

2008 Representative Assembly Meeting Highlights

The following is a brief summary of some of the 59 actions taken by the AOTA Representative Assembly (RA) at their April 2008 meeting in Long Beach, California, as they continued to work on achieving the Association's Centennial Vision. For more details, contact your representative(s) listed on the RA Roster located in Leadership & Governance on the AOTA Web site and www.aota.org.

Motions From Members

Motion 1 asked the Association that core competencies be developed for entry-level occupational therapists for practice related to physical rehabilitation of the upper extremity across diverse contexts and the lifespan. This motion was defeated with three substitute motions adopted. The first substitute motion charged the "President to direct the Executive Director to develop a fact sheet regarding occupational therapy practice in physical rehabilitation of the upper extremity by the 2008 RA Online meeting."

The second motion charged the "President to recommend that the Blueprint for Education for the Future Ad Hoc Committee include in their recommendations course content to retain excellence in physical rehabilitation." The final motion charged the President to direct the Executive Director to deliver a presentation regarding the state of education of core sciences in OT and OTA programs at the Program Director's meeting. The "presentation should highlight the demand for core sciences education by the marketplace, payers, regulatory agencies, and practice. In addition, the presentation should reference program models currently in existence with strong core science education with a report back to the face-to-face 2009 RA meeting."

Motion 2 asked the RA to recommend that the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) reconsider the possibility of OTAs participating in OT educational programs as Academic Fieldwork Coordinators. This motion was defeated. The Assembly reinforced its support of the 2006 ACOTE Standards that were developed with input from members and regulators for Academic Fieldwork Coordinators. Currently, OTAs may serve as Academic Fieldwork Coordinators for OTA level programs and may be "delegated administrative duties such as coordination and acquisition of fieldwork sites in master's- and/or doctoral-level OT programs."

Motion 3 requested that a task force categorize our current library holdings and recommend items that need to be prioritized to a more durable digital/electronic form. This motion was defeated. A substitute motion was passed requesting that the Executive Director of AOTF report the following by the 2009 RA meeting: 1. Current condition and location of archives; 2. Procedures for archiving historical documents of all media types; 3. Timeline for completing the archival process already underway; and 4. Plan for increasing availability of documents for future utilization via a variety of formats.

Education and Fieldwork

The Commission on Education's (COE) revised statement titled *Academic Terminal Degree* was adopted. The RA established that the "official position of AOTA is one that supports the associate degree as the requirement for entry to the field as an occupational therapy assistant." It charged the President to recommend to ACOTE implementation of a 5-year timeline for the existing three certificate level programs to transition to the associate degree level. "This transition period may be extended for good cause showing." A motion was adopted to implement COE's Voluntary Credentialing for Fieldwork Education Program (VCFWE) for the 2009 AOTA Conference. The intent is that this will be an ongoing program that provides a "model for best practices in the foundational skills for the fieldwork educator role." Finally, the President was charged to develop educational materials that capture the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Two Points of Entry in the Profession to "educate students, AOTA members, and external agencies about the rationale and benefits of two points of entry into the profession."

Leadership Development

Three motions were adopted from the President's Ad Hoc Committee on Association Leadership. These included motions to "operationalize *Coordinated Online Opportunities for Leadership* (C.O.O.L.);" for the Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures Committee (BPPC) to include the transition development planning process in all appropriate documents; and for the President, through the Emerging Leaders Development Ad Hoc Committee, to "carry out the planning and preparation for a pilot **Emerging Leaders Development Program**" by 2010.

Societal Issues

The new societal statement on Livable Communities was referred back to the RA Coordinating Council (RACC) for additional edits. The RACC will also be working with the BPPC on revision of Policy 1.30-R Official Documents to further define the types of official documents produced by the Association.

Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs)

Four motions brought forward by the OTA Leadership Ad Hoc Committee or the OTA Representative to the RA were adopted, including: creating an OTA Toolkit to be posted on the Web; four articles in *OT Practice* that spotlight OTA leaders; revising governance documents to include the "need for an OTA perspective for committees, commissions, ad hoc committees, etc."; and updating the *Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook* regarding OTAs.

Practice

The COP revised *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework: Domain and Process* was adopted. Early intervention (EI) initiatives were passed, including a charge to the President to recommend that the Blue Print for the Future of Education Ad Hoc Committee consider including course content in four areas. These areas include assessment and intervention, overview of Part C in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), evidence-based practice in EI, and various methods of teaming used in EI. The School System Special Interest Section's name was changed to Early Intervention & School SIS (EISIS).

AOTPAC

The RA passed a motion supporting 100% financial contribution of Assembly members to AOTPAC in honor of their 30th anniversary and successfully completed the charge raising over \$11,000. The RA Leadership Team (RALT) will be developing a statement challenging every AOTA member to make a financial contribution to AOTPAC during this critical election year.