Dear readers,

Hello and welcome to the New Graduate Bulletin.

It is almost Christmas so before you over indulge in Christmas pudding and mulled wine have a look at some of our new resources and upcoming projects. For those 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, and helping you to make the most of your membership.

I have some very exciting news to share with you! Since I sent you the last newsletter I have been appointed as the new Education Liaison Officer at the Royal College of Occupational Therapists. Although I have been a part of the College for few months now, my new role gives me the opportunity to communicate with students and graduates like you in a more interactive way, and I am already thinking about how to better accommodate your needs as recent graduates. Need some guidance? I will be happy to advise you and do my best to direct you to all the resources and opportunities available to you. You will find my contact details at the end of this publication.

Let me summarise a few things that you will find in the following pages. Our Education Manager, Maureen Shiells, would like to share some of the great work her team has been doing and some of the projects on the horizon. There will soon be a pilot programme of occupational therapy-led vocational clinics in GPs’ surgeries, supporting people with physical and mental health problems to return to work. Preparations for our Annual conference in 2019 are underway and you are still able to apply at a discounted rate. Have a look at the plenary speakers list - you won’t want to miss them! As promised, you will also find our second edition of “Acting as an expert: Guidance for occupational therapists” and some news about what is coming in early 2019. Last but not least there are opportunities to get involved and develop your skills, as well as further promote the profession.

Wishing you the merriest Christmas and the happiest New Year!

Sofia Lypiridou
Education Liaison Officer
Message from the Education and Research team

It's been a busy Autumn in our Education and Research team and I'd like to let you know what we have been up to. It’s possible for you to become engaged in the work of RCOT and now is the time for you to begin to use your voice as new graduates. You will be influencing the profession as it (and you) moves forward. And as always, for anything you do that resembles CPD — remember it might just be a small, bite-sized piece of work that takes you 10 minutes – you can take a look at the Career Development Framework and give yourself a pat on the back as you plot your very own learning and development there, notching up the pillars of practice as you go. You can find it [here](#).

Firstly, we are well into the swing of our RCOT review of practice education resources, which should be of interest to you as new graduates with an eye on the future. Hopefully you will soon be ready to support a student or two on practice placement if you haven’t already, and we hope to have some great new and refreshed resources prepared to help you as the review moves into its final phases. It’s due to complete in Summer 2019, so look out! We’ll aim to keep you posted in the meantime.

Secondly, we are just about to begin our review into the [Learning and Development Standards for Pre-registration Education](#). These are the standards UK universities have to meet to be able to deliver a pre-registration degree to produce qualified Occupational Therapists, so they would have heavily influenced your course if you trained in the UK.

We are keen to hear about how you found your pre-registration degree. Did it prepare you for work as an occupational therapist? Were there any gaps in your learning? You will have an opportunity to put your views to us via our project lead, Emily Wheeler, who will be consulting widely for the review. Emily will be calling for your input, but if you have any thoughts or feedback at this early stage, please contact Emily directly.

Maureen Shiells - Education Manager

RCOT awarded funding to run occupational therapy-led vocational clinics in GP surgeries

The Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOT) is delighted to announce that it has been successful in its bid for support from the Challenge Fund, to run occupational therapy led vocational clinics based in GP surgeries. The successful application was one of only 19 (out of 900 applications) chosen to receive the funding – run by the joint Department of Health and Social Care and Department for Work and Pensions, Work and Health Unit.

The pilot schemes will support people with musculoskeletal and/ or mental health problems stay in or return to work. The occupational therapy clinics will use a stepped care model ranging from brief self-management advice to employer liaison and rehabilitation. Each person using the service will receive a personalised Allied Health Professions Advisory Fitness for Work Report which they can share with their GP and employer.

Currently, 93% of GP Fit notes, which are designed to give general rather than job-specific advice, state that patients are unable to work and one third are issued for five weeks or longer (NHS Digital 2017). This vocational clinic initiative will test whether these figures could be improved with earlier, individualised return to work advice from occupational therapists in primary care.

The pilot will be delivered in Southampton and South Wales in partnership with University of Nottingham, Solent NHS Trust and Hywel Dda University Health Board. Learning will be gathered from people using the service and other stakeholders about their experience of the initiative which ends in February 2020.

To read the full article visit: [https://www.rcot.co.uk/news/rcot-awarded-funding-run-occupational-therapy-led-vocational-clinics-gp-surgeries](https://www.rcot.co.uk/news/rcot-awarded-funding-run-occupational-therapy-led-vocational-clinics-gp-surgeries)
News

Registration is now open

Registration is now open for the Royal College of Occupational Therapists Annual Conference 2019. If you have not experienced it, this is your chance to book your place at a special discounted rate (up to 70% student discount). The Annual Conference is an inspirational experience where you will be able to listen to lectures and hear about the latest research in Occupational therapy. You can get practical advice on how to improve your everyday practice; also network and exchange views with some of the country’s most eminent occupational therapists, who may already have inspired your development and practice.

Visit the RCOT Annual Conference Website to get the latest information about the conference, and also advice on how you can make a business case to attend it. And don’t forget if you book your place before 3 May 2019 you get 50% off the standard registration price (Non-members).

Plenary speakers announced for #RCOT2019 Annual Conference

We are delighted and very privileged to confirm Suzanne Rastrick, Allied Health Professions Officer, NHS England and Philip Allen, an inspirational service user, as plenary speakers at the 2019 RCOT Annual Conference. Both accomplished speakers will give delegates an insight into the difference the occupational therapy profession makes – but from very different perspectives.

Suzanne, who is an occupational therapist, will explain how her occupational therapy skills propelled her career achievements – she is now the most senior allied health professional in England, helping to inform and direct national health and social care policies and processes.

Philip was a high-flying solicitor who sustained a brain injury in 2010. To all extents and purposes his disability is invisible, so he very cleverly will reveal throughout his plenary address how his disability has impacted on his life. Thanks to the occupational therapy profession he has been able to rebuild his sense of self-worth. He embodies all that is great and inspiring about the occupational therapy profession; moreover he wants to use his presentation to thank the profession for what it has helped him to achieve.

Find out more about the speakers here, and to register to book your place at conference please visit the registration page.
Resources

Acting as an Expert Witness: guidance for occupational therapists

Produced for occupational therapists who are currently working as expert witnesses, or considering undertaking this work, this second edition has been updated by the Medico Legal Forum of the RCOT Specialist Section – Independent Practice.

The guidance provides comprehensive information on the role and function of an occupational therapy expert witness in the UK. It covers all elements of the process from formal instruction and giving evidence in court to preparing cost budgets and expert reports. Also included is a helpful glossary of civil legal procedure terminology.

Free for RCOT members to download at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/acting-expert-witness

Watch this space (Early 2019)

This publication will be important guide to assist social care managers as to how adaptations could best be provided locally. It will show when occupational therapists add value to the process, as well as the rationale for when they are needed in the assessment process due to complexity of individual circumstances.

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 Pauline.McDonald@rcot.co.uk with your BAOT membership number to be added to the mailing list.

New Library catalogue portal

The RCOT Library is pleased to launch a new library catalogue portal which offers:

- faster access to resources - including ebooks and electronic theses,
- features better content displays throughout a modern, responsive interface that will work just as well on your phone or tablet as on a desktop computer, a streamlined export process, easier to amend and filter results.

You can find a guide to using the portal, as well as other useful documents on accessing resources, on our Information Skills page

You have access to a variety of online resources including: hOT topics, evidence fact sheets, quick facts and over 50 e-journals, 100 e-books and multiple e-thesis.

- Start with looking at the hOT topics which provide an overview of key reading in a subject area. Available at: 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: Admissions to A&E Departments at: www.rcot.co.uk/about-occupational-therapy/ot-evidence-factsheets
- The list of available e-journals can be found at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/journals-and-e-journals and e-books at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/e-books
- E-theses may be available for immediate download through the RCOT library catalogue at: www.rcot.co.uk/practice-resources/library-resources/borrow-thesis

Free for RCOT members to download at: https://www.rcot.co.uk/acting-expert-witness

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Engage

Toolkit for self-directed learning

Now available at www.rcot.co.uk/toolkit which includes a range of downloadable templates for hosting CPD sessions based on innovative methods of learning, e.g. a debate session, action learning sets or a critical film night. The toolkits are ongoing resources and the Professional Development Team would value hearing from students and new graduates if there are additional resources they would like to see featured. Please contact prof.dev@rcot.co.uk if you’d like to share some ideas or feedback."

Occupational Therapy: Improving lives, Saving Money

Our campaign reports have overarching recommendations to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for people whilst demonstrating a strong return on investment. These are:
- Deploy more occupational therapists in primary care and frontline services to intervene early and to support people to remain at home
- Increase the number of therapy led services to maximise people’s independence and ensure an enablement ethos
- Employ occupational therapists to deliver a public health approach addressing needs such as, social isolation, employment and housing.

It would be great if you help us promote the #ValueOfOT in mental health services I support @theRCOT’s call for prevention and early intervention in #mentalhealth services. Read the report here: rcootimprovinglives.com #ValueOfOT

Full report of our campaign can be found here: https://www.rcot.co.uk/promoting-occupational-therapy/occupational-therapy-improving-lives-saving-money

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The Faculty of Health and Life Sciences at Northumbria University, Newcastle, is inviting applications for a funded PhD project: Do men attend luncheon clubs? An exploration of gendered interventions to promote social engagement.

This PhD project will employ participatory action research in partnership with older men and service providers. It will address the following research questions: Do men attend luncheon clubs? What alternative meaningful social engagement interventions would men value? How could these interventions be implemented?

Applicants should demonstrate academic excellence, i.e. 2:1 or equivalent (preference 1st class honours); a master’s degree (preference for merit or above); or APEL evidence of substantial practitioner achievement.

The project will be supervised by: Dr Tracy Collins (principal supervisor) and Dr Gemma Wilson and Professor Susan Carr (co supervisors).

The studentship, available to Home/EU students, provides a full stipend paid for three years at RCUK rates (2018/19, £14,777 pa) and full fees.


Find out more about this PhD project at: Do men attend luncheon clubs? (Find a PHD page)

Research Priority Grant (1 grant of up to £88,000)

To support a major research project that clearly addresses an identified professional UK research priority area. Applicants will need to justify the priority need for their proposal in relation to national/local policy and priority for practice.

For more information and other grants please visit: https://www.rcot.co.uk/news-and-events/awards-and-funding/ukotrfrf-research-grants
Thank you for reading this issue of the New Graduate Bulletin, I hope you have found this publication useful. Please get in touch if you have any feedback - email Sofia.Lypiridou@rcot.co.uk or twitter @RCOTStudents.

Issue 14 of the New Graduate Bulletin will be out in March, until then keep shouting about the profession and celebrating the fantastic work you are doing.

Sofia Lypiridou

Education Liaison Officer—Pre-registration