



Statement on the COTEC Register of Experts

Introduction

This document aims to clarify how both experts on the register and the Council of the Occupational Therapists for the European Countries (COTEC) can get the best from the valuable resource of experts. COTEC Register of Experts consists of experts nominated by Member Associations of COTEC in the fields of Mental Health, Aging, Dementia, Children and Adolescents, Poverty Reduction, Primary Care, Equal Access to Healthcare and e-Health.

COTEC recognises that there should be mutual benefits for the individuals and groups of experts as well as for the COTEC organisation. COTEC recognizes that it is COTEC's responsibility to make comments about the absence of occupational therapy in consultations when occupational therapy is a well-established profession in the area of interest.

The COTEC Executive Committee has produced the following discussion document to identify how best to utilise the skills of experts and also how to identify benefits to individuals and groups.

Areas that could require experts' involvement:

CONSULTATIONS: Public consultations in the fields mentioned earlier that are identified as requiring a response, either on behalf of COTEC and / or on behalf of an individual occupational therapists. It will be the responsibility of the Executive Committee to decide on which consultations require a response. In the event of this being a COTEC response, the Executive Committee can or will select the appropriate expert(s) from the register. In the second case of an individual response being required the Executive Committee will invite all the experts on that specific part of the register to respond.

COTEC REPRESENTATION: Experts may represent occupational therapy on behalf of COTEC at Events that reflect strategic aims and agreed action of COTEC.

POSITION PAPERS will be proposed by the General Assembly, the Register of Experts and / or by the Executive Committee. Appropriate experts from the register will be invited by the Executive Committee to draft these papers.

WEBSITE: The Register of Experts will be designated a special section on the COTEC website to inform members, exchange information and produce content relevant to the occupational therapy network and interested stakeholders (see Procedural Section).

EUROPEAN CLINICAL GUIDELINES: Experts may participate in establishing European clinical guidelines.

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Benefits for experts could include the following:

COTEC REPRESENTATION: In the event of an individual representing occupational therapy on behalf of COTEC funding for travel, accommodation and / or other reasonable costs will be considered. Attendees supported by COTEC must have the best skills available and be an expert within the framework of the chosen event. From time to time, Experts may identify an event of their area of interest which COTEC may feel able to support. It will be mandatory for every expert supported by COTEC, to write a report and send it to the COTEC Executive Committee and when appropriate a short summary for the COTEC Newsletter

PROMOTION OF EXPERTS: Experts will be listed openly on the COTEC website, with name and area of interest and possibly with a photograph. It may be possible that individual experts request a certificate of evidence of their involvement as expert.

COTEC explores the potential to receive additional benefits from time to time and as appropriate to promote and value experts' involvement, as for example a reduced conference fee.

INCREASED COLLABORATION AMONGST EXPERTS: To facilitate collaboration amongst experts from the register, COTEC functions as a moderator and provides a platform online and on upcoming COTEC congresses to meet and exchange ideas. Social media activities can also be taken into account to enhance communication within the register of experts.

RECEIPT OF NEWSLETTER: each individual will receive an electronic copy of the quarterly COTEC Newsletter.

ACT AS ADVOCATES for their field and identify the contribution of occupational therapy to the topic area.

INCREASE PERSONAL VISIBILITY AND INVOLVEMENT in Europe to build the individual's career

Procedural section/ Procedure of engagement

The COTEC Executive Committee will explore suitable **communication channels** to contact experts and send out alerts. In addition to e-mail, Facebook and twitter, an online forum for experts can be created on the COTEC website. Members of the COTEC Executive Committee will invite experts to briefings via skype before an expert attends conferences or other events on behalf of COTEC. Collaboration on responses to consultations will be facilitated by members of the COTEC Executive Committee through skype meetings. **Subject lines** in alerts like e-mails will be chosen based on comprehensiveness and should not exceed a maximum of seven words in order to enhance readability and reduce workload for experts. **Protocols** on how to respond to consultations and write position papers will be developed by the COTEC Executive committee and circulated among the experts groups.

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