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Vice President's Editorial


Welcome to the second newsletter of the year. And what an interesting year it has been so far!

The Executive Committee has continued its work in striving to develop strong alliances to ensure more visibility, greater influence and a stronger voice in Europe.

In March I attended a Professional Development Programme event at EPHA's premises in Brussels to learn more about advocacy, what it is, how to do it and what makes it effective. Whilst there I met a representative from the European Parkinson's Disease Association (EPDA). The EPDA have a funded strategic health initiative aimed at improving the experience of people with Parkinson's Disease by finding out what works already and where the gaps in an effective service are. They have a strategic committee comprised of people from Eurocarers, EPHA, The Brain Council amongst others, and they are wanting to recruit an OT to the strategic committee and a number of additional OTs to a series of working groups. This is a good example of what building alliances is all about and it is a great opportunity for OTs from across Europe to get involved with a European project.

The big question is will any of our OTs step up to the plate and volunteer to be involved? Or will we let this opportunity pass us by?

This latter question illustrates the importance of national associations and the COTEC executive working together to nominate appropriate OTs to achieve our agreed goals. I do hope you can play your part in nominating and supporting people to get involved. You can read more about this project and how to nominate colleagues below. The outcome of the European elections is now known and you will all have read about the shock waves created by the far left and far right votes. A significant number of new MEPs have taken up their role and the COTEC Executive Committee is beginning to identify their specific political interests to understand who to develop advocacy relationships with. We can then target our efforts on health and social care issues with those who can help to move them forwards. You may already have built a relationship with some of your MEPs. If so, do let us know - the more we can cooperate the quicker we may achieve some good outputs.



Members of the Executive Committee have also been working hard on different items in the action plan for 2014. A governance handbook is developing well, the COTEC constitution is being reviewed and brought up to date, a communication strategy is being created and the Action Plan for 2015 is taking shape in preparation for the GA meeting in Nijmegen in October this year. All the actions you asked us to undertake to create a greater level of transparency in the way that COTEC operates. We will be sharing our work with you in the next few weeks in preparation for the GA. Make sure you register for the GA in good time; the details of the meeting have already been communicated to you. See you there!

Anne Lawson-Porter
COTEC Vice President

CIHSD High-Level Consultation meeting

On April 1st, 2014 the president of ENOTHE Brian Ellingham and COTEC president Stephanie Saenger participated in the WHO Coordinated/Integrated Health service Delivery (CIHSD) High-Level Consultation meeting as invited guests. This was a great opportunity to build networks and to inform the participants about OT.

In November 2013 COTEC forwarded the call from WHO for CIHSD projects to their members. We are pleased some National Associations and individual OTs answered the questionnaire and therefore raised the visibility of Occupational Therapy in Europe. Hans Kluge, Director, Division of Health Systems and Public Health, WHO regional office for Europe announced there were over 300 projects send in.

Brian Ellingham was invited to a panel presentation at the meeting and explained very well that OTs are used to working with an enormous amount of different disciplines from medical, social, technical backgrounds which illustrated that OTs are used to work outside the purely medical environment and in fact are delivering integrated care.

Jan de Maeseneer, president of the EFPC, praised Occupational Therapy and agreed with Ellingham. He also emphasised OTs are used to work occupation based, goal instead of disease orientated and are able to answer the patients needs and wishes to participate in society.

We were able to make some useful contacts for example with EUROCARERS, EPF and the people from the WHO EU region. Twitter messages were send #BECIHSD.



Read the full Meeting Report for the CIHSD Stakeholder Consultation <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/Health-systems/health-service-delivery/publications/2014/coordinatedintegrated-health-services-delivery-cihsd.-stakeholder-consultation>

European Parkinson's Disease Association launches a new Strategic Health Initiative – My PD Journey

In April this year, the EPDA launched its SHI, in collaboration with EPHA, EFPC, Eurocarers, The European Patients Forum (EPF) and the European Brain Council (EBC,) supported by AbbVie. Occupational therapists are included as important stakeholders in the SHI project plan.

[Read more and see how COTEC members can participate](#)

EPHA Working Groups on Health Professions & Policy Coordination Meeting

Stephanie Saenger attended the first of two annual EPHA Working Groups on Health Professionals which took place on the morning of 8 May followed by the monthly Policy Coordination Meeting. The Working group discussed the following issues:

- Implementation of modernised Professional Qualifications Directive
- Study on review and mapping of Continuous Professional Development
- Development of public health & professional competences
- EU role in health policy
- Update on Action Plan on EU Health Workforce, ongoing projects
- European Commission consultation on Primary Care
- e-Health

Both meetings were informative and gave opportunity to meet (new) people and to give information about COTEC and Occupational Therapy. COTEC Executive Committee has yet to decide what could be the contribution of COTEC and the benefits of being an active member of the working group, seen in the light of the priorities of the Action Plan and the budget. It was also a change to say goodbye to Monika Kozinski, the outgoing Secretary General of EPHA. Monika will join the World Health Organisation (WHO).



38th BAOT/COT Annual Conference in Brighton

Stephanie Saenger was honoured to be invited and delighted to attend the 38th Annual Conference of COT in Brighton. It was very interesting and useful to hear the challenges faced by occupational therapists in the UK and to be able to join the discussions in the various groups. It was enlightening to hear the views of our colleagues and stimulating to feel their enthusiasm for the profession. Together with Camilla Cox the UK delegate for WFOT Stephanie presented and discussed the work of COTEC in the international fringe meeting. For those who are on or interested in twitter: #COT2014 was a trending topic for 20 minutes on twitter.

COTEC listed in the European Transparency register

COTEC has been listed in the European Transparency register since March 2014. The register provides EU citizens with a direct and single access to information about who is engaged in activities aiming at influencing the EU decision making process, which interests are being pursued and what level of resources are invested in these activities. The Transparency register has been set up and is operated by the European Parliament and the European Commission. [Read more about Transparency register](#)

EU Consultation on Primary Care

COTEC answered a call of the European Commission on the preliminary opinion on the 'Definition of a frame of reference in relation to primary care with a special emphasis on financing systems and referral systems'. The consultation is part of the Commission's effort to investigate how European health systems could benefit from a better integration between different levels of healthcare, both in terms of increased cost-effectiveness, and in terms of improved quality of care and equity.

In their answer COTEC emphasised the need of multidisciplinary teams and the important role of occupational therapy in integrated primary care. COTEC's submission was shared with EPHA who compiled the various answers to a streamlined one on behalf of EPHA and its members.



International Occupational Therapy Regulatory Forum

In June COTEC Executive Committee followed an invitation from National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, NBCOT, to London where the *International Occupational Therapy Regulatory Forum* took place under the theme: *Building a Global Occupational Therapy Regulatory Community*. Thirty people from 18 countries followed NBCOT's invitation and discussed various topics around regulatory governance of OTs and their educational accreditation as well as frameworks for continuing competency and scopes of practice. Stephanie Saenger, Anne Lawson-Porter and Helena Cronebäck held a presentation on global mobility challenges, TUNING and the EU-regulations. It became clear the regulatory systems differ a lot in the different continents and countries as does the involvement of National Associations of Occupational Therapists. Europe faces an extra challenge due to the many languages, which was illustrated by the COTEC T-shirt given to the Paul Grace, CEO of NBCOT. The first aim of the *International Occupational Therapy Regulatory Forum* was to share information and establish a network. Questions and topics arising will be shared among the network and might spur future meetings.





EIU research project on Mental health

COTEC was invited to participate in an expert panel contributing to the development of an index on the active integration of people with serious mental illness - an Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) research project commissioned by Janssen. Stephanie Saenger will represent COTEC. The panel brings together 6-7 senior-level experts from across academia, policy, clinical practice and service users and the EIU project team. COTEC was invited because there is a will to have an experienced occupational therapy view on the measures in place to help people with mental health problems re-integrate into society - such as through supported education and work schemes. COTEC's capacity on the panel was to advise on the suitability of suggested indicators and the framework of the index. COTEC's role seemed to be ideal in being informed of the complexities faced by occupational therapists across Europe, specifically in the area of mental health that the index will focus on. The panel had till now one tele-conference and some written feedback rounds. Participation in the panel is an excellent way to raise the visibility of occupational therapy. Stephanie Saenger was also selected to be interviewed to give more information about challenges in participation, best practices and the work of OTs in Mental Health.

COTEC Executive Committee Interim meeting June 12-14, 2014

The COTEC Interim Executive Committee Meeting took place in London between the 12th and 14th of June 2014 alongside a meeting organised by National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) about occupational therapy regulation. During their meeting, the COTEC Executive Committee discussed a long agenda which included preparation for the second COTEC General Assembly and the governance day which will be held a day before the COTEC General Assembly business meeting; collaboration with ENOTHE including the COTEC-ENOTHE joint congress 2016; participation in other organisations' events; financial issues related to the budget; COTEC website; and other issues mainly related to COTEC official documents.

[Read more...](#)

COTEC Secretarial News

COTEC Summary of the OT Profession 2014

The document has been produced since 1986 and in the 2014 document you will find statistical information from all 30 COTEC Member associations. The document can be downloaded at COTEC website on the Facts and figures section [COTEC Facts and figures](#) and it has also been circulated to all Member Associations electronically. Any corrections should be addressed to VP Administration Anu Söderström.


COTEC Promotional material at WFOT2014 Congress

COTEC and COTEC-ENOTHE2016 Congress promotional material was shipped to WFOT2014 Congress in Yokohama. The material included COTEC poster and congress leaflets. WFOT kindly offered to have the material available at their stand.

General Assembly meetings

The 2nd COTEC General Assembly will be held in Nijmegen, the NL, October 25-26, 2014.

Saturday Oct 25th will be "COTEC Governance Day" for which the Executive Committee is preparing a program which enables Member Associations to network and share experience on OT topics. Sunday Oct 26th will be



General Assembly business meeting followed by an afternoon program focusing on COTEC work for 2016 and beyond.

Information on meeting venue, accommodation and social program has been circulated to Members as well as the Call for agenda items. The General Assembly agenda will be circulated August 25th, 2014.

At the Executive Committee Interim meeting it was decided that the locations of the future General Assemblies will be decided by the Executive Committee. Consideration will be given to geographical location so that the meeting will be held in southern, central, eastern, western and northern parts of Europe in turn. Every fourth year the General Assembly will be held in conjunction with the COTEC-ENOTHE Congress. The location of the 2015 GA will be decided late this summer and 2016 GA will be held in Galway, Ireland.

COTEC Executive Committee meetings

The Executive Committee meets via Skype every month. The next Skype meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 14th. For agenda items, proposals and exact times and dates, please contact anu.soderstrom@cotec-europe.org

COTEC Executive Committee next face-to-face meeting will take place in Nijmegen, October 23rd, 24th and 27th in conjunction with the General Assembly.

National News from Member Associations

COTEC Member Associations are kindly asked to submit national OT news to be posted on COTEC website. News should be sent to Helena Cronebäck, helenacroneback@cotec-europe.org

COTEC wishes all a wonderful summer!

