

NORTH DAKOTA OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION



February

Edition 2, Volume 13

A Message from the NDOTA President:

Greetings to my fellow OTs!

I hope this letter finds you refreshed and ready for a new year of growing and making a difference to those around you: Ready to learn new therapy techniques, mentor a colleague or new OT, research a new topic of interest. Or maybe you plan to give yourself more work/life balance, try a new hobby or revisit one you've set aside. Possibly your goals are more practical, and you want to become more efficient and effective with documentation or support a cause you feel strongly about.

Here in NDOTA we are striving to achieve many of these things, as well! It is our vision to make NDOTA an organization that gives the OTs of North Dakota the support of colleagues and mentors around them, that provides interesting and useful educational opportunities, that engages in the community, and that stays abreast of legislation that impacts our profession.

We continue to strive to be transparent with our finances, improve our online access and services, look for new ways to reach out to the community and connect OTs. We are extremely grateful to the volunteers on the NDOTA Board of Management that selflessly give of their time and energy for the greater good of all ND OTs. We are also beyond grateful for our lobbyist, Levi Andrist, who has faithfully stood beside us for many years now and has chosen to keep his fees very low for us. Having a vigilant lobbyist and a professional association that cares about the future of all OTs is akin to having a lifeguard on duty.

Nonetheless, we all know that absolutely everything costs money, and an association such as NDOTA is no exception. With a membership fee of \$65/year for OTRs (\$5.42/mo), \$45/year for COTAs (\$3.75/mo), and \$10/year for students (\$0.83/mo), that's a very small price to pay for impact it has on our profession and community in our state. A membership organization without members is like a nursery with no babies, or a military with no soldiers - it defeats the purpose! Becoming a member has no downside, because there are only opportunities to participate - not obligations. Members can partake as much or little as they choose. If you are still unsure, feel free to contact any of us on the board directly to discuss any concerns you may have. We look forward to a great year together at NDOTA!

Best regards,

Heather Dibra

VP of Education

Hello!

As many of you recall, we were unable to host our fall NDOTA conference due to inclement weather beyond our control! I am happy to say we were able to plan a spring NDOTA conference to bring back our adult track speakers! Aimee Volk, MS, OTR/L and Amy Osvold, BSW will be speaking on Low Vision. Please visit www.ndota.com for further information! There is a conference brochure located on NDOTA's website which provides a detailed layout on objectives for this course. The spring conference is scheduled for Saturday, April 18, 2020. It will be located at the Courtyard by Marriot. There are hotel rooms available for NDOTA participants Friday evening if needed. We are planning on having an NDOTA meeting at noon, with lunch provided to those who attend.

We hope to see you there! Thanks to Aimee and Amy for being flexible and finding time to reschedule their presentation for us!

Best regards,

Shawna Wing, MS, OTR/L

NDOTA VP of Education

Treasurer

2020 ushers in some exciting new changes to the treasure position. Instead of utilizing an Excel document for accounting NDOTA will be utilizing Quickbooks! This change will streamline many steps of the balancing of our books each month, saving time and money for our organization.

Other changes include a change of town for the PO Box, to better reflect the distribution of the board members more accurately. I continue to research the best options for credit card processing for members to renew their dues online in order to provide the best option for NDOTA While also being fiscally responsible.

Geena

Farwest District

The Farwest district has welcomed a new district chair. Please welcome Tiffany Skor to the BOM for NDOTA.

Hi, my name is Tiffany Skor, I am your new far west district chair! I graduated from the University of North Dakota in 2007. My background has included mental health, inpatient acute, inpatient rehab and outpatient. I am currently a senior occupational therapist working in adult outpatient therapy at Sanford Health in Bismarck. I see a variety of patient populations including neuromuscular, orthopedic and lymphedema. I became LSVT BIG certified in 2013 and Lymphedema certified in 2015. I live in Bismarck with my husband and two children. I enjoy being with family and friends, playing volleyball, gardening, reading and baking.

Representative Assembly Update

Greetings everyone. AOTA is continuing to address the new Patient Driven Payment Model (PDPM), advocating for inclusion of OT services. Please, see their website for updates:

https://www.aota.org/Advocacy-Policy/Federal-Reg-Affairs/News/2020/PDGM-Share-Story.aspx?promo_name=Share-pymt-exp&promo_creative=Advocacy-Policy&promo_position=hero

On this site, there is a survey that was opened in December 2019 to gather data about the PDPM directly from OT practitioners. Please, complete that survey and share your experiences.

In addition, they are examining multiple key issues for the 2020 State Legislative Sessions, which include:

- Health care reform and Medicaid redesign
- State regulation of OT
- OT licensure Compact
- Role of OT in mental health
- The opioid crisis & the treatment of chronic pain
- Coverage and reimbursement for OT services
- Encroachment concerns
- OT in schools

As always, please, contact me as your AOTA Representative of ND for discussion about any ideas and concerns you have related to OT practice.

Thanks so much for your attention to AOTA and OT practice!

Cindy Janssen

VP of Legislation and Practice: NDOTA Legislative Summary and Lobbyist Necessity

Submitted By: Cory Vatsndal-Geck OTR/L CHT

Vice President of Legislation and Practice

First of all a huge thank you to our lobbyist, Levi Andrist, from the firm "Gilbertson Andrist Government Affairs" or GA Group. He is on top of all legislation relating to Occupational Therapy. Levi or one of his associates notify NDOTA of any information that may even somewhat relate to our profession ranging from reimbursement, other entities infringing on our practice, or other government regulations affecting OT in any way.

Just in 2019 North Dakota 76th Legislative Assembly, which adjourned Friday night, April 26, 2019. The legislation used up 76 out of the 80 maximum legislative days allowed. There were 908 bills introduced this session, compared to 779 in 2017. The GA Group looked at each bill introduced and consulted with us regarding each and every one. The bills were narrowed down to the ones that could even somewhat affect OT and then further monitored.

Throughout the years, if I had to articulate their role and the impact of NDOTA at the capitol, in short, I would say that the GA group (our lobbyist) have been extremely effective and have been growing in presence.

As to the more time-intensive efforts relating to OT, I'd mention the following:

The GA Group was the lead negotiators and advocates for OTs in scope-of-practice bills relating to athletic trainers and PTs to be sure the public is protected by licensing laws that accurately reflect a practitioner's education and training.

They were the tip of the spear with the ND Insurance Commissioner during ACA implementation when the commissioner was considering how to define habilitative and rehabilitative services.

They were the lead advocates for the establishment and continuation of Medicaid Expansion, which provides health insurance coverage for 20,000 working-class North Dakotans and which is an important payer for OT services. (It's worth noting ND was the first GOP-dominated state to expand Medicaid.)

They worked to create and expand the Medicaid waiver and voucher programs for treating those on the autism spectrum (these programs are now engrained in the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT)).

They pushed to get enhanced reimbursement rates for OTs (pediatric, in particular) in the traditional Medicaid program.

I cannot emphasize enough how our lobbyist supports and protects Occupational Therapy Services and is looking to help expand our foot print in health care.

AOTA/NBCOT Information

We are pleased to share this update from Dan Logsdon from the National Center for Interstate Compacts regarding progress that is being made on the joint AOTA/NBCOT Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact Initiative.

The Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact initiative is steadily moving forward to create an occupational licensure compact for the OT profession with support from AOTA and NBCOT. The Advisory Group for the project held its initial meeting during the last week of October 2019 in Washington, DC. Since that initial meeting, the Advisory Group has convened by phone to develop recommendations for the project Drafting Team which will meet in late February to begin drafting the text of the compact.

The Drafting Team is expected to complete a draft compact in early May. That document will then go back to the Advisory Group for comment before being distributed to stakeholders for comment in the summer of 2020.

The project team is determined to have a draft ready for consideration by state legislatures in 2021

Red River District

NDOTA is very excited to announce the Red River District has a new district chair!

Cherie Graves has been teaching at the University of North Dakota (UND) Occupational Therapy (OT) Program for the past six years. In addition to teaching, she serves as the Academic Fieldwork Coordinator and faculty advisor for the Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA). Cherie currently serves on the Board of Directors for The Arc, Upper Valley in Grand Forks, an organization committed to the human rights of individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, to facilitate their participation in being able to live, work, and play in their communities without limitations. Cherie received her Masters degree from UND in 2006 and her PhD in Educational Leadership from UND in 2019. Prior to teaching at UND she worked in South Dakota in many different adult physical rehabilitation settings. Cherie lives in Grand Forks with her family, Andy (husband), Oliver (9 yo), Willow (4 yo), and Sammy (1 yr old GoldenDoodle).



Cherie Graves, PhD, OTR/L

North Dakota Pi Theta Epsilon Update

The Pi Theta Epsilon (PTE) OT student conference was held on February 1st. The conference is a collaboration between UMary and UND PTE chapters. Megan Boucher was present at the conference for the NDOTA Board of Members to talk about the importance of maintaining membership in NDOTA and its effect on legislation and practice in North Dakota.

Melanie and Cori discussed a U of Mary study that is being continued on from a previous study – looking at why people are in leadership roles in their local associations and what keeps people in their associations.



Pictured: Megan Boucher, Shelby Wittenberg, UND; Cory Niebur, U of Mary



Pictured: Megan Boucher; Shelby Wittenberg, UND; Cory Niebur, U of Mary; Melanie Johnson, U of Mary

Call for Elections

BOM positions for the April 2020 election:

- VP of Education
- Secretary

Questions on the positions or have a nomination, email Sheri @ ndotawebmaster@hotmail.com or call 701-771-8949

Membership Update

238 Total Members

5 OTA

105 OTR

128 OTS



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