

Occupational Therapy Association of Oregon

Viewpoint

Winter 2024 Newsletter



OTAO

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Message From the President



Katie O'Day, OTA President

Dear OTA Members,

As your president, I'm excited to share updates on our continuous efforts to champion the occupational therapy profession in Oregon. Our commitment remains steadfast: advocate for the needs of OTPs in every setting, ensuring you can deliver exceptional care across your diverse specialties.

A Turning Point: We recently celebrated a major victory with the release of the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) workstudy report mandated by HB2618. This report is pivotal as it recommends that schools adopt a workload methodology to determine the appropriate number of OTPs needed to support students, especially those with special education needs. This echoes the successful approach in North Carolina, which additionally benefits from established caseload caps – a goal we continue to pursue for Oregon. (Read the report: link to ODE report:

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/pages/ot-pt-slp-workload-methodology.aspx>)



Our Fight Continues: While this is a positive step, we remain dedicated to advocating for you. Unmanageable caseloads and bureaucratic hurdles can still hinder your ability to provide optimal care. That's why OTA is your unwavering advocate, working tirelessly to:

- **Champion workload equity:** We advocate for reasonable workloads to ensure that Oregon students who need occupational therapy are able to receive the free and appropriate public education that they deserve outlined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- **Partner for success:** We collaborate with organizations like the Oregon Speech and Hearing Association (OSHA) and American Physical Therapy Association-Oregon to eliminate barriers. We worked with them collaboratively for HB2618 and are embarking on collaborations to hopefully remove prior authorizations that delay access to OT services.
- **Support the OT licensure Compact:** We advocate for the implementation of the Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact, already enacted in most states, to enhance professional mobility and access to OT services. We hear you asking for us to get the compact passed in our Oregon legislature!

Witnessing Growth:

- **New OTD programs:** We're thrilled about the expansion of OT education in Oregon with the opening of new programs at Western Oregon University and George Fox University this fall.
- **Free continuing education:** Enhance your knowledge with our FREE virtual workshop offered by Linn Benton Community College on March 9th! (Register Here: [link to registration: https://www.ota.org/event-5561253](https://www.ota.org/event-5561253))
- **OT Month celebrations:** Mark your calendars for exciting events in April! We will have events including OT Night Out across the state, hikes, volunteer events, bike rides, advocacy events and more! Stay tuned to our social media pages!

Join the Movement:

Your voice matters! We encourage you to volunteer your expertise and passion by joining our:

Together, we can create a brighter future for OTPs in Oregon.

Email me at otaopresident@gmail.com to learn more about volunteering opportunities!



OTAO Board Positions Updates

| Open Positions | Position Description |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Conference Chair | Helps plan and organize our 2024 conference, including speakers, vendors, guest relations, location, CEUs, and more! |
| Conference Committee Members | Supports the conference chair. |
| Southern Oregon Regional Director | Represents regional community and events. |
| Central Oregon Regional Director | Represents regional community and events. |
| East NW Oregon Regional Director | Represents regional community and events. |
| Home & Community Liaison | Supports emerging efforts while specializing in home and community outreach efforts. |
| Marketing Committee Co-Chair | Supports efforts to promote state-wide events and board opportunities. |

Please visit our new and improved website for more information: www.otao.com



Linn-Benton Community College Spring Workshop

Date: March 9, 2024 Time: 8:45 am - 1:30 pm

Linn-Benton Community College and OTAO are excited to announce the return of the LBCC Spring Workshop! **Consider attending this free continuing education event. With a theme of leadership throughout our profession, this event will include Keynote speaker Amy Mahle, EdD, COTA/L, ROH a leader, collaborator, and author who values and experiences joy by investing in people, uniting others, and inspiring them to take action towards meaningful projects and issues.** She is driven by a model of continuous improvement, innovation, community engagement, and creating a team-oriented culture. She's the co-author/co-editor of the comprehensive textbook, *Adult Physical Conditions: Intervention Strategies for Occupational Therapy Assistants*.

To acknowledge and support clinical, volunteer, legislative, and the variety of leaders in Oregon Occupational Therapy, this event will include sessions for all skill levels and roles. Attend a debrief on the legislative sessions and a call to action, a panel of leaders across areas of practice, sessions on working with AOTA, or any one of the exciting sessions related to clinical leadership.

We hope to see you there, hear more about your contributions to the field, and support you as valuable practitioners across Oregon, leading OT into the future!

Please complete registration at <https://otao.com/event-5561253>



April OT Month Events

What did you say? Using an Interpreter and Social Etiquette in Practice

Free CEUs - Register at: <https://otao.com/event-5604249>

Date: April 4, 2024 Time: 5:00 - 6:30 pm

This is a virtual event; a Zoom link will be sent after registering.

Annual OT Month Bike Ride

Date: April 13, 2024 Time: 10:00 - 11:30 am

Meet at Water Avenue Coffee, 1028 SE Water Ave. Portland

An OTA0 tradition continues! Join Kristy Fleming, OTA0 treasurer and 2023 Sybil Hedrick Park Award recipient, for a leisurely 7-mile bike ride along the Springwater Corridor Trail. Helmets are required and water is recommended.

Stay tuned for more events to come!



House Bill 2618 Updates

Discover the updated January 2024 report at the below link:

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/Pages/OT-P T-SLP-Workload-Methodology.aspx#:~:text=In%202023%2C%20HB%202618%20directed,SECTION%201.>

ODE initiated a study to identify the best methodology for determining the appropriate student caseload for school-based occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists. The study included review of the following components outlined in HB 2618:

- The number of students eligible for services provided by the school-based health practitioner;
- The level of need of the students eligible for services provided by the school-based health practitioner;
- The recommended frequency of visits for students eligible for services provided by the school-based health practitioner;
- The number of schools served by the school-based health practitioner;
- The amount of time spent by the school-based health practitioner preparing documentation for an individualized education program or participating in meetings for an individualized education program; and
- Any other workload metrics for a speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist or physical therapist that are identified by the department.



Emerging Practice

Occupational Therapy and Lifestyle Medicine: The Perfect Match

By: Zipporah Brown, OTD, MS, OTR/L, DipACLM

As we know, occupational therapy (OT) is “the therapeutic use of everyday life occupations with persons, groups, or populations for the purpose of enhancing or enabling participation” (AOTA, 2020). Lifestyle medicine is an evidence-based therapeutic approach that uses interventions focused on six pillars- nutrition, physical activity, quality sleep, stress management, positive social connections, and the avoidance of risky substances- to prevent, treat, and reverse lifestyle related chronic conditions (Clayton & Bonnet, 2023). So OT right?! As occupational therapy practitioners, we are trained to address health management, including lifestyle related chronic conditions, through the use of occupation-based interventions focused on optimal engagement.

The Occupational Therapy Practice Framework-4 th edition (2020) illustrates the connection between the nine areas of and lifestyle medicine pillars, notably, sleep, social participation, and the newest addition health management. Health management specifically highlights our skillset in lifestyle optimization as it relates to symptom and condition management, physical activity, nutrition management, and addressing social and emotional factors related to health promotion (AOTA, 2020). Essentially, as occupational therapy practitioners, we are uniquely qualified to be at the forefront of prevention and restoration using lifestyle medicine as a complimentary therapeutic approach to enhance the health and wellbeing of individuals and within larger systems.

Considering that we work with diverse populations, lifestyle medicine interventions can be applied across the lifespan and in a variety of settings. For example, in maternal health, one could provide education and strategies for managing stress during and after pregnancy through interventions focused on building awareness and resilience. Within a school setting OT practitioners could facilitate groups focused on physical activity for adolescents at risk for obesity; additionally, they could serve as a consultant and work towards increasing access to healthy food choices.



OT practitioners in home health can work with older adults to support aging in place and chronic condition management by addressing meal planning and preparation of healthy meals as well as sleep routines and overall sleep hygiene within an optimal environment. Within community-based practice, I work with individuals living with persistent serious mental illness to provide education and implementation of the six pillars of lifestyle medicine through weekly health education and plant-predominant meal preparation groups in their homes. Each week we discuss a different pillar of lifestyle medicine, create a short-term goal based on the pillar, and prepare a healthy meal of their choice. At the foundation, occupational therapy recognizes that what we do everyday matters. We also recognize that what we have access to impacts our health and our health impacts how we engage in occupations. Implementing lifestyle medicine as a complimentary therapeutic approach to our unique skill set with an emphasis on holistic human centered care, clearly illustrates that we are premier practitioners as it relates to addressing the prevention, management, and reversal of chronic conditions across the lifespan. Cheers to being the change!

Interested in learning more about lifestyle medicine? Currently, the American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) is offering 5.5 complimentary CME/CE hours, learn more here: <https://portal.lifestylemedicine.org/Portal/ACLM/Education/Campaigns/White-House/WHconference-SignIn.aspx>

References

- Clayton, J.S., & Bonnet, J. (2023). *Foundations of Lifestyle Medicine Board Review Manual* (4th ed.). American College of Lifestyle Medicine.
- American Occupational Therapy Association. (2020). Occupational therapy practice framework: Domain and process (4th ed.). *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 74(Suppl.2), 7412410010. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2020.74S2001>



Emerging Practice

By: Sarah Foidel, OTR/L, OTD



Functional Pathways: Improving Dementia Care

During my 25 years as an occupational therapist, I have learned the importance of education and advocacy at a systems level. Functional Pathways LLC is designed to improve the care of people with dementia. By developing strength-based care plans and providing functional assessments, occupational therapy can elevate the lives of people living with advancing dementia and experiencing challenging behaviors. Through the lens of behavior is communication, strength-based care plans can end occupation deprivation for people with dementia. Functional Pathways LLC is a vehicle for OT to provide education to systems versus a direct care model. My current clients include a major hospital system to develop acute care dementia protocols to improve outcomes, being lead faculty for an ECHO (a grant funded telehealth program) to consult biweekly on behavioral health challenges in nursing homes across Oregon, and being a paid speaker on improving dementia care. In the future, I hope to expand to providing purchasable education packages for long term care, having online occupational therapy continuing education, and work within the state system to change the foundation of dementia care. I also would love to see individual clients, but currently working big systems feels more impactful. Education is power—I want to provide that to direct care providers to change care delivery.



Historical Archive Update



<https://www.otleaders.org/history-preservation-project>

Click on the above link to see other state's OT history projects.

OTAO has recently been added to this list.

If you are interested in volunteering to further OTAO historical efforts,
please contact our historian:

otaosis.historian@gmail.com

