



**OTARG NEWSLETTER**  
**(Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group)**

**October 2012**  
**No. 17**

**8<sup>th</sup> OTARG CONGRESS**  
**ZIMBABWE 2013**



**PROMOTING OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY IN AFRICA**



**Member Countries**

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

**Editor**

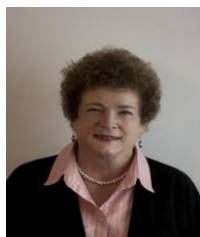
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[rcrouch@intekom.co.za](mailto:rcrouch@intekom.co.za)

**Office-bearers of OTARG:**

Chairperson:  
**Sarah Matovu, Uganda**  
[Sarah](#)  
Vice Chairperson:  
**Justice Mackenzi Nthitu, Botswana**  
Secretary  
**Patricia de Witt, South Africa**  
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Member at large /WFOT representative to OTARG  
**Albert Pascal, Tanzania**  
Student Representative  
**Tatenda Maphosa, Zimbabwe**  
Website: **Vivyan Alers, South Africa**  
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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

This is OTARG'S 17<sup>th</sup> Newsletter and has the most wonderful information in it. Please read every word!

It is with such pleasure that I am able to send out to you the 1<sup>st</sup> Announcement of the 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Occupational Therapy African Regional Group (OTARG) in Harare, Zimbabwe, next year from 19<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2013. As I said in the last Newsletter these Congresses of OTARG keep the whole organisation together and have assumed enormous importance for the region. Keep looking at the OTARG website for the announcements to keep up to date. It is [www.otarg.org.za](http://www.otarg.org.za) and is also on the WFOT website at [www.wfot.org.au](http://www.wfot.org.au).

In this edition you will also find the first notification of the bursaries from OTARG that will be available to two applicants to attend the Congress in Harare next year. The sale of the book "Occupational Therapy: An African Perspective" edited by Vivyan Alers and Rosemary Crouch, published by Sarah Shorten Publishers on behalf of OTARG, has generated US\$ 1000 each for two delegates. Details for applicants are given and it is the duty of the OTARG Executive Committee to choose the delegates. This truly is the most exciting development and a dream of every OTARG member who contributed to the book.

Also in this Newsletter you will find lovely reports from the various regions of OTARG. Thank you to those occupational therapists who responded so promptly, including our wonderful

chairperson Sarah Matovu who discusses the new occupational therapy training in Rwanda, and a report from Sarah Makenda and Herma Grossmann from Tanzania. We are also so delighted also to have reports from the Seychelles and Ghana. This is a first!!

Rosemary Crouch Editor.



FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

**CALL FOR ABSTRACTS**

**Theme: Promoting Occupational Therapy in Africa**

### Important Dates

**Congress: August 19 – 23, 2013** (Note that 19 to 23 August are business days for the Congress).

**Deadline for abstract submission: 31 January 2013**

**Notification of accepted abstracts: 31 March 2013**

**Early bird registration: 31 May 2013**

**Confirmation of attendance by presenters: 30 June 2013**

## Venue

**Monomotapa Crowne Plaza Hotel, Harare, Zimbabwe.**

## Background

The OTARG Congress is the premier biennial gathering for Occupational Therapists in Africa and beyond. Policy makers, persons living with disabilities and other individuals committed to improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities are also welcome. The OTARG Congress provides an opportunity for OTs in Africa to examine current progress, evaluate recent scientific developments and lessons learnt, and collectively chart a course forward.

## Objectives of the Congress

The main objective of the Congress will be to make Occupational Therapy more visible in Africa. Congress presentations will seek to demonstrate how occupational therapy can be promoted through education, research and evidence based practice, relevance, impact, ethical practice, policy etc. Individual countries will be given an opportunity to show case how they have promoted or plan to promote occupational therapy through the above strategies.

Congress workshops will focus on skills/strategies that will promote the profession.

Pre- and/or post- Congress workshops will target areas as identified by member countries.

The OTARG 2013 congress programme will identify new knowledge and offer many opportunities for structured dialogue on the major issues facing the global response to rehabilitation and disability issues. A variety of opportunities, from abstract-driven presentations to bridging and plenary

sessions will meet the needs of diverse participants. Other related activities, including satellite meetings, exhibitions and affiliated independent events, will contribute to an exceptional opportunity for professional development and networking.

## Sub-themes

Research and evidence based practice

Education

Ethical and/or professional practice

Occupation-based practice

Policy and practice

Relevance – aligning services to declarations, conventions, global and local priorities

Effective service delivery

Impact assessment

Marketing the profession/services

Other

## Participants

This is a premier gathering for occupational therapists in Africa and beyond. Policy makers, Health Funders, Health educators, other health professionals, and Disabled People's organizations are also welcome.

## Congress Registration Fee

OTs Early bird registration fee: US\$220

OTs Late registration fee: US\$250

OT Students Early bird: US\$150

OT Students Late registration:  
US\$180

Other Early bird registration fee:  
US\$300

Other Late registration fee: US\$350

### Exhibition

A limited amount of space will be available for academic/professional displays/exhibits during the Congress. More information on this will be available in due course.

### Official Language of the Congress

The working language of the Congress will be English, and as such all workshops, oral and poster presentations should be in English

### Call for oral and poster presentations

Abstracts for papers or posters on issues falling within the theme and sub-themes outlined above may be submitted electronically in English as per the format on the web page on or before **31 January, 2013**. Authors will be informed by **31 March 2013** whether their paper/poster has been accepted for presentation by the Scientific Committee. Oral presentations will be allocated 20 minutes including five minutes for questions. A subset of papers presented at the Congress will be published subject to peer review. Further details will be provided after the papers have been reviewed.

One and a half hour or three hour workshops are also invited.

### Visa Application and Letter of Invitation

It is the delegate's responsibility to investigate the visa requirements for travel to Zimbabwe and to apply for a

visa, if necessary. Delegates should contact the nearest Zimbabwean embassy or consulate to determine the appropriate timing of their visa applications. All visa applications should be submitted to the authorities at least 60 days before travelling to Zimbabwe (i.e. before mid-June 2013).

Individuals requiring an Official Letter of Invitation from the conference organizers can request one by contacting the OTARG Registration Committee at. To receive a Letter of Invitation, delegates must first register for the conference, pay in full and submit any required supporting documents (if applicable) before a Letter of Invitation will be issued. Those who require a letter for funding purposes should make individual enquiries with the team.

The registration fee minus a handling fee of USD 65 will be refunded after the conference if the visa was applied for in time and proof is shown that a visa could not be granted even though all requested documents were submitted. A refund for any additional items ordered (for example abstract books, etc.) cannot be made. Refund requests must be made in writing and sent to the 8<sup>th</sup> OTARG Registration Committee, by email, no later than 31 August 2013.

The Letter of Invitation does not financially obligate the conference organizers in any way. All expenses incurred in relation to the conference are the sole responsibility of the delegate. Your registration details might be shared with the Zimbabwean immigration authorities to assist in the immigration process.

### Congress Website

The congress website where information updates can be received is located at <http://www.otarg.org.za>

## Contacts

For further information, please contact: Tecla Mlambo on [teclamlambo@hotmail.com](mailto:teclamlambo@hotmail.com) or check on the OTARG website for contacts of other Organizing and Scientific Team members.

### CRITERIA FOR OBTAINING FUNDING TO ATTEND THE OTARG CONGRESS

#### Funding is available for 2 applicants to attend the 2013 OTARG CONGRESS

The sale of the OTARG book "Occupational Therapy: An African Perspective", has generated funds for 2 bursaries for occupational therapists to attend the 2013 OTARG Congress. The maximum available for an applicant is US \$1,000 and although this may not cover the whole attendance fee, accommodation, transport, congress fees etc, the applicant is only eligible for it if personal additional money is available to fulfill the costs needed. If the latter is not available then the funding needs to be returned to OTARG for another applicant.

Participation of the OTARG Congress is mandatory. Should the recipient not attend the full congress, the full amount must be refunded to OTARG.

The recipient must be a qualified occupational therapist from a W.F.O.T. recognized training centre in Africa.

The recipient must be a member of their country's Occupational Therapy Association and OTARG and registered with their Health Professional Council or Association of their country. Registration numbers are required.

The recipient must submit an abstract for a presentation at the OTARG

Congress and present as a workshop, poster or a paper presentation.

The applicant must apply on the correct form at the website: [www.otarg.org.za](http://www.otarg.org.za). with the airfare, accommodation and subsistence cost, congress fee cost, and state what other money is available. A report must be submitted to the OTARG committee one month after the OTARG Congress.

The funding is only available to 2 participants for the 2013 OTARG Congress. Each application will have US\$1000 available to them. The funds will be held by the OTARG Executive who will be in charge of paying all expenses.

### A REPORT FROM SEYSELLES



The Seychelles Occupational Therapy Association conducted a study between February and May 2012 on physical accessibility in Seychelles which was commissioned by the National Council for the Disabled in Seychelles.

The ultimate goal was to influence the mentality of property developers, building owners, architects and designers, builders, planning officials, policy makers and legislators to create a **Barrier Free Seychelles** for all. Data were gathered through discussions with key stakeholders i.e. The Seychelles Bureau of Standards (SBS), The Department of Planning and representatives from the Disabled People's Organisations (DPO). Following our report, the process of adopting the International standard ISO



21542 and the British Standard BS 8300:2001 as national standards in Seychelles is underway.

The Department of Planning has made revisions to the Building Regulations and included a section on accessibility. We are working in partnership with the Department of Planning and Disabled Persons to conduct an audit of buildings and public spaces in the Greater Victoria area.

Conducting this study has increased the occupational therapy role in Seychelles in advocating and advising on the topic of accessibility.

Occupational therapy in Seychelles supports the Autism Advocacy project launched earlier this year and which has the support of the First Lady office, with an occupational therapist being a member of the Autism advocacy awareness committee. The project objective is to increase awareness of this condition as well as ensure early detection as well as early intervention program for those diagnosed with this condition. Being part of this committee has put us in the forefront as being a key service provider for those diagnosed with Autism disorder.

12 Occupational therapy diploma students will graduate early next year and this should enable us to provide a better occupational therapy service with wider coverage, especially in the community as well the outer islands.

Contributed by Seychelles Occupational Therapy Association chairperson,  
Fiona Paulin

## NEWS FROM GHANA

### U'VE GOT TO START FROM SOMEWHERE

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Ghana has a population of over 25 million with a good health insurance scheme. Most people are apparently assessing health facilities than ever before since the introduction of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) in 2004. It is however unfortunate to know occupational therapy is not included in the health delivery system simply because there are no occupational therapists in the country. Even professionals within the health care and related services have little or no idea about occupational therapy. Occasionally VSO supports by sending qualified occupational therapists to any of the three psychiatric hospitals in the country. These occupational therapists work briefly, after which we need to keep looking forward for the next voluntary posting that never, seems to happen again.

Currently occupational therapy is thinly known, but not the roles though, at the 3 main psychiatric hospitals. Thanks to the on-the-job trained OTAs who continue to function with the little knowledge acquired ages ago. VSO sponsored occupational therapists bring along new ideas, these seem to live and leave with the implementers. The trend reverses to 'as it was' as soon as they are gone due to these inconsistent attempts to bring change. There has been the need to

start from somewhere, to enable these institutions and the nation in general to have permanent OTS to sustain the good work of the profession.

The University of Ghana, School of Allied Health Sciences has put in much effort to establish the need to start an occupational therapy programme in the country. The training probably is the first of its kind in the West African sub region. Although there have been a lot of impediments the **BSc OT Programme has taken off since September 2012**. Currently there are 20 students enrolled in this maiden 4-year degree programme.

There is a lot of work to be done and the pioneer cohort is continuously being sensitized of such difficult times for example in the areas of faculty, fieldwork experience, dedicated occupational therapy service facilities and employability. These have been seriously considered and more considerations are taken concurrently with the programme in progress.

The School of Allied Health Sciences therefore welcomes all interested practitioners and academics who will like to be part of this exciting step we've taken. Get in touch for further discussions on how you can contribute to occupational therapy as together we can 'broaden the horizon'.

**Peter O Ndaa**  
**University of Ghana**  
**College of Health Sciences**  
**School of Allied Health Sciences**  
**Korle Bu, Accra**  
**Ghana. [pndaa@chs.edu.gh](mailto:pndaa@chs.edu.gh)**

#### **A REPORT FROM TANZANIA**

Generally the Training Programme for Occupational Therapy has progressed markedly following the support from the KCM College and the Ministry of Health. This has been in the areas of students'

support and recruitment. As a result of this the number of enrolling students has raised from 3 students in 2006/7 to 17 in 2011/2012. We now have 14 students in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, 16 in 2<sup>nd</sup> year and 12 in 1<sup>st</sup> year. Here are a total of 42 students. This is the highest number since the school started.

Challenges still exists such a severe shortage of teaching staff; we still do not have our own facilities like classrooms and offices, our own tutors (only part-time ones as we are still waiting for the Government to employ tutors) and of course we lack funds to run the programme.

Our future plans are as follows:

- To start a Bachelors Degree programme, hopefully in the next academic year 2013/2014
- To have our own facilities/premises.
- To have full-time tutors employed either by KCM College or the Ministry of Health
- Attract donors and expatriates to support this programme.

The Training College this year awards the Rosemary Crouch award to the most outstanding graduate in Occupational Therapy Ephphania C. Massawe.

Contained in this report is some added news form Herma Grossmann, occupational therapist from Moshi who holds the highest Award in occupational therapy, that of Honorary Fellow of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists.(WFOT). She adds that:

They are really doing well at the OT School and I often go up and chat with them. On the periphery, the Tanzanian Government is slowly increasing the employment rate of occupational therapists in the hospitals and Tanzanian occupational therapists are getting active in setting up their own private practices. Self-employment is getting more popular.



Some occupational therapists, already in the field have chosen to upgrade themselves to BSC level through distance learning. This is a time and money-saving approach.

We have also started a rehabilitation /integration programme for children in Retention-homes under TOTA.

The first Forensic Occupational Therapy Programme in Tanzania has started and will hopefully promote the profession. It is also of interest that the Community-Orientated Rehabilitation Programme (COR) model is now successfully been implemented under 7 established organizations.

**Sarah H. Mkenda,**  
**Senior Occupational Therapist and Coordinator of the Occupational Therapy School in KCM-College of Tumaini University, Moshi, Tanzania**  
[sarahmkenda@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sarahmkenda@yahoo.co.uk) or  
[dot@kcmcollege.ac.uk](mailto:dot@kcmcollege.ac.uk).

**Herma Grossmann, Occupational Therapist at the YWCA, Moshi.**  
[hhgrossmann@gmail.com](mailto:hhgrossmann@gmail.com).

#### **NEWS FROM SARAH MATOVU, CHAIRPERSON OF OTARG.**

The Rwanda Occupational Therapy Training Programme will be starting in August 2013 at the Kigali Institute of Health Rwanda.

Anne Marie Witchger Hansen, Duquesne University, Department of Occupational Therapy, Pittsburg, USA, is doing a cross-cultural study of the trials. Tribulations and triumphs for occupational therapists in 16 African countries. She will be collaborating with OTARG on the study. We had a meeting with her for 2 days on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> October 2012 and an MOU is to be drafted to formalise the collaboration and partnership.

**Sarah Matovu**  
**Chairperson** **OTARG.**  
[sranatty@yahoo.com](mailto:sranatty@yahoo.com).

#### **NEWS FROM OTASA**

This has been a year of both change and achievement as we have continued to work on improving our effectiveness and efficiency. Lana van Niekerk resigned as president in July but has agreed to stay on Exco as chair of the 2018 WFOT congress steering committee. I have taken over as president and am continuing the activities started under Lana's leadership. Ongoing work is being directed towards transforming OTASA into an organisation that is truly representative of all occupational therapy staff. To this end, we now have a public health sector representative on Exco and our membership has increased from below 50% in 2011 to 55% in 2012. We aim to continue this upward trend.

Two new portfolios have been added under the umbrella of the 'Education and Research Standing Committee', namely a research and an occupational science sub-committee. The intention of the occupational science sub-committee is to create a forum to promote the growth of research and educational practices focused on occupation and occupation-based practice, while the research sub-committee aims to coordinate, support and develop occupational therapy research. An online system was launched for the South African Journal of Occupational Therapy (SAJOT) in 2011 and is working well. The system allows authors to submit articles for review and provides OTASA members with electronic access to SAJOT articles. The scope of practice for occupational therapy has long needed revision, and the draft documents were circulated by the Board of the Health Professions Council of South Africa in July. The documents were work-shopped at our Council meeting in July and comments have been submitted to the Board. The OTASA congress in

Durban was extremely successful with excellent attendance and presentations of a very high standard. The next OTASA congress will be held in Cape Town in 2014, so start planning for this now!

We have thrilled that the 2018 WFOT congress is going to be held in Cape Town. This will be the first time a WFOT congress has been held in Africa which presents an amazing opportunity for us all to work together to showcase occupational therapy as it is practised in Africa. The programme will showcase occupation in context and unique interpretations of occupational therapy practice with emphasis on participation and diversity. Planning events and/or capacity development opportunities will be hosted at the 2013 Occupational Therapy Africa Regional Group Conference and OTASA conferences in 2014 and 2016 to allow as many people as possible to contribute their ideas and shape the character of the congress.

Submitted by Helen Buchanan,  
Chairperson of OTASA  
[Helen.Buchanan@uct.ac.za](mailto:Helen.Buchanan@uct.ac.za).

**START SAVING FOR ZIMBABWE  
2013!!!**

Website addresses are as follows:  
[www.otarg.org.za](http://www.otarg.org.za) and also the WFOT  
website at [www.wfot.org.au](http://www.wfot.org.au) .

RBC 30<sup>th</sup> October 2012

