website aimed at early career dementia researchers. It provides support/resources including: information on grant proposals, job/funding opportunities, access to podcasts and the chance to ‘ask a dementia expert’.

Access the website at: [https://www.dementiaresearcher.nihr.ac.uk](https://www.dementiaresearcher.nihr.ac.uk)

---

**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](mailto:lesley.gleaves@rcot.co.uk) with your BAOT membership number to be added to the mailing list.
NEW GRADUATES LEARNING TOGETHER EVENT

Building on the successes of the former New Graduates days of 2015, 16 and 17, and taking the participant feedback into consideration, RCOT’s Education and Research Department is pleased to announce a new type of event for those who are about to graduate, or are in the early dates, post-graduation, as occupational therapists.

The Learning Together Seminar entitled, ‘Early career planning for the newly qualified occupational therapist’, will take place in London at RCOT HQ on Thursday 24th July 2018. Its aims are to:

1. Use the Career Development Framework (RCOT 2017) as a structure to articulate personalised lifelong learning opportunities offered by RCOT and other organisations for participants to consider as they step into their new career as an occupational therapist;

2. Participate in a broader discussion to identify other potential ways for participants and RCOT to support retired members and all members with their CPD and lifelong learning;

3. Create space for participants to share their own ‘newly qualified’ learning and experiences with each other.

This day is aimed at people on Levels 4-5 of the Career Framework and will be the first in a series of three similar events, all aimed at people who practise at different levels of the Career Development Framework.

TAKE A LOOK AT PhD OPPORTUNITIES WITH QMU

Queen Margaret University – Occupational Therapy PhD Studentships (mental health)

Firefly Research at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, has secured funding for two occupational therapy PhD studentships. The Firefly Research Team invites applications from individuals with a strong academic record for these externally funded PhD studentships, which commence September 2018.

One PhD studentship is available for each of the following topics:

- Study One - Quantitative investigation of psychosocial factors and participation in employment for individuals with complex mental health problems.

- Study Two - Quantitative investigation of social and physical environmental context and participation in meaningful life roles for individuals with complex mental health problems.

The Firefly Research Team are happy to discuss applications with potential applicants and are available for meetings, phone calls or skype.

For more information go to: https://www.qmu.ac.uk/media/4358/firefly-phd-bursary-topics-feb-2018.pdf or contact Susan Prior at sprior@qmu.ac.uk to discuss your research proposal for study one, and Michele Harrison at mharrison@qmu.ac.uk to discuss your research proposal for study two.

The deadline for submissions has been extended from the 30th March to the 31st July.

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR RCOT REGION NOMINATIONS

There are 13 RCOT Regions across the UK and you are allocated to one, based on your registered postal code. Each Region is supported by a committee of volunteer members who are nominated annually to support local and regional events, networking groups and activities, sharing of best practice and information to and from the Royal College of Occupational Therapists.

Nominations for regional committees are opening in mid-July and regions are recruiting for Student Representatives to help contribute. This role is a great opportunity to network and start gaining CPD.

More information will be available in the July copy of OTnews.

If you have any questions, please contact: stacey.abraham@rcot.co.uk

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
And Finally...

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 via email: amie.mowlam-tett@rcot.co.uk or twitter @RCOTStudents. Issue 12 of the New Graduate Bulletin will be out in August. Until then keep shouting about the profession and celebrating the fantastic work you are doing.

Amie Mowlam-Tett
Student Education Liaison Officer

A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new