

# OT Outlook

O H I O O C C U P A T I O N A L T H E R A P Y , P H Y S I C A L  
T H E R A P Y , A N D A T H L E T I C T R A I N E R S B O A R D

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### SECTION MEMBERS:

- Lois Borin,  
*OT Section Secretary*
- Martha Cameron,  
*OT Section Chair*
- Paul Hoffer
- Rebecca LeBron
- Hector Merced

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As the heat of summer in Columbus gives way to crisp autumn days, the Occupational Therapy Section remains very active. On a historic note, Section member Rebecca LeBron was elected as President of the Joint Board. Rebecca's term marks the first time an occupational therapist has served as joint board president in over eight years.

On the down side, the fiscal years 2006-2007 budget bill passed the legislature containing language that will consolidate the activities of 20 regulatory boards, including the OTPTAT Board, under the Department of Health, Commerce, or Public Safety.

As part of the budget bill language, a transition team will study the best way to implement the proposed changes. The transition team consists of representatives of the Departments of Health, Commerce, Public Safety, and Administrative Services, the Office of Budget and Management, and three directors representing the 20 boards slated for consolidation. I am pleased to report that, along with the directors of the Respiratory

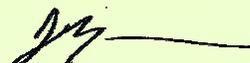
Care Board and the Embalmers and Funeral Directors Board, I was selected by my peers to serve as a member of the transition team. It is our hope that with our knowledge of regulation and regulatory systems in other states, we will be able to better educate the other members of the team on the potential benefits and pitfalls of any proposals. On behalf of all licensees and the citizens of Ohio, I will work my hardest to ensure that the high levels of customer service offered by the Board will be maintained under any form of board consolidation.

I hope to have additional information to report about consolidation in the next edition of *OT Outlook*.

Another important change contained in the budget bill is the addition of an occupational therapy assistant to the Section. As many of you are aware, many licensees diligently worked to change the existing law to add an OTA to the Board. I know that in many presentations I've given to occupational therapy audiences, one of the most frequently asked questions was

"When will an OTA be added to the Board?" For all who asked that question over the last several years, your wait has ended! Since Rebecca LeBron was reappointed to another three year term beginning August 27, 2005, an occupational therapy assistant will be appointed by the Governor for a term beginning in August 2006. The occupational therapy assistant board member position will replace an existing occupational therapist board member position. As a result, the Section's composition will become four OT's and one OTA.

Any individual with a current, valid license as an occupational therapy assistant in Ohio for at least the past five years whose license is in good standing is eligible to apply to serve on the Board. If you are interested, you should contact the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions. In addition, you may also want to consider contacting the OT Section, the Ohio Occupational Therapy Association, and your state senator and representative.



## SCHOOL BASED OT PRACTITIONERS

Due to a large volume of questions and comments by practitioners, the Section is currently working with the Ohio Occupational Therapy Association to address the issue of school based therapy .

The following are two responses to some recurring issues surrounding school based therapy. If you have a question regarding school based therapy, please do not hesitate to write or email the Section for clarification.

### ***Is there a limit on the number of students an OT may have on their caseload in a school based setting?***

The Ohio Occupational Therapy Practice Act only establishes ratios for the number of occupational therapy assistants and/or limited permit holders an occupational therapist may supervise and does not regulate caseload levels.

Ratios establishing the number of students that an occupational therapist may serve are located in administrative rules adopted by the Ohio Department of Education.

Rule 3301-51-09(G) of the Ohio Administrative Code states: (4) Related service providers for preschool and school-age children with disabili-

ties shall provide direct services in accordance with the following ratios. Additionally, consideration shall be given to paragraph (G)(1) of this rule. Indirect and direct services shall be provided in accordance with each child's IEP. (c) An occupational therapist shall provide services to no more than fifty school-age children with disabilities or no more than forty preschool children with disabilities.

This rule only specifies ratios for occupational therapists and is silent on caseload maximums for occupational therapy assistants.

The Section recommends

### **The OT Section does not determine how children qualify for occupational therapy services in school settings.**

that you contact the Ohio Department of Education with your questions or review the Ohio Department of Education laws and regulations to discern the maximum number of students an occupational therapist in a school based setting may have on their caseload.

### ***Please clarify the scope of practice in the provision of occupational therapy services for people working in a school based setting.***

The Section does not determine

policy regarding how children qualify for occupational therapy services in a school setting. The Section recommends contacting the Ohio Department of Education, Office for Exceptional Children at [www.ode.state.oh.us](http://www.ode.state.oh.us).

It is also not within the jurisdiction of the Occupational Therapy Section to render billing and reimbursement advice. The Ohio Occupational Therapy Association's pediatrics member support group chair may be able to assist you with many of your questions regarding school based IEP issues, as well as questions regarding

### **The Ohio Department of Education establishes the rules that determine the student to therapist ratio.**

funding. You can contact the Ohio Occupational Therapy Association at [www.oota.org](http://www.oota.org).

In addition, the ratio establishing the number of occupational therapy assistants that an occupational therapist may supervise is established by the Occupational Therapy Section in rule and is not setting specific. The Ohio Occupational Therapy Practice Act remains the same in all practice settings where occupational therapy is provided.

## CALLING ALL OTA'S

The Section is looking for an experienced occupational therapy assistant practitioner to be an advisor to the OT Section for a nine month term beginning January 1, 2006.

The advisor attends Section meetings to provide input on issues that

affect occupational therapy assistants.

To qualify, you must have a current valid license to practice as an occupational therapy assistant in Ohio.

If you are interested in *volunteering* your time to assist in the protection of the public in Ohio, please forward your

resume and a cover letter to the Occupational Therapy Section at 77 South High Street, 16th Floor, Columbus, Ohio, 43215-6108.

Please submit your items no later than October 1, 2005.

## CHANGES TO THE CE AUDIT PROCEDURE

The Section has made many changes over the years to the audit and renewal procedures. Well, this year is no exception.

Beginning with the 2006 license renewal, the Section will conduct retrospective audits of licensees continuing education activities for the previous renewal cycle. In the past, audits were mailed with the renewal application and licensees were asked to complete the audit forms and return them with their renewal application.

Practitioners will no longer be required to complete the CE reporting form as part of their renewal application packet. Licensees will simply complete the renewal application and return it for processing. Audits will be

mailed after the renewal is over, probably around the 15th of July.

The audit procedure itself will not change. All therapists are still required to complete 20 hours of CE every two years in the appropriate categories. Those therapists who are audited will be required to provide copies of their certificates of CE completion to be considered compliant with the audit process.

Changing the process from a prospective to a retrospective audit will help ensure that practitioners comply with the CE requirements. Any licensee who marks that they met the CE re-

**The audit will become retrospective to ensure that Ohio has only the most competent and qualified OT practitioners.**

quirement but cannot submit proof of CE completion, if audited, may be disciplined for submitting a fraudulent renewal application. This will ensure that the consumers of Ohio are receiving the best occupational therapy care from competent and qualified practitioners.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the changes to the audit procedure, please contact the

Board via email at the following address: [board@otptat.state.oh.us](mailto:board@otptat.state.oh.us).

## ETHICS CE CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

It's that time of year again. The OOTA Annual Conference will be held this year in Columbus on October 7-8, 2005.

The OT Section members and the Executive Director will be presenting for two hours on a variety of topics including current rule changes, issues and questions that have come before the Board during the past year, an overview of the information available on the Board website, and administrative changes to the licensure process. There will also be a discussion of ethical situations.

Though attendance at the licensure forum presentation is not mandatory, it is just one of the ways practitioners can fulfill the mandatory ethics CE requirement.

You can also complete the ethics requirement by passing the laws and rules examination.

This is a great way to ensure that you know what the current rules and laws governing your practice are and if any changes that have been made to the regulation of OT practice.

Another way to earn your ethics CE is to complete an article/journal review, which is a form of independent study.

Keep in mind that the article must be directly related to ethics in the practice, management, or education of occupational therapy. You can find articles in AJOT, OT Practice Magazine, or any research based article. As proof of completion, simply write a summary of the article, make a copy of the title page, and the first page of the article and save them in case you are selected for the CE audit.

Distance learning and self study opportunities are also available to earn ethics continuing education. Though many

online courses are not free, the majority are relatively inexpensive. A few places you may want to check for courses relating to ethics in the practice of OT is Advance for Occupational Therapy Practitioners ([occupationaltherapy.advanceweb.com](http://occupationaltherapy.advanceweb.com)), AKH, Inc. ([www.akhealthcare.com](http://www.akhealthcare.com)), Care2Learn ([www.care2learn.com](http://www.care2learn.com)), OnlineCE.net ([www.onlinece.net](http://www.onlinece.net)), and CEU World ([www.ceuworld.com](http://www.ceuworld.com)).

Please keep in mind that the OT Section and the OT PT AT Board do not endorse any particular ethics course offering or any websites.

Courses meeting the CE requirements of rule 4755-9-01 of the Administrative Code will be accepted by the Section.

**There are many opportunities for practitioners to earn their ethics CE credit.**

## L I C E N S I N G   A N D   T H E   P R O F E S S I O N A L A S S O C I A T I O N S

The Section often receives correspondence addressed to the Ohio Occupational Therapy Association (OOTA) and the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). The OOTA and American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) are professional organizations and membership is *voluntary*. NBCOT is a private certifi-

cation body and certification is also *voluntary*.

The Occupational Therapy Section regulates and licenses all occupational therapy practitioners in Ohio.

Licensure in Ohio is mandatory if you wish to practice as an occupational therapy practitioner, but registration and certification are voluntary.

Ohio does not require you to maintain NCBOT certification to renew your license or to provide occupational therapy services in the state.

If you know someone who would like to practice occupational therapy in Ohio, please direct them to visit the Board website to download an application for licensure.

## 2 0 0 6   M E E T I N G   D A T E S

All Board meetings are open to the public and anyone is welcome to attend. Please contact the Board at (614) 466-3774 or [board@otptat.state.oh.us](mailto:board@otptat.state.oh.us) to verify the time and meeting room of any meeting you would like to attend.

The following schedule is tentative and is subject to change.

January 5, 2006  
February 14, 2006  
March 28, 2006  
May 11, 2006  
June 13, 2006  
August 1, 2006  
September 21, 2006  
November 14, 2006

Most Board meetings are held in Room East B on the 31st floor of the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, 77 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio.

## L I C E N S E E   C E N S U S

As of September 12, 2005 there are:  
**3,748** occupational therapists;  
**297** occupational therapists in escrow;

**2,158** occupational therapy assistants;  
**192** occupational therapy assistants in escrow;

**1,710** athletic trainers;  
**6,407** physical therapists; and  
**4,398** physical therapist assistants with active Ohio licenses.

## C O N T A C T   U S

Ohio Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Athletic Trainers Board

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