

Microsoft Teams

Attending:

Jennifer Lee – President, Regulated Member
Arwen Caines – Vice President, Regulated Member
Carrie Hait – Regulated Member
Whitney McKenzie – Regulated Member
Christie Bergman – Public Member
Dennis Fitzgerald – Public Member

Marianne Baird – CEO & Registrar
Mallory Foreman – Recording Secretary

Regrets:

Heidi Knupp – Regulated Member
Dr. Tom Smith – Public Member

1. Gathering, Overview of the Agenda

Jennifer called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

Council welcomed Dennis Fitzgerald, new Public Member, to his first ACOT Council Meeting. An introduction activity was held.

2. Approval of the Agenda

With no adjustments suggested, Council voted on approving the agenda.

MOTION: To approve the September 19, 2022, ACOT Council Meeting Agenda - Christie (MOVED) Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.

3. Review Agenda for Open Forum

Marianne explained the preparation for the open forum including:

- Havelin Anand attending as representative of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT). Ms. Anand will be describing CAOT's advocacy updates.
- News from ACOT.
- Open floor for guests to discuss their workplace news and to ask ACOT questions.

Council suggestions:

- To ask participants their reason for deciding to join the open forum tonight.
- Ask participants if there are any changes that would benefit future open forums.
- To ask what CAOT's key priorities and initiatives are for the upcoming year.

- Ask how CAOT will keep OT recruitment and retention at the forefront of government's considerations, and how allied health is represented at government tables.

4. Open Forum

Council welcomed Havelin Anand with CAOT and guests, including one guest representative from SAOT.

Ms. Anand provided updates on CAOT's advocacy initiatives and priorities for the next year:

- For two years there has been a public awareness campaign targeting federal decision makers for OT's scope of practice in mental health with an emphasis on a digital public campaign
- There is a focus on how to increase the number OTs in Canada by increasing the number of seats available in universities
- A continuum is available on CAOT's website where you can obtain key messages, stories, and economic evidence. This can be retrieved as letters, phone scripts, email scripts and social media
- CAOT and the OT TRC Task Force co-chairs met with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) in December 2021 to focus on the development of partnerships to support the expansion of OT services within ISC's programs.
- Since January 2022, CAOT has participated in over 20 meetings (Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Shadow Ministers, Critics, Members of Parliament, Prime Ministerial & Ministerial staff).
- As a result of proactive outreach to newly elected MPs pursuant to the September 2021 Federal election, CAOT was invited to appear before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health (HESA) on March 28th, 2022, to share the perspective of the occupational therapy workforce in Canada. CAOT focused on presenting workforce issues and challenges, including the current lack of supply of OTs to meet the demand for services and the importance of universal access to occupational therapy services.
- CAOT was present at the Canadian Institute for Military and Veterans Research's (CIMVHR) annual conference to showcase the contribution of OTs via services provided to the Canadian Armed Forces and Veteran's Affairs Canada
- CAOT Policy Analyst(s) attend bi-monthly meetings of the Opioid Harm Response Community to present the merits of evidence based, clinically effective, occupational therapy non-pharmacological pain management interventions as one way to tackle the opioid crisis.
- CAOT advocacy efforts have resulted in OTs holding seats in various important Committees and programs: Lesya Dyk was named Chair of the Advisory Council of the National Research Council's Aging in Place Program; Dr. Ben Mortenson

- as Member of the Technical Committee on LTC Standard; and Marnie Courage is a part of Accessibility Canada's Technical Committee on Outdoor Spaces.
- CAOT continues to be actively engaged in a number of coalitions such as HEAL (Organizations for Health Action – CAOT CEO Hélène Sabourin is Co-Chair); Extended Health Professionals Coalition (EHPC); Canadian Coalition for Public Health in the 21st Century (CCPH21); and the Quality End of Life Care Coalition (QELCCC).
- CAOT met with senior staff of the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) in July 2022 to discuss the role and value proposition of occupational therapy in mental health and the importance of recognizing OTs for their full scope of practice.
- CAOT attended various stakeholder engagement sessions hosted by the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS) to provide input on their assessment of the current state of Health Human Resources (HHR) in July 2022. The sessions provided the opportunity to highlight and voice the OT workforce needs across Canada.
- In the coming year, we will continue to highlight cost-effective occupational therapy solutions and increase our advocacy efforts to promote the role of occupational therapy on primary care teams in communities across Canada, in mental health, and the importance of occupational therapy coverage in public and private health insurance plans. The team will continue to provide advocacy support to occupational therapists provincially and nationally to participate in sharing and promoting the value of occupational therapy.

Marianne asked the guests what they hoped to get out of their attendance today. Both guests stated that they were not attending to report anything particular to ACOT but wanted to hear updates from CAOT and ACOT.

Marianne shared ACOT updates including:

- Currently working on a refresh of the Standards of Practice, Code of Ethics, and Bylaws as per the requirements of Bill 46.
- The National eLearning modules will be available shortly. There will be an eNews sent out when they are ready.
- We are working with the University of Alberta's Rehabilitation Research Center for analysis of ACOT's aggregate continuing competence program data.

Marianne asked the guests how the pandemic has affected their work. One of the guests stated that it has been very flexible for them as they could work from home. The other guest mentioned that they are getting back into the school setting with some employees working from home and there are more children being homeschooled. SAOT was able to meet in-person for the first time since the start of the pandemic.

Marianne asked whether the guests had any further questions and they asked:

Q: How many eLearning modules will be coming out before the new registration year?

A: Just the one. This year it is on competencies. Next year ACOT will be circling back for registrants to re-take the Protecting Patients Against Sexual Abuse and Misconduct module and acting against racism and intolerance related courses will be provided in the future.

Q: USA, for example, has a credit system for hours based on courses taken. Is this a possibility for ACOT?

A: ACOT's Competence Committee conducted a literature review in 2019 that showed taking courses did not necessarily show an effect on practice, however self-reflection on learnings has a positive impact on practice. Therefore, ACOT uses self-reflection rather than tracking course credit hours.

Council thanked the guests for attending.

5. Strategic Plan Update

ACOT is continuing to meet all the key deliverables in its Strategic Plan. New highlights included:

- We have been collaborating with the University of Alberta Occupational Therapy Department to purchase anti-racism training for registrant use.
- There has been an increase in registrant engagement with learning sessions. Alanna Ferguson has been offering a variety of sessions in varying lengths for registrants.
- The Acting Against Racism and Intolerance (AARI) Committee has been working on identifying Indigenous Elders who could help guide their work.

6. Review of Action Items

Highlights of items completed since the last Council meeting included:

- The AARI tracker is now available on the ACOT website. Updates will also be sent out via eNews.
- Council agreed criminal record checks for registrants would continue to only be required for new applicants and re-applicants, while renewing applicants would continue with annual declarations.
- A purchase versus lease analysis was completed for ACOT computers and based on this analysis it was decided ACOT would continue to purchase and amortize computers rather than leasing them.

7. Practice Inquiries Activity

Overall, fewer practice inquiries came in this year compared to the same reporting period last prior year. However, there has been an increase in the number of questions coming in about continuing competence program requirements.

Since publishing our informed consent guideline, we have had more inquiries about informed consent.

SAOT's private practice group has invited ACOT to speak on our various private practice guidelines that the College has.

ACTION: *consider doing a webinar series on the frequent queries we get.*

MOTION: To accept the Strategic Plan Update, the Action Items Report, and the Practice Inquiries Activity Report for information - Whitney (MOVED) Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.

8. Generative Thinking

Briefing Note – Collecting Race Base Data

The Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI) is asking for all provincial regulatory OT Colleges to collect and submit aggregate race-based data. Under the *Health Professions Act*, ACOT is permitted to obtain this information, however, Marianne noted that this data would need to be collected and used carefully.

A Councillor expressed discomfort with gathering this type of data. Marianne noted provision of this information would be completely voluntary for the registrants. She also mentioned this information could help identify the composition of our registrant population, which in turn would assist us in targeting a representative population for Council and Committees. CIHI would use the data to identify broader workforce characteristics.

Council agreed that if ACOT does decide to collect race-based data the messaging to registrants will need be closely examined before being sent out. The messaging will need to focus on the voluntary aspect, and how the data collection promotes protection of the public through the ability to target appropriate representation. Council also noted they will need more information about why CIHI wants this information, why ACOT might want to agree to collect it, and how this will benefit ACOT and the public interest. Marianne stated that she will bring back this information along with draft policies and procedures for the data collection and use to Council for review at its October meeting. A Councillor then recommended that this issue be taken to the AARI Committee for review.

ACTION: Marianne to develop race-based data collection and use policies, procedures and messaging for Council to review during its October 2022 meeting.

ACTION: AARI Committee to review race-based data collection and use policies, procedures and messaging.

ACTION: If Council approves collection of race-based data, hold a forum to discuss it with registrants.

Briefing Note – Social Media

During its April and May 2022 Council meetings, use of television advertisements for engaging with the public was discussed and it was found to be cost prohibitive. Council then shifted towards use of social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) as an alternative medium for providing information to the public about ACOT.

Council suggestions/comments:

- A six-month trial run for this project makes sense.
- Council agreed it makes sense to use a contractor rather than hiring additional staff for this function.
- Metrics are needed; consider analytics such as traffic volume, demographics and a breakdown of urban and rural users.
- Add a measure on social media such as a tick box saying, “was this helpful.”
- The focus should be on public protection.
- After three months and six months, this project should be evaluated to assess whether it should be continued.
- Phone call and email volume from the public is another option for determining whether use of social media will result in an increase of public awareness about ACOT.

MOTION: To approve a six-month trial period of social media presence with use of ACOT’s existing website contractor Monolith. - Christie (MOVED) Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.

College Performance Measurement Framework and Truth and Reconciliation Resources

Marianne brought forward the CPMF framework, noting it can inform ongoing updates to Council’s annual evaluations.

Jennifer reminded Council of the resources provided to guide staff and Council’s efforts on the upcoming National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

9. Consent Items

Review of Last Meeting's Minutes

Council viewed the June 21, 2022, Council meeting minutes and there were no suggested changes.

MOTION: To approve the June 21, 2022, Council Meeting Minutes as presented - Whitney (MOVED) Christie (SECONDED). CARRIED.

Registrar Limitation (RL) 3: Asset Protection

Marianne presented RL 3 with the following attachments:

- Disaster Recovery Plan
- ACOT Work from Home Policy
- IPC Policy and Procedure
- ACOT Business Continuity and Pandemic Preparedness Plan

Marianne noted:

- We continue holding competitive bids and consulting Council for any large purchases
- We have an independent audit annually
- Our funds are held in secure highest rated Canadian bank accounts

A Councillor asked Marianne how working from home is going for herself and the ACOT staff. Marianne stated that the staff really enjoy the hybrid approach. There are daily virtual check-ins and there was no loss of efficiency by working from home.

MOTION: To approve RL3: Asset Protection as presented - Arwen (MOVED) Whitney (SECONDED). CARRIED.

Registrar Limitation (RL) 5: Compensation & Benefits

Marianne presented the RL 5 Monitoring Report with the following attachments:

- Vacation Liability to September 30, 2022
- Briefing Note – Staff Benefits Policy

Marianne noted staff are encouraged to use up their vacation days and this year we were able to decrease our accrued vacation liability.

Marianne brought forward a proposal for providing part-time staff with health and dental benefits, noting the cost of benefits for ACOT's part-time staff is less than the cost of retraining new staff members. Provision of health benefits can be a factor in staff recruitment and retention, and it is a competitive labour market.

Council suggested looking into a graduated or pro-rated approach for provision of these benefits to part-time staff and making this part of the employment contract.

ACTION: *Marianne to contact the benefits provider regarding ability to pro-rate benefits and provide this information to Council to inform an electronic vote.*

Council had a short discussion on budget room for providing benefits to part-time staff.

MOTION: To accept RL 5: Compensation & Benefits as presented - Whitney (MOVED) Christie (SECONDED). CARRIED.

MOTION: To approve the proposal in principle for part-time staff to receive benefits - Whitney (MOVED) Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.

10. Complaints Activity

Council viewed the Complaints Activity Report. Currently there are seven open complaints and total complaints volume this year is the highest so far.

MOTION: To approve the complaints activity report as presented - Whitney (MOVED) Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.

11. Reflection on Governance

Council gave their opinions on the meeting in relation to the Ends Policy:

- Good conversation and it is good to carry some of the items forward for further information
- Appreciated the safe space for conversation
- Appreciated the different perspectives brought forward, especially on the sensitive topics
- Public protection goals have been reached

12. Meeting Survey

Council then took five minutes to complete the September 19, 2022, Council Meeting Survey.

13. In-Camera

MOTION: To move the September 19, 2022, Council Meeting to in-camera - Christie (MOVED) Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.

14. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

MOTION: To conclude the September 19, 2022, ACOT Council Meeting at 8:59 p.m. – Jennifer (MOVED) Arwen (SECONDED). CARRIED.