



OTARG NEWSLETTER

(Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group)

May 2011

No. 15



Member Countries

Botswana
 Ethiopia
 Kenya
 Malawi
 Mauritius
 Namibia
 Nigeria
 Rwanda
 Sierra Leone
 South Africa
 Tanzania
 Togo
 Uganda
 Zambia

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WFOT APPOINTMENTS 2010 - 2012

Sharon Brintnell	President - Canada
Vice President	Anne Carswell - Canada
Executive Director	Marilyn Pattison - Australia
Vice President Finance	Samantha Shann – United Kingdom
Programme Coordinator for Education and Research	Alfred Ramukumba – South Africa
Programme Coordinator International Cooperation	Suchada Sakornsatian - Thailand
Programme Coordinator Promotion and Development	Richard Ledgerd – United Kingdom
Programme Coordinator Standards and Quality	Nils Erik Ness - Norway

EDITORIAL

Hello to all occupational therapists in Sub-Sahara Africa. We are on the brink of another memory/history making event!!!

This issue of the OTARG Newsletter will provide you with the most up-to-date information on the OTARG Congress in Livingston in September 2011 and also give you information on what is going on in occupational therapy in our region.

The book "Occupational Therapy; An African Perspective" will be on sale at the Zambia Congress at a reduced price for Congress attendants. Many of you are aware that profit made from the sale of the book is to be used by OTARG to sponsor occupational therapists to the OTARG Congresses. Profits will unfortunately not be realised by September but will certainly be available for the Congress after this event.

In this edition of the Newsletter you will find reports from Mauritius, Tanzania and Uganda.

There is also an amazing report from Kushinga Maneswa who has contacted me re the formation of the group "Occupational therapy students in Africa:facebook group." It is not only for students but also for qualified occupational therapists and interested parties. Well done Kushinga. Read more!!

Also included in this edition are the obituaries of three occupational therapy giants that we have lost in the period between the two Congresses. They are Charles Lirunde Bulinda, Omalade Coker and Joy Varney-Blackburn.

At the Congress these people will be revered and honoured for their contribution to our wonderful profession.

We look forward to once again getting together in Livingston in Zambia and I look forward to seeing you all there.

Rosemary Crouch Editor

The OTARG CONGRESS 2011

The 7th Congress of the Occupational Therapy African Regional Group.

Expanding horizons: Occupational Therapy for a developing world

The congress will be held at the Fairmount Hotel, Livingstone, Zambia from the 12-16 September, 2011

To support the development of occupational therapy in Africa the Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group (OTARG) was established in 1999, in Durban, South Africa. It is a regional group under the World Federation of Occupational Therapy (WFOT).

The objectives of this regional group are to:

- Support the development of Occupational Therapy services in sub-Sahara Africa.
- Increase the knowledge base and awareness about Occupational Therapy in Africa.
- Promote networking and exchange of information between African countries.
- Encourage membership of African countries with WFOT.
- Support the development of existing and emerging occupational therapy training centres in line with WFOT minimum standards.
- The congresses bring together Occupational Therapists from across the African continent and the world, and other interested rehabilitation and disability stakeholders.
- **REGISTRATION:**
- Registration forms and further information are available on the OTARG web site www.otarg.org.za/.
- Organizing Committee: Email: Eckiwe Kamanga: eckiwekamanga@yahoo.co.uk
Scientific Committee: Chair: Theresa Lorenzo: Theresa.Lorenzo@uct.ac.za

Updates will be posted on the OTARG website at www.otarg.org.za/

Registration

Costs/Congress Fee

Early Bird

\$220 US by 31st July 2011

Late Registration

\$250 US

Students Early Bird

\$100 US by 31st July 2011*

Late Registration

\$120 US*

*(only undergraduate students from African training institutions are eligible for the student discount, please submit proof of student registration)

Payment to

Account Name

Occupational Therapy Africa

Regional Group (OTARG)

Bank Code 011545

Account Number 032270089

Swift Address SBZAZAJJ

Bank Standard Bank,
Hatfield, South Africa.

Accommodation

Delegates are responsible for their own booking.

New Fairmont Hotel +260 213 3237260

2. Suratian2004@hotmail.com

<http://www.victoriafallszambia.travel/TheNewFairmount>.

SINGLE 60 USD, TWIN AND DOUBLE ROOMS ARE 35 USD PP

Booking agent: James Mwanza =260 213 322365. Jta@microlink.zm for alternative accommodation and tours.

NEWS FROM MAURITIUS

A Tribute to Occupational Therapists

Mauritius is a sparkling island nation off the southeast coast of the African continent in the southwest Indian Ocean. Training in occupational therapy approved by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists started at the University of Mauritius in 2003.

By far, the Ministry of Health was the sole sector whereby occupational therapists could work and be

recognised. However, during the past few years, occupational therapy in Mauritius bloomed into a magnificent sunflower.

Since 2007, more non-governmental organisations on the island recruited occupational therapists and when the fabulous work of these professionals were known; the Ministry of Education took on board occupational therapists in its newly set up special education needs intervention team designed for children having difficulty in coping with their studies in mainstream schools. With the marketing of the profession by both the occupational therapists and occupational therapy students at the University of Mauritius, the Ministry of Social Security followed in and employed occupational therapists to serve the geriatric population. Even the University of Mauritius recognised the value of the profession and recruited a locally trained occupational therapist to hold the post of Occupational Therapy Programme Coordinator.

Occupational therapists trained in Mauritius are expanding their horizons - three of our colleagues are currently working abroad and further four have upgraded their skills in specific fields in occupational therapy such as hand rehabilitation, interpersonal communication and group dynamics and applying concepts of creative ability with different client groups. In addition, one occupational therapist designed a snoezelen room used for children with developmental disabilities. Other non-governmental organisations are presently working on this concept to have such controlled multisensory stimulation within their occupational therapy service. There is also one occupational therapist who initiated a school for children with disabilities. I am proud of the evolution of Occupational Therapy in Mauritius and may this fruition mark the beginning of a new era of heightened collaboration and

solidarity between different organisations on the island and occupational therapists. For the future generation, try to win the whole ecosystem of occupational therapy!

With warmest wishes for continued success,

**Christel Couronne W.F.O.T Delegate
President, Occupational Therapists'
Association**

NEWS FROM OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS IN AFRICA: FACEBOOK GROUP.

The objective as occupational therapy students in Africa is to bring first class standards to the study of occupational therapy in Africa. This is not a modest aim, nor should it be.

Social media is a powerful tool for sharing information. Our group provides a forum for discourse among occupational therapy students; furthermore the group seeks to facilitate discussions on speciality areas of occupational therapy and emerging areas for practice and to promote sharing of ideas. We believe that that the internet is becoming more part of our lives. Such initiatives are not only necessary, but inevitable.

By bringing students, mentors and other interested parties through the medium of the internet we hope to give prospective occupational therapists, studying in Africa, relevant relevant information to help their studies.

This is an open group on facebook for occupational therapy students, qualified therapists and interested parties. All are welcome to comment or post any links that are relevant to our occupational therapy practice.

Please contact us for further information.

Kushinga Maneswa.

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NEWS FROM TANZANIA

The occupational therapy school is progressing well. They have managed to

raise the number of students enrolment to 15 with the support of the government. They are still struggling with the shortage of teaching staff but slowly this will change as well.

Sarah Mkenda, the Course Coordinator and Senior Occupational Therapist, is expecting a baby at any time now and we pray for her that with God's Grace the baby will arrive safely and be healthy.

Sarah H Mkenda

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Coordinator O T School

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News was also received from Rosemary Mbaule who is president of TOTA. She tells us that Tanzania OT has moved forward in marketing the OT profession in the country particularly in penetrating into the government health system. OT continues to show relevance in health care and educating policy and helps to differentiate between OT and PT. This year the MUuhimbili National Hospital has agreed to establish an occupational therapy department after a struggle of 9 years. The ministry of health and Social Welfare continue to push regional hospitals to employ OTs. The challenge we are facing is few OT graduates each year and OTs working in isolation.

Rosemary Mbaule Kauzeni.

NEWS ABOUT OT TRAINING IN UGANDA.

From Uganda there is now a BSc programme in Occupational Therapy that is welcoming applications for the programme that starts in August, through the ECUREI Institute. It caters for OTs that wish to upgrade to a BSc, Please send applications to ecurei@yahoo.com. For more information google ECUREI.

Sarah Matovu saranatty@yahoo.com.

**IN MEMORY OF THOSE
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS WHO
HAVE GONE BEFORE US**

CHARLES BULINDA LIHRUNDE

It was with great sadness that we heard about the passing away of our dear friend and colleague Charles Bulinda Lihunde. Charles was a legend to the profession of occupational therapy. He was the first Head of Department of the new Education programme for the training of occupational therapists at KCMC, Tumaini University in 1999 and was the first President of the Tanzanian OT Association. He was a trained occupational therapist from Kenya. Since 2000 he was very involved in the development of occupational therapy in Tanzania and worked closely with the Tanzanian Department of Health and the Heads of the University. He did the most wonderful job and everyone loved him.

Great tribute must be paid to him for the contribution he made to the profession of occupational therapy in Africa.

Herma Grossman (OT), with Charles



Nightingale (OT) with Charles.



OMOLADE COKER

A special picture of Omolade with Alfred Ramukumba (OTARG President) in Kampala at the Congress in 2003.



Omolade spent 27 years developing the occupational therapy services at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital where she became Chief occupational Therapist.

She was committed to improving the quality of occupational therapy education in Nigeria and was actively involved in the development of the Bachelor of science curriculum at university level. Omolade served as the President of the Nigerian Association of occupational Therapists, Vice Chairman

of OTARG and Nigerian Delegate to the World Federation of Occupational Therapists.

She worked tirelessly to re-establish the declining occupational therapy services in the early 2000's through the voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) programme.

Her strength of character and vivaciousness and exuberant personality endeared her to colleagues. She will be very fondly remembered.

Joy Varney Blackburn



Joy Varney Blackburn, well known and revered occupational therapist, passed away on Wednesday 13th April 2011 in South Africa.

She trained as an occupational therapist at the Vona du Toit College, part of Pretoria University.

Joy worked at psychiatric hospitals in South Africa. From 1960 to 1970 she lectured and taught pottery at the Occupational Therapy Vona du Toit College.

She dedicated herself to doing research on mentally handicapped children with self-injurious behaviour and published a number of articles and also authored a chapter in the 2nd edition of the book "Occupational Therapy in Psychiatry and Mental Health," ed. Crouch. She was very involved with the training of

Occupational Therapy Assistants during this time.

Joy was part of the inaugural committee of the POTs Group (Psychiatric OTs) in 1985. She and her second husband Malcolm (married in 1986) attended the first OTARG (Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group) Congress in Mauritius in 1991.

At the beginning of the 1980s Joy was an inaugural member of the establishment of SAISI (South African Institute of Sensory Integration). She served on the Board for more than 20 years. During this time she was the 3rd Chairman and served for 4 years from 1988 to 1993.

Joy was elected President of OTASA (Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa) in 2001. Her involvement in OTASA was extensive and she made a big impact, particularly in occupational therapy in the psychiatric field.

Joy was a beautiful person in all respects. She was an intensely creative person, a master potter and wild-life lover and expert. She set an example as an occupational therapist in the real sense of the word. She was a wonderful colleague, a wonderful friend, a wonderful mother and wife and companion, and a wonderful occupational therapist!

IN CONCLUSION

A sad note to end on, but also a very important one. These people made a considerable contribution to our profession in Africa and were very also involved in OTARG.

All that remains is a welcoming note to the 7th OTARG Congress in Livingstone. Do try very hard to get there. It is going to be a very exciting event.

Website addresses are as follows: www.otarg.org.za and also the WFOT website at www.wfot.org

RBC 20/11/2010

