



**Dr. Anil K. Srivastava**  
President

## Message from President AIOTA

Jan.30, 2018

### AIOTA ROUND UP

[Jan. 2017-Jan.2018]

**Best wishes to Members from President and the Executive Committee of AIOTA for a very happy, healthy and professionally rewarding New Year 2018.**

*I am shocked to know of sad demise of Dr. N.R. Chitnavis. She was formerly the President AIOTA, Dean ACOT and Director of OT School & Center, Government Medical College, Nagpur.*

*The leadership, pursuit of academic excellence and professionalism of Dr. Chitnavis will inspire us all to work with more hard work and dedication for growth of the profession in the country. On behalf of Members and Executives of AIOTA, I offer our condolences to the bereaved family. May Mrs. Chitnavis rest in peace.*

I am pleased to inform you that AIOTA in cooperation with its regional branches and its active members have been proactively taking steps for uplifting the profession of occupational therapy in India. I am glad to put forth these current updates of the recent activities of professional significance for information to members of AIOTA.

## National-Level Updates

### ***Occupational Therapists included for SLD Certification in India***

I congratulate the members of the AIOTA for the valued recognition of occupational therapy in the government sector of the country. Gazette notification dated 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018 of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, has accepted the request from AIOTA and has included occupational therapist as one of the healthcare authorities of the constituted medical board, for issuance of certification to persons with specific learning disabilities (SLD). The recently constituted medical board will comprise of medical superintendent or chief medical officer or civil surgeon or any other equivalent authority notified by the state government, pediatrician or pediatric neurologist (where available), clinical or rehabilitation psychologist and occupational therapist or special educator or teacher trained in the assessment of SLD. This welcome achievement would not have been possible without the sustained efforts



of EC members of AIOTA from New Delhi viz. Dr. Lalit Narayan and Dr. Neeraj Mishra. Contribution of Dr. Harsh Vardhan from New Zealand, by providing supportive documents pertaining to autistic disorders and learning disabilities for AIOTA's representation is also duly acknowledged. Inclusion of occupational therapy in the designated medical board will strengthen the assessment component of the multidisciplinary assessment process of SLD. The occupational therapy evaluation will aid in identifying the areas of strengths and weaknesses of children with learning disabilities, in performing various activities and occupations; thereby analyzing the tasks they need to perform. On the basis of functional assessment, occupational therapists will be the proactive member of board in suggesting an intervention program focusing on the person, the environment and the task to be performed for optimum outcome.

The inclusion of occupational therapists into Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act for assessment of loco-motor disabilities, autism and many other dysfunctions was also requested to Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, which needs to be further perpetuated for implementation. We are optimistic of positive outcomes soon, regarding decision making by government sector, with cooperation from members of AIOTA.

Our efforts are also directed towards creation of more numbers of job placements in government sector; thereby inclusion of occupational therapy services for providing effective intervention under the National Plan for Health Sector for the treatment and rehabilitation of specially-abled population in all age groups. To discuss this issue a meeting with Neeti Ayog, Government of India which was scheduled on Jan.25, 2018 due to unavoidable reasons will be re-convened soon.

### ***Voluntary Enrolment of Allied and Healthcare Professionals***

A meeting was convened on request of Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India at Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi on 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2017 with stakeholders representing occupational therapy, physiotherapy and other health related professionals. It was regarding the

Database Portal for voluntary enrolment of allied and healthcare professionals, by uploading their personal and professional data into it. We strongly resented the structure of Database Software for Allied & Healthcare Professionals; on the precise grounds that occupational therapy profession was not listed and ignored in its totality. It was suggested, that, there should be an independent database for occupational therapy and physiotherapy professions, instead of the existing one, which has clubbed these professions with large, heterogeneous group of health associated services. National Human Resources for Health (HRH) Cell has responded positively and have assured, that most of the issues raised by AIOTA will be addressed and necessary changes will soon be made in the database portal with information to AIOTA. Though, the ministry has made certain changes but are not agreeable and up to our expectations. National HRH Cell has informed vide their letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> January 2018, that the portal has been launched formally by the Secretary, Health and Family Welfare (HFW), on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 and can now be accessed through either of the links: Ministry of HFW website: <https://mohfw.gov.in/eventsandannouncements/call-enrollment-allied-and-healthcare-professional-database> or direct link to the database portal: <http://a2hp.mohfw.gov.in/>.

Members of AIOTA graduated from AIOTA accredited institutions may enroll in the database through the link provided by the ministry.

### ***Inclusion of OT in projects of National Trust***

National Trust for Welfare of Children of Department of Empowerment of PWD's under Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India has accepted AIOTA's request and decided to include one post of OT in 4 projects Namely DISHA (Early Intervention and School Readiness Scheme), SAMARTH (Respite Care Residential Scheme), VIKAAS (Day Care Scheme for 10 Year and above) and GHARAUNDA (Group Home for Adults Scheme).

### ***Occupational Therapy Definition (Modified & approved by AIOTA on April 25, 2017)***

There was need to revise the definition of occupational therapy in Indian context to current practice as on today. AIOTA EC worked out on it and finalized the OT Definition. The updated definitions of Occupational



Therapy from member organizations including India is uploaded on AIOTA and also on WFOT website [www.wfot.org](http://www.wfot.org) – Resource Centre >General.

### ***AIOTA's Disaster Management Cell***

AIOTA intend to develop a Disaster Management Cell with 30-40 members of AIOTA dedicated to serve the disaster survivors. To propagate this cause, Dr. Anil Srivastava, President AIOTA, Dr. Kit Sincalir, WFOT Ambassador & formerly President of WFOT and Dr. Neeraj Mishra, EC Member met key NDMA Officials in Delhi on Feb.20 2017. With suggestion and assistance of NDMA a meeting was also convened on Sept 18, 2017 with Sri Mahesh Navrekar, Chief Officer, Disaster Management Unit of Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai. President AIOTA, Dr. Shashi Oberai, Vice President and Dr. Neeraj Mishra met him and discussed the issue in detail. He welcomed the proposal and consented to provide extensive training of 10-15 days to a batch of nominated 30 members of AIOTA free of cost. The members of AIOTA duly trained in rehabilitation and relief work for disaster affected will be on the database of the government for utilization of their expertise during emergencies. Duly trained members of AIOTA will be master trainers to further train the members in their regions. The issue is under further discussion for implementation.

### ***Fellowship in Advanced OT in Neuro-Developmental Disorders***

It is for the first time in India for the profession of OT, that a fellowship of long duration has been planned by ACOT. AIOTA's 'Fellowship in Advanced OT in Neuro-Developmental Disorders -India: 2017' with moral support from National Trust, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India has begun from Sept 18, 2017. This innovative academic activity of 9 months duration will be completed on June 17, 2018. The fellowship is designed to provide an opportunity to postgraduate OT's working in pediatric set up to further learn the subject through didactic and web-based learning to strengthen their clinical base with advanced techniques and treatment methods based on the latest evidences. Most reputed and highly-qualified & experienced faculties from the field of pediatric OT from India & overseas are included for in campus and online deliberations and workshops during this academic program. Renowned pediatric OT Erna Blanche from USA is the principal resource faculty. The participants will gain knowledge to choose, administer and interpret appropriate comprehensive assessment, to implement advanced modalities for management of neuro-developmental dysfunctions, besides empowering the caregivers.

Dean ACOT Dr. Jyothika Bijalni, Fellowship Co-coordinators Dr. Shriharsh (Mumbai) & Dr. Lakashmanan (Bangalore) have done exhaustive ground work of about 1 year to come up with the format of international standards for this event. Full seats in the fellowship program speak of its wide acceptability by the occupational therapy professionals which has encouraged us to further continue and also plan it for other specialty areas in the coming years.

### ***COTE on Art of Writing Research***

Academic Council of Occupational Therapy (ACOT) is organizing COTE program on “Science and Ethics of Research Methodology and Art of Writing Research” in collaboration with Indian Journal of Occupational Therapy (IJOT) from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2018 at Mumbai. The four days COTE which is intended to be arranged annually will be in the form of an intensive live as well as webinar course. It will be worth attending by the amateur researchers to build strong research foundation and for the experienced researchers to fine-tune their research aptitude by updating their knowledge and skills with the latest guidelines, laid down by International Committee of the Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE). Associate Editor Dr. Punita V. Solanki is the organizing convener of this COTE program.

Many more academic events and COTEs on various practice areas were organized by ACOT in collaboration with in institutions and branches at various places in the country, including Certificate Course on PAMOT at New Delhi in Dec. 2017

### ***Nominations for WFOT Projects***

Following nominations from AIOTA were accepted by WFOT

1. Dr. Joseph Sunny (Cochin): Primary Contact for WFOT Website to managing WFOT membership



& data and also managing education program information.

2. Dr. Jyothika Bijlani (Mumbai): Reviewer for the educational programs applying for WFOT recognition
3. Dr. Lakshmanan S (Bangalore): Developing a position statement on the role of OT in Mental Health
4. Dr. Amitabh Dwivedi (Jaipur): On request of WFOT Dr. Amitabh was nominated for Wheelchair Stakeholders Meeting at Mobility India in Bangalore from Jan.15-18, 2018 organized by World Learning, on behalf of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and in partnership with the International Society of Wheelchair Professionals.
5. Nominations of Dr. Shashi Oberai (Navi Mumbai) and Dr. Amitabh Dwivedi was also accepted as reviewer of abstracts for WFOT Congress 2018
6. Dr. Neeraj Mishra (New Delhi) who was nominated for 'WFOT Disaster Management for Occupational Therapists Online Module' has completed it successfully.

### ***Retrospective Approval OT Programs by WFOT***

Due to continuance pursuance of AIOTYA since last more than 2 years, the retrospective approval is granted to OT's graduated before 2008 (prior to AIOTA/WFOT accreditation of the institutions), from JKKMMRF College of OT, Komarapalayam & R.M. Medical College, Chidambaram of Tamil Nadu. All OT's graduated from these institutions before 2008 can now become members of AIOTA & WFOT.

### ***Indian Journal of Occupational Therapy***

A welcome change from the year 2017 is that now onward; four issues of Indian Journal of Occupational Therapy (IJOT) will be published in place of three with more number of research studies and case reports. The decision has also been taken to publish abstracts of the oral and poster presentation of the AIOTA conferences in the Issue-2 of IJOT each year. The brief information of every research work in the form of an abstract will be a documentation of research work in India. It will also give due credit to the pilot researchers. It will encourage all researchers in India, to fruitfully utilize their valuable time, efforts, and knowledge, to fine tune their research work documentation in a consistent and scientific manner thereby, improving their research, writing skills, and aptitude. Issue -4 of IJOT each year will now be theme based specialty edition with a guest editorial by a renowned academician of the specific specialty area. The theme of IJOT Vol. 49: Issue-4 of 2017 is Pediatric Science and the guest editorial was written by Erna Blanche (USA).

AIOTA has also decided to go as far as possible paperless in most of its activities. Therefore, from 2017 onward IJOT may only be accessed by login to AIOTA Website ([www.aiota.org](http://www.aiota.org)). The print journals will not be circulated to the members and students. Guidelines to authors for submission, undertaking/copyright form and other related documents will also not be published in IJOT. Henceforth, all the IJOT related documents and World OT Day Report will be made available on AIOTA website. It will help minimizing heavy expenses of publication and postage.

### ***AIOTA Certification for Ergonomically Designed Products***

AIOTA has initiated to issue certification for seating ranges and other products for their ergonomic suitability. Certification for ergonomically designed seating range has been provided as per norms laid down by AIOTA to Godrej Interio (Mumbai) and Geeken Seating Collections Pvt. Ltd. (Gurgaon). Many more reputed firms are approaching us for certification. The firms are advised to appoint occupational therapist as ergonomic consultants in their set ups. ACOT soon launch post graduate certification course on Ergonomics soon with an aim to have a pool of OT's with specialization in practice areas in ergonomics in India.

### ***OTICON'2017, Jaipur***

Rajasthan Branch of AIOTA in collaboration with Mahatma Gandhi Occupational Therapy College, Mahatma Gandhi University of Medical Sciences and Technology has very successfully hosted



OTICON'2017 as a mega event for Occupational Therapists in India and overseas under the leadership of Organizing Secretary Dr. S. K. Meena Dr. Shashi Oberai and the team of scientific program provided superbly knit scientific itinerary. National Conference of AIOTA at Jaipur in 2017 will be remembered for the gracious presence of Dr. Kit Sinclair, formerly President and now WFOT Ambassador. The COTE Workshop on "Making a Difference in Disaster Management" was impressively organized by Dr. Kit, as key resource faculty in collaboration with facilitators Dr. Mathan Raj David, Dr. Neeraj Mishra, and Dr. Binoo Berry. Presentation by officially deputed Dr. Saurabh Dalal, Consultant Medical Preparedness and Biological Disorders at National Disaster Management Authority, New Delhi, was an excellent overview on disaster preparedness and response in India. President AIOTA was pleased to honor Dr. Kit Sinclair with "Crown of OT Award."

AIOTA has honored stalwarts of the OT in India Dr. M.M. Sangoi and Dr. G. C. Jain (Jaipur) with its prestigious "Life Time Achievement Award." "Young OT Achiever Award" is also introduced from OTICON'2017 to motivate young OTs for innovative professional development in the country. Dr. Harsh Vardhan qualified from NIRTAR, Cuttack was unanimously chosen for this honor. He has been elected as President of New Zealand OT Association and also got a rare opportunity to speak before the MPs' in the New Zealand parliament on challenges of dyslexia, dyspraxia, and autism spectrum disorders in primary and secondary schools. Dr. Jayashri S. Kale (Mumbai) and Dr. Kishore Kumar (Patna) were conferred upon AIOTA's prestigious "Professional Excellence Award."

### ***Introducing two new Trophies in AIOTA Conferences***

Following two new trophies are being introduced from OTICON'2018.

1. 'M.M. Sangoi Trophy' for best paper on 'Ergonomics, Environment & Access'.
2. Vijay Suple Trophy' for best paper in 'Mental Health' in place of earlier AIOTA Trophy for best paper in Mental Health.

## **Regional-Level Updates**

### ***ASD in CM's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme in Tamil Nadu***

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is included in the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS) in Tamil Nadu (TN). Hence, therapy for [autism](#) will be free of cost in private centers also. A holistic team comprising of psychiatrist, psychologist, pediatrician, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech therapist, developmental therapist and social worker will be appointed in these centers. Congratulations to TN Branch of AIOTA for their efforts in inclusion of occupational therapists in the team.

### ***Book by an Indian Author***

Congratulations to Dr. Sebestina Anita Dsouza, Professor and Head of Department of Occupational Therapy of School of Allied Health Sciences, Manipal University, Manipal, for her book 'Concepts in Occupational Therapy: Understanding Southern Perspectives'. The book editors include Dr. Sebestina Anita Dsouza, Dr. Roshan Galvaan and Dr. Elelwani Ramugondo, of the Division of Occupational Therapy, University of Cape Town South Africa. The book published by Manipal University Press was released on the occasion of World OT Day.

### ***World OT Day 2017***

AIOTA is a national organization of occupational therapy profession in India. AIOTA tries building all possible efforts by organizing academic and professional activities in all regions of India in cooperation with institutions and its branches to ensure heightening the visibility of the profession in the country. World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) has conveyed its thanks and gratitude to AIOTA for once again coordinating a spectacular celebration of World Occupational Therapy Day 2017 by the institutions and regional branches of AIOTA.



### ***7 New OT Colleges***

Message of congratulations is also received from WFOT for establishment of Occupational Therapy College at Goa Medical College, Goa, Mahatma Gandhi University of Medical Sciences & Technology, Jaipur, National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD) and Sri Ramchandran Medical College at Chennai, in 2017. It indeed is welcome information that discontinued Occupational Therapy Colleges of Saveetha University, Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research of Chennai and Annamalai University, Chidambaram have re-begun in Tamil Nadu this year. I congratulate Rajasthan Branch & TN Branch of AIOTA for their commendable achievements.

### ***ICMR Approval for Indo-Swedish Research Grant to Manipal***

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has granted approval for Indo –Swedish Research Grant to Department of occupational Therapy, Manipal University. The international research project titled 'Managing Time in Dementia' is aimed to investigate use of assistive technology for people with dementia to support their daily time management. Prof. & HOD OT Dr. Sebastina Dsouza is the Principal Investigator and Dr. Vinita Acharya and Dr. Meena Ramchandran Asstt. Professors of the department are Co-Investigators for this project.

### ***Extension of age of Retirement of OT's in the State of Bihar***

The age of retirement of OT's with BOT qualification, of State of Bihar, is extended from present 60 years to 67 years w.e.f. May 2017 due to efforts of Bihar Branch of AIOTA. Notification to this effect has been issued by the Government of Bihar.

### ***OT's Appointed in Government Hospitals in Tamil Nadu***

Due to sustained efforts of TN Branch, occupational therapists were appointed on newly created 18 posts in government hospitals of Tamil Nadu in 2017. Tamil Nadu Branch is working efficiently for promotion of OT by organizing camps, COTE's and meeting with government officials and institutions.

### ***Appointment as Consultant OT in Kerala***

Dr. Joseph Sunny (Cochin), got appointed as Consultant Occupational Therapist at Child Development Centre of Government of Kerala at Thiruvananthapuram Medical College, It is for the first time that Kerala Government took initiative to appoint an occupational therapist as consultant in a Child Development Centre. Kerala branch is working for setting up State Council of OT's in Kerala.

## **Associated Updates**

It is a welcome trend that almost all state branches like Mumbai, Rajasthan, UP, Nagpur, Delhi , Karnataka, Gujrat, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and others are regularly organizing COTE, relief camps, talks & articles on visual and print media for promotion of OT in the states. Significant information is regularly appearing in IJOT, Newsletter and on website also.

In an individual capacity members of AIOTA are honoring the country by presenting their research papers in international conferences: WFOT Congress-2018 (Dr. Manjusha Vagal, Mumbai), Asia Pacific OT Symposium-2017 (Dr. Ramkrishna Masilamani, Pondicherry), World Congress for NeuroRehabilitation, Mumbai -2018 (Dr. Shashi Oberai & Dr. Aishwarya Swaminathan (Mumbai).



**Dr. Anil K. Srivastava**  
President AIOTA

