

2020



ANNUAL REPORT



About OTASA

The Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa (OTASA) is a non-profit professional association representing the interests of Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapy Technicians/Assistants and Occupational Therapy students across South Africa. OTASA supports, promotes and represents the profession of occupational therapy (OT) as a key element of the health service provision in South Africa and positions itself as an integral, evidence-based and relevant force meeting society's health and occupational needs in partnership with key stakeholders and the public. For more information about Occupational Therapy, visit www.otasa.org.za.

The Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa 2020 ©

(This work is copyrighted. You may download, display, print and reproduce this material in unaltered form only (retaining this notice) for your personal, non-commercial use or use within your organisation.

Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act, 1978, all other rights are reserved.

Requests for further authorisation should be directed to The President via email at president@otasa.org.za

Table of Contents

About OTASA	1
Table of Contents	2
1. PRESIDENTS REPORT	3
2. FINANCIAL REPORT	6
3. OTASA: WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE STAND FOR AND WHAT WE DO	7
OTASA Vision:	7
OTASA Mission Statement:	7
OTASA Values:	7
OTASA'S Strategic Plan	8
4. MEMBERSHIP	8
4.2 Member satisfaction survey 2020	9
4.3 Growing as diverse membership	10
4.3.1 Road shows	10
4.3.2 Member diversity	11
4.3.3 OTT members	11
4.3.4 OT student members	11
5. PROMOTE THE PROFESSION AND OUR UNIQUE ROLE THROUGH ADVOCACY AND REPRESENTATION	14
5.1 Government	14
5.2 Health Funders in both the private and public sector	15
5.3 OT service users	17
5.3.4 Position Papers	17
5.4 OTASA Marketing and Advocacy initiatives	17
6. ENHANCE COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS	19
7. OPERATIONAL AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	20
8. STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS	21
9. STRENGTHEN OCCUPATIONALLY RELEVANT OCCUPATIONAL BASED PRACTICE	22
10. ESTABLISH A PRIORITISED, CONTEXTUALLY RELEVANT RESEARCH AGENDA TO INFORM, SUPPORT AND LEGITIMISE PRACTICE AND SERVICE DELIVERY	22
11. CELEBRATING 75 YEARS	23
12. OTASA AWARDS	24
12.1 Vona du Toit Memorial Lecture 2020	24
12.2 2019-2020 OT week prizes	24
12.3 2019 Marie du Toit research prize	24
12.4 2019/2020 Ruth Watson Research Grant	24
12.5 2020 Albie Sachs Award	24
12.6 Fatima Hendricks Leadership Award	25
12.7 Honorary Certificate of Merit	25
12.8 OTASA Student research prizes	25
13. OTASA OFFICE BEARERS	26
14. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	27

1. PRESIDENTS REPORT

2020 marks the Platinum Jubilee (75th) anniversary of the Occupational Therapy Association in South Africa. The inaugural meeting took place in 1945 at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town with five members and Ms M Crousaz was elected the first Chairperson. There has been much water under the bridge since this time. While the book 'OTASA: A remarkable Story' edited by Rosemary Crouch describes both the professional challenges as well as the many accomplishments of the organisation over this time, there is undoubtedly still much work to be done. Some of which includes the promotion of unity and transformation within the profession and strategic positioning, so that equitable and quality occupational therapy is included in all mainstream service provision, where it is needed across the country.

While we had planned a busy year which included much celebration, the COVID-19 pandemic had an altogether other plan for how OTASA would use its energy and resources in 2020. Since President Ramaphosa announced the national lockdown in March, there has been no part of our professional community that has not been affected. Although how profession in the various sectors has been affected differs, this has been an extraordinarily difficult time for all occupational therapists, occupational therapy technicians and students, not forgetting those that we serve.

In order to provide support and guidance in this extraordinary time, OTASA circulated critical information, provided guidelines on many aspects relating to the COVID 19 pandemic, we negotiated with medical funders, the insurance regulator and provincial health authorities around the resources to enable occupational therapy to contribute to the pandemic and to their essential and more routine work. We provided a platform for communication for occupational therapists in many sectors, free CPD activities for critical webinars and support groups for occupational therapists in distress. We have collaborated with other professional societies and associations on joint initiatives as well as with the disability sector, through our partnership with the South African Disability Alliance (SADA) to advocate for people with disabilities who were particularly vulnerable during this time. Since we appreciated that COVID-19 was a national disaster, that did not recognise boundaries and allegiances, OTASA opened all our communication platforms to all OTs nationally and in the Southern Africa region so we could share information, experiences and best practise evidence.

Telehealth has been an exciting new development that has emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic. While this means of service delivery has been most effective in sectors where patients have access to data and are computer literate, it has been less effective in delivering services to communities with less electronic resources and electronic know-how. The debates around what assessments can and cannot be safely and reliably administered continue and evidence is urgently needed to refute or support claims. The creativity of occupational therapists in devising treatments for patients on this platform has been inspiring, although clearly requires organisational and time intensive planning. While telehealth remains a source of income for many, job security for others within the profession has been a growing concern. The introduction of the Compensation Fund's CompEasy system has created critical financial concerns for those occupational therapists providing services to persons who are injured on duty, as a result of the change

in the payment system of occupational therapy experts by the Road Accident Fund. Many novice therapists completing their community service year struggled to find work due to limited posts available within both the public and private sector. The COVID-19 lockdown and transmission reduction regulations have also had a marked effect on job security. A recent survey of our private practitioners indicated that they were earning between 50% and 90 % less than at the comparative time last year and a growing number of retrenchments has been noted.

All the work mentioned above has had to take place in the face of the new life that we have all had to get used to. The OT office has been closed and the office staff and office bearers are working remotely. Naively we had initially hoped that life would be back to normal by September. We postponed the OTASA Congress, scheduled to be held in June, initially to September and then again until next year Mid 2021, as there is no certainty around cross border travel and the safety of face to face meetings at this time. The same was true of the Council and National AGM. We have a large Council and the idea of a virtual 2-day meeting is daunting. But daunting or not a virtual Council meeting will be held on 21st and 22nd August and the AGM on the 16th September in the middle of the OT week celebrations.

Despite all the COVID -19 challenges the national EXCO has continued to meet regularly and has planned and executed many activities aimed at fulfilling our collective mandate in operationalising the strategic plan.

- Despite some challenges with the purchasing of a new data information system and website, we have been trying to manage the day to day work more effectively.
- Promoting Universal Health Care/NHI readiness, which may seem far away, but is gathering momentum in all DoH strategic plans.
- Promoting new practice opportunities for occupational therapists is ongoing.
- Promoting sound, ethical and legal working practice.
- Having open and constructive communication and engagement with our members, partners and students, sometimes about uncomfortable, but critical issues as well as engaging with our critics.
- Promoting transformative corporate governance to sustain the association over time.
- Advocating for the profession and PWD through active engagement with strategic national and international partnerships, alliances and collaborations.
- Promoting professional development for our members.

During the past year the National EXCO has met with a number of very senior and experienced occupational therapists, whom we have respectfully called the OT Stalwarts. The purpose of these engagements has been to listen, learn and debate the critical issues facing both the profession nationally, and the Association, to gain a broader perspective and insight into the way forward. The single most common issue that has been highlighted in these discussions, as well as in discussions with many others, is the

way occupational therapy could contribute to the critical unemployment problem confronting South Africa. This is an issue that needs serious consideration.

During the last six months the national EXCO committee has been working at half strength. Elvin Williams (COO) and Elize Janse van Rensburg (Vice President Professional Development) resigned at the end of the year. With Council's approval Elvin Williams took over the Professional Development portfolio from February 2020. The COO post was advertised and there were 6 candidates. However, in view of the financial uncertainties within the country and the dissolution of the OT Office, it was decided that we would wait until early in 2021 financial year before a COO appointment would be made.

Special thanks are needed for the national EXCO members, office staff, partners and chairpersons of Standing Committees and branches who contributed to this national effort during this very difficult and stressful period. As this is a voluntary organisation, this has often been at great personal cost.

We are mindful that this year has been a year of high work-related stress with burnout being a continual theme. There has been high anxiety around COVID-19 exposure, inadequate PPE and inability to provide services. We are aware of many colleagues who have been exposed and in isolation, sometimes more than once. Many have been infected and while for some the symptoms have been mild, but for others, they have been more serious. To everybody who has lost a loved one our heartfelt condolences.

Despite the difficulties during this year much has actually been achieved and the new realities and ways of working have opened new opportunities that we can harness. The national EXCO undertakes to continue to attend the interests of the profession to the best of our ability and work systematically towards achieving our mandate.

Respectfully Submitted



Prof Pat de Witt

President

2. FINANCIAL REPORT

Below is a summary of the financial status of the Association for the financial period 2019-2020:

As Treasurer and buddy of the OTASA office, which includes the OTASA Office Administrator and the OTASA Financial Administrator, we confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the following representations:

- There have been no irregularities involving management or employees that have a significant role in the accounting and internal control systems, or that could have a material effect on the financial statements.
- We have made available to the Accountant and Auditor, all books of accounts and supporting documentation, and all minutes of meetings.
- We confirm the completeness of the information provided regarding the identification of related parties.
- OTASA has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of noncompliance. There has been no noncompliance with requirements of regulatory authorities that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of noncompliance.

The following have been properly recorded and, when appropriate, adequately disclosed in the financial statements:

- The identity of, and balances and transactions with, related parties.
- All known, actual or possible, noncompliance with laws and regulations, the effects of which should be considered when preparing financial statements, has been disclosed to the auditor.

During the 2019-2020 financial year, the following were key performance areas for running smooth financial operations within OTASA:

- Monitor, together with the Finance Coordinator, the banking and investing of all monies received.
- Monitor and approve all claims and payments as loaded onto the banking system by the Office Administrator.
- Monitor the trial balance sheet, regarding all financial transactions of OTASA, as supplied by Finance Coordinator on a monthly basis.
- Develop new financial policies and update existing financial policies where needed.
- Approve all out of budget expenses as after discussion with the Executive.
- Annual meeting with the Accountant to discuss the OTASA financial status.
- A more effective communication system with Branches and Standing committees were implemented in the form of WhatsApp groups to enable Branch Treasurers and Standing Committees direct communication lines with the Treasurer.

General:

- Four successful Roadshows to Branches were done during the 2019 period.
- OTASA has also received a profit share of R130050 after 2018 WFOT in Cape Town.
- After the 2019 Council, a directive was given by Council to start a process to appoint new auditors. The current Auditors will complete the OTASA 2019 financial statements. The appointment of new auditors is in process.
- Comprehensive Financial Statements and Reports can be requested from the OT Office.

3.OTASA: WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE STAND FOR AND WHAT WE DO

OTASA Vision:

By 2022, we envisage occupational therapy as an integral, evidence-based and relevant force meeting society's occupational needs in partnership with key stakeholders and the public.

OTASA Mission Statement:

The Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa (OTASA) is the professional association that advances the dynamic growth of quality occupational therapy with a focus on occupation and a distinct South African identity.

OTASA Values:

Our values are captured in the following statement: **"DOING IT"**.

VALUES	WE:
Diversity	are connected in diversity
Occupation-based	rooted in occupation
Inclusive	stand together
Networking	network to recognize where change is needed
Grounded	are grounded in South African identity
Innovative	find new solutions
Transformative	are proactively moving with the times

OTASA'S Strategic Plan

The Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa's Strategic Plan 2022, developed by the membership through a National Listening and Dialogue campaign, sets out 6 areas of strategic priority for the Association:



These 6 goals have focussed the work of the Association of the past 12 months. This report will provide an overview on the activities and progress in each of the se 6 goals.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Membership category	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
OT	1776	1807	2015	2085	2104	2188	2260
OTT/OTA		1	2	2	3	3	4
Students	99	43	323	121	207	1085	1707
Affiliated (National – non-OT's)	19	21	18	22	16	13	13
Associated (International - OT's and non-OT)	3	5	12	9	19	15	13
TOTAL	1897	1877	2370	2239	2349	3304	3997

There has been a small, but pleasing increase in the full membership over the past year. However, we note with concern that 99 members have not paid their OTASA annual subscription, due to the COVID-19 pandemic despite the extension of the payment period.

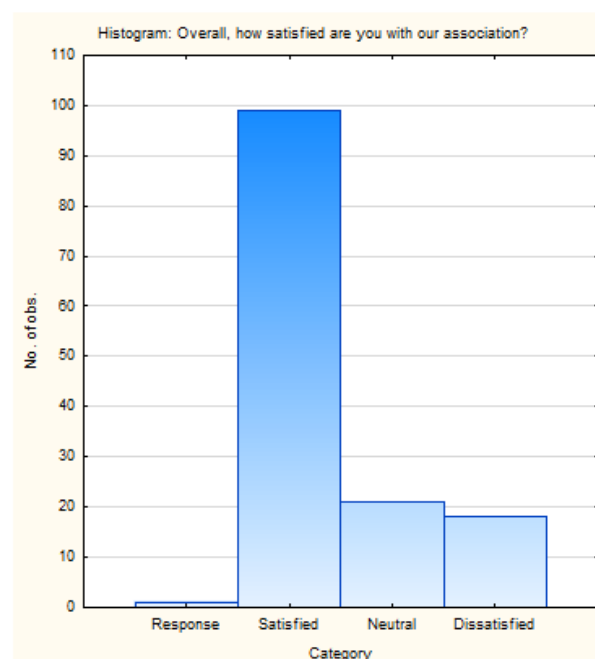
The growth in student numbers reflects the Council 2018 decision to form OTASA-S and the fact that all students are now members of OTASA.

The membership throughout the country, as reflected in the branches differs widely.



4.2 Member satisfaction survey 2020

While there were only 143 responses, the annual survey (return rate 4.3), which was a disappointment, the comments were valuable and highlighted many issues which need attention. As can be seen most members who completed the survey are satisfied with the overall performance of the Association.



The respondents scored for all questions in the survey were rated satisfactory at different levels between 52% and 69%. There was considerable support for OTASA ,for the manner in which the COVID-19 issues were handled, however there are issues that need to be attended to such as: the website, the slowness of responses to emails and other queries, unequal attention and support for the needs of all members, communication on strategic and advocacy issues. Some members perceive that OTASA gives insufficient ethical guidance and does not do enough to deal with the CompEasy and medical scheme payment rates, nor have we taken a strong enough stand on some issues.

4.3 Growing as diverse membership

4.3.1 Road shows

At Council 2019 a decision was taken that the national EXCO and branches would plan a series of Roadshows to branches to promote OTASA as well as to engage with and hear the concerns of local occupational therapists. Three shows were achieved before the COVID -19 Lockdown: Southern Cape: 23rd May 2019, Limpopo: 26th September 2019, Mpumalanga: 7th March 2020. These were all very well organised events.

Mpumalanga



Limpopo



Eastern Cape



4.3.2 Member diversity

Occupational therapy is a diverse profession, with members working in many different sectors and contexts. Such diversity creates differing and sometimes conflicting needs. It is OTASA's view that all components of our diverse profession are valued, and their work respected. National EXCO has made a concerted effort to try to understand the complexities of all sectors and that the documents that are provided speak to the commonalities within the profession rather than differences, and where there are specific field related issues then we consult broadly within the field for the best outcome to any challenges.

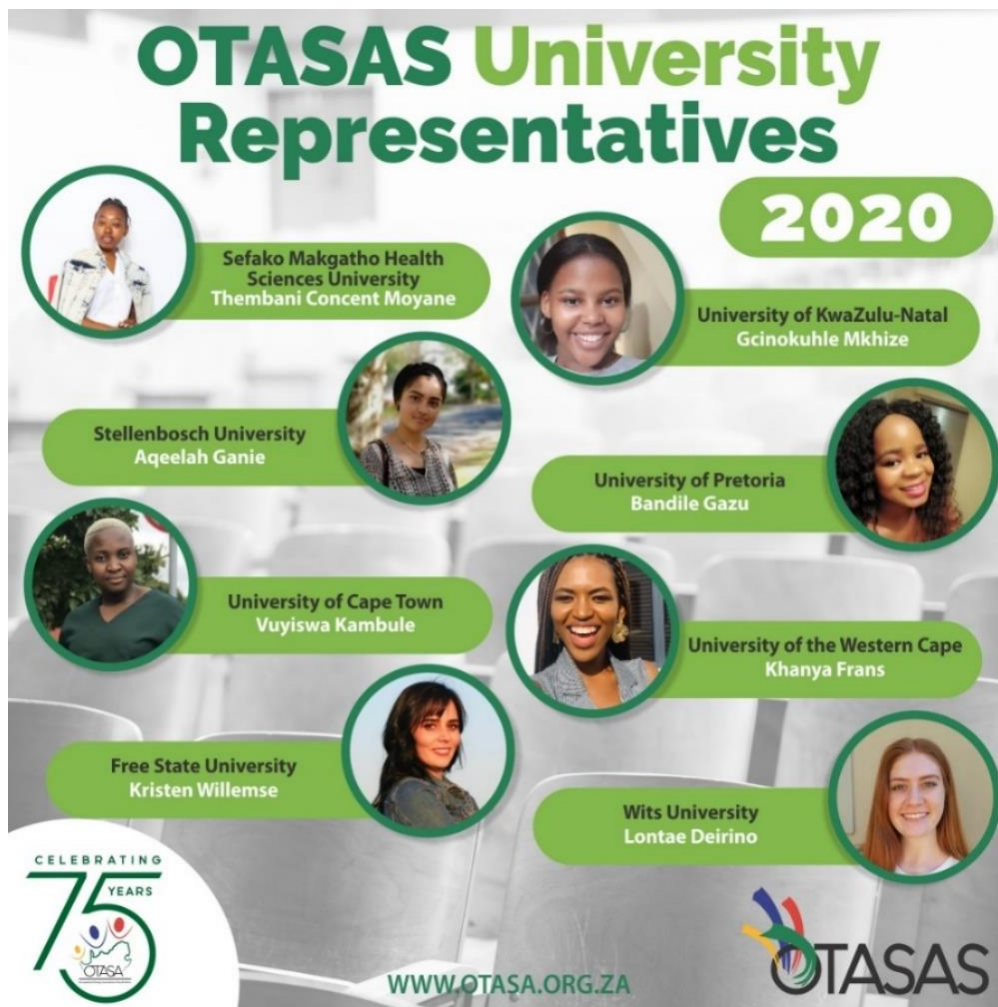
4.3.3 OTT members

Despite the low OTA/OTT membership, OTASA is committed to addressing the future of the midlevel workers. During the past year the OTT task team completed their work on a proposed curriculum, which is to be reviewed by the Education Standing Committee. An OTT concept note was approved by Council. While we have identified the correct people to speak to, in the DoH, however, we have not been able to secure a meeting. The future work of the OTT task team will depend on the outcome of the discussions at this meeting.

4.3.4 OT student members

The OTASA-S held its first ever elections for a national executive and they have been hard at work since taking office in September 2019.

OTASA-S University Launches



Since Council 2019, three OTASA-S launches were successfully held between September 2019 and March 2020 at the University of the Free State, Stellenbosch University and the University of the Western Cape. These launches are important milestones for the university 'branches' and the student body. Unfortunately, the launches at Wits University, University of Pretoria, University of Kwazulu Natal and University of Cape Town were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic and will be revisited soon.

The Universities have all successfully appointed OTASA-S representatives. The university representatives are critical to the functioning of OTASA-S and the student leadership programme as they are responsible for coordinating OTASA-S activities at university level in collaboration with the OTASA executive.

Student Leadership Camp (SLC) 2020

The hosting of the student leadership camp has been a challenge as fundraising initiatives have been unsuccessful. There is an urgent need for fundraising towards the camp to ensure its long-term sustainability. Despite the cancellation of SLC 2020, the SLC task team (which is made up of the student executive, previous camp attendees who have

now graduated and are serving as camp facilitators some of the university academic reps) had worked very hard in the planning of the camp.

Student Mentorship Programme

The national shutdown of universities not only saw an increase in student participation in the OTASA-S with the creation of a second National Student Whatsapp group because the first one was at capacity, but also the introduction of the Student Mentorship Programme. The mentorship programme has now been rolled out to students across the 2nd to 4th years of study and is envisaged to be a permanent fixture in the student leadership programme. Thank you to all the OTs who have given of their time to mentor the students.

Elections for OTASA-S Executive Committee

Nominations for OTASA-S EXCO 2020-2021 will be going out shortly after Council 2020.

OTASAS Launch at University of the Western Cape 27 September 2019



OTASAS Launch at Stellenbosch University 19 February 2020





5. PROMOTE THE PROFESSION AND OUR UNIQUE ROLE THROUGH ADVOCACY AND REPRESENTATION

The strength of any profession within a country lies in its recognition and acceptance by the government of the day and those who fund services as well as recognition by those who receive services.

5.1 Government

OTASA has actively engage with the government either through stakeholder meetings and written and verbal submissions on the following:

- **Presidential Health Summit Compact** to which OTASA contributed was signed on 25th July 2019 by President Ramaphosa at George Mukhari Hospital. The Compact outlines a five-year roadmap for health systems strengthening reforms under the '9 pillars' for accelerating UHC where the goal is: one country; one health system where the "quality of care must be the same regardless of whether you have money or not and regardless of where you live." The Pillar Committees, with a rehabilitation professional on each pillar, have continued to meet and deliberate. The first set of progress reports were sent to the President's Office at the end of July 2020.
- **Department of Health: Human Resource Strategic plan 2020-2030**
OTASA actively engaged in all stakeholder meetings that were held in the development of this strategic plan, as well as gave written comment and supporting evidence for this important policy document. The draft plan was release in February but has not yet been signed off.
- **Department of Health: Strategic Plan for Non-communicable diseases 2020-2030**
This is an important policy document that has practice, educational and research implications for the profession that has bearing on the planned UHC. OTASA commented on 3 drafts this document, with the lasted comment being submitted at the end of July.

- **NHI Bill**

On the 20th September a national virtual briefing of OTASA members on the NHI Act was held. It was facilitated by Elsabe Klinck who explained and took members questions. Following many of engagements with individual members, groups and our rehabilitation profession partners to understand the professional implications of this Act. OTASA submitted an extensive written comment to the DoH and we also requested a verbal presentation to the Parliamentary committee. While our written submission was acknowledged the verbal presentations have not as yet taken place.

- **Department of Health: National mapping of OTs and OT services.**

There is no single national data base for any of the health-related professions in the country, critical information for the human resource planning for UHC. While the DoH had access to public sector information, there was no available information on OT private practices. OTASA was requested to assist by surveying members and requesting specific location and nature of practice information. The information of the 56 respondents was submitted.

5.2 Health Funders in both the private and public sector

- **Board of Medical Funders (BHF)**

During 2019 the BHF undertook a project to explore proposed PMBs for several areas (Mental Health, Child Health, National Medicine List, Assistive technologies, palliative care, etc.) that would be provided in line with primary health care and included prevention and health promotion strategies. This process required the submission of extensive reports with evidence to support each claim, as well as almost monthly meetings to present and debate issues.

- **Individual Medical Schemes**

- OTASA has actively engaged with all medical funders around the reimbursement of occupational therapy services on the telehealth platform. The guidelines for occupational therapists as well as the coding guidelines were sent and, on many occasions, discussions were held with key people to advocate for this.
- OTASA has dealt with enquiries from specific medical funders regarding specific interventions that occupational therapists had billed for, e.g. neonatal care; lymphedema interventions and mental health services.
- OTASA has answered a range of questions around billing of services provided by OTTs.

- **Road Accident Fund**

The end of the contract between the panel of medical experts with and the RAF ended in May 2018 and brought about great challenges for Occupational Therapist's in medico-legal practice. In the absence of contracts between experts and The RAF, medical expert invoices could not be paid directly into expert accounts. The RAF then issued a directive for experts to be paid via the RAF panel attorneys. To date, many therapists have still not received money received by panel attorneys, on behalf of experts. Towards the end of the year 2018, the RAF sent out a Request For Information Tender and appointed new panel of experts. Contracts derived from the RFI saw a sub-categorisation of Occupational Therapists with the lowest tariff allocated for Occupational Therapy. Towards the

end of the year 2019, the RAF advertised another online tender for medical experts. By August 2020, the tender has still not been awarded.

In February, the Acting CEO of The RAF, Mr Collins Letsoalo, sent out communication that once the panel of attorney's contract ends, The RAF will no longer appoint a Panel of Attorneys to represent them. This exacerbated the already existing expert payment problems by panel attorneys and the national lockdown due to The COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 worsened the expert payment and operational problems within the RAF.

Actions taken by OTASA to aid with resolution of problems;

1. In June 2020, 3 Occupational Therapists were appointed on the Expert Representative Committee of 10, with the RAF. OTASA has since worked closely with the representatives ensuring that members concerns are well articulated with the RAF. The OT expert representative committee members also provided members with verbal feedback through a webinar as well as written feedback in the form of meeting minutes derived from meetings with the RAF.
2. Continuous building of relationships and working with other organisations such as SAMLA (The South African Medico-legal Association) and APRAV (The Association for Protection of Road Accident Victims), on areas of common interest, in order to contribute to medico-legal industry discussions and influence strategic actions, particularly around RAF work.
3. OTASA has established a task team to develop medico-legal guidelines in order to improve standard of practice in medico-legal work.
4. The document is expected to be completed within the year 2020. Industry related webinars have also been conducted in order to provide therapists with opportunity for continuous professional development.

● **Compensation Fund (CF)**

The CF introduced a new CompEasy system in August of 2019. Many system functionality issues prevented OT service providers registering, submitting claims and being paid, resulting in severe financial difficulties which over time, caused a concerning number of retrenchments. OTASA was actively engaged in the national concern raised on this matter and amongst other initiatives, participated in a TV debate and Parliamentary Portfolio Committee briefing. From October to March the only communication we were able to achieve, was through our lawyers. OTASA has circulated two surveys to understand if any progress has been made and we have made 3 attempts to assist our members to have their status on the CompEasy system checked. We were granted 2 meetings with the CF, in March and July to discuss the many concerns. The outcomes of these engagements were communicated in a written report and national zoom feedback session.

● **Insurance Regulator**

OTASA was invited by The Association for Savings and Investment South Africa (ASISI), the insurance regulator, to discuss what FCEs could and could not be done under the National Disaster Alert Level 3 regulations.

5.3 OT service users

Advocacy for occupational therapy service users has been ongoing throughout the year in collaboration with South African Disability Alliance (SADA). We have added our voice to many issues affected children and adults with disability in term of education and work opportunities and particularly during the Lockdown period in advocating for the way information about COVID-19 and the preventative measures were packaged, so that the information was accessible. We have added our voice to raise awareness of the mental health concerns and occupational needs of the elderly, COVID-19 exposed people in isolation facilities, and the effect of the alcohol ban on people with substance abuse problems and their need for extra assistance as well as gender-based violence. OTASA submitted an extensive report to the Department of health on the Level 4 Alert regulations to advocate for rehabilitation services to be allowed for CP children, Children with Autism, patients with traumatic injuries that would result in a disability, if left untreated and for patients with serious mental illnesses.

5.3.4 Position Papers

Position papers are critical advocacy tools either to define and describe the role of occupational therapy in a particular area of field do practice or to state the professions position about particular issues.

The Vocational Rehabilitation position paper was completed and published in the SAJOT earlier in the year.

The education Standing Committee is working on a position paper on education and the decolonization of the OT curricula which will delineate the principles for educational reform.

Two position papers are in process by specially appointed experts: Role of occupational therapy with pre-term children in NICUs and the wellness of occupational therapy work force.

The president of the Association has called for members with expertise to contribute to two position papers to pro-actively position the profession in two areas of national concern as articulated by President Ramaphosa: the role occupational therapist can play in the prevention and treatment of alcohol abuse and services for victims of gender based violence. These were consistent with the discussion that arose in the webinar on occupational justice and the call for occupational therapy to be re-imagined into emerging spaces.

5.4 OTASA Marketing and Advocacy initiatives

- OTASA's aim with regards to marketing and public relations in the year 2019 and 2020 was to create awareness and educate South Africans about the Occupational Therapy profession and the role that the profession plays in society. OTASA also sought to highlight how Occupational Therapy contributes or is positioned to adequately contribute to the resolution of societal ills through aligning practice strategies with the National Development Plan.

- Education and awareness of the Occupational Therapy profession was conducted through various platforms which included television, radio interviews, social media platforms, as well as through webinars hosted by OTASA throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Topics covered on national media platforms (Television and Radio)

- SABC News interview with Occupational Therapists to discuss problems with payout of medical practitioners by the compensation fund.



- SABC News interview with an OT student to unpack occupational deprivation during the national lockdown and recommended solutions.



- SABC News interview on Occupational Therapy, COVID-19 and rehabilitation.



- Thobela FM radio interview with an Occupational Therapist to discuss COVID-19 and people with disabilities



- OTASA social media platforms
 - The Social Media campaigns are designed to build the OTASA brand and create awareness of the work and activities carried out in the Occupational Therapy industry in South Africa.
 - The channels utilised include Facebook and Instagram. Time is spent creating relevant and conversational content that would appeal to the audience, add value and positively impact the OTASA brand. The content mix varies between education, brand availability and awareness.
 - Below are the followers on each of the platforms. Steady growth of follows was observed throughout the year 2020.

CHANNEL	February 2020	May 2020	August 2020
Facebook followers	4 818	5 567	5 836
Instagram followers	1 022	1 306	1 437

6. ENHANCE COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Despite considerable effort to try to modernize and improve our communication with members, this is still an area where there is member dissatisfaction. At Council 2019, it was agreed that a Communication policy be developed. This is still in process as the communication within the Association and to the members is multi-layered and transmission up and down the structures complex. To date most communication to members has been in a written format which has its limitations. The social media and especially the WhatsApp platforms are very popular and active nationally. The POPI Act has raised some concerns about the nature of information that is communicated there. The virtual communication platform has opened new opportunities. We have had a very successful feedback session to members about our engagement with the Compensation Fund. It has allowed members to raise questions and concerns. A similar session has been planned to engage with members working in the medico-legal

space. A webinar with members has also been planned for after the Council meeting, to update members of the strategic work OTASA is doing and to invite input and comment.

At the last Council meeting, funding for an integrated data management system was approved. A contract was negotiated, but later cancelled as the accommodation of the complexities of the three organizations into one system proved to be exceptionally problematic. The up grading of the website was linked to this initiative. Both the integrated management system and the website are a priority.

7. OPERATIONAL AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Prior to the 2019 Council meeting, OTASA had a Corporate Governance 'Bosbraad' with Council members and a number of invited guests which was facilitated by Craig Kensley Independent Business Development Expert. The purpose was for conversation between the groupings within the OT profession on key challenges, opportunities and way forward to operationalise the OTASA Strategic Plan using the Business Model Canvas process. Following the Council meeting the national EXCO set up a programme for Corporate Governance discussions starting with the OTASA partners (INSTOPP, SAISI and the National OT Forum) and then progressing to all the internal OTASA structures. The meeting with the partners was held in November to discuss areas of co-operation and areas of difference and was facilitated by Prof Alfred Ramukumba and assisted by Pieter Griessel, HR lawyer. A robust discussion with in the National EXCO occurred at the beginning of March. However, the meetings planned with the Standing committees, Branches and Special Interest Groups that was planned for April had to be cancelled due to the national Alert level 5 lockdown. These conversations will now take place in the context of the 2020 Council meeting.



In February INSTOPP notified OTASA that they intended to withdraw from the partnership around the OT Office in February 2021 and the existing partnership agreement with OTASA around membership. The OT Office was financed and managed according to an agreement between the three partners. The OT office is in the process of being dissolved, with the assistance of our Accountant as well as our lawyers.

This has had a major impact on the corporate governance, which has now centred on the nature of a future office of OTASA and areas of co-operation. A MOU between OTASA and SAISI is in draft form. but negotiations with the other partners are in progress.

An important development from this process has been the exploration of SAQA as a possible platform for a more structured approach to CPD and the offering of professional development courses that are more skill based and SAQA accredited. This initiative offers the profession many exciting opportunities. A project plan is being compiled and costed for presentation to Council.

This change in partnership arrangement also required OTASA to review the constitutionality of such partnerships and the organisation itself, as well as a range of other issues like the policy on intellectual property, confidentiality of meetings and documents and conflict of interest.

The POPI Act was enforced as from the 1st July 2020. While OTASA has been working towards POPI compliance over time, there are procedures that need to be put in place in the one-year period of grace.

8. STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

International Organizations

WHO: Prof Theresa Lorenzo attended the **WHO Rehab 2030 conference in July 2019** as a member of the Rehab Competences Working Group of WHO, nominated by OTASA. She has managed to get two OTTs invited to represent mid-level workers, as they had been trained as community rehabilitation facilitators in the 1990s.

WFOT: The 2020 August Council meeting was postponed due to the COVID -19 pandemic. OTASA has been involved in the nomination of the new WFOT executive. The following position papers were approved: Role of Professional Occupational Therapy Organisations in Monitoring Practice, Occupational Therapy and Human Rights (revised), Occupational Therapy in Mental Health, Occupational Therapy and Driving and Community Mobility and Occupational therapy in Obesity in Childhood and Adolescence. They also released a report on the Global Trends in Assistive Technology.

OTARG: Lebo Maseko is the delegate to OTARG and attended their Biennial meeting in Rwanda in 2019.

British and Canadian Occupational Therapy Associations: gathered advice and information on their experience of introduction of their National Health Insurance as well as billing codes.

National Organisations

The president represented members at stakeholder meeting of the HPCSA and Professional Board for Occupational Therapy, Medical Orthotics and Prosthetics and Art Therapy. We have engaged with the Board on a wide range of issues including the Scope, the Maintenance of Licence (MOL), specialist registers, hours of clinical work for final year occupational therapy students during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as a range of other ethical issues. The current Board has completed their term and OTASA nominated six occupational therapists for the new board, as well as recommended some community members to the Minister of Health. We thank the outgoing Board for their hard work.

The Inter-professional Indaba has met twice during the past year. Both meetings were dedicated to discussion around UHC preparedness and the NHI.

We have continued to contribute to the work of the SA Mental Health Alliance as well as learn from and advocate with SA Disability Alliance on the many issues facing people with disabilities across the life span.

9. STRENGTHEN OCCUPATIONALLY RELEVANT OCCUPATIONAL BASED PRACTICE

COVID-19 has given occupational therapy a window of opportunity to promote the importance of occupation in health and wellness. The Occupational Science Standing Committee has capitalized on this by a number of publications in the parliamentary news, as well as an OTSA discussion piece and webinar focusing on critical occupation-based issues. A Wits student also highlighted the importance of occupational engagement in a TV interview that made us proud. Students from each university competed on innovative social media clips on their activities of daily living during lockdown. These were fun, creative and a pleasant relief from the seriousness of the time.

10. ESTABLISH A PRIORITISED, CONTEXTUALLY RELEVANT RESEARCH AGENDA TO INFORM, SUPPORT AND LEGITIMISE PRACTICE AND SERVICE DELIVERY

From the many interactions that OTASA with national and provincial service planners and funders, in both the public and private sectors, it is becoming more evident that in order to equivocally secure our professional position we need robust clinical evidence in all fields of practice that is relevant to our context and service delivery complexities. While the evidence in the profession is growing, we lack critical evidence to support practice and resource allocation in many fields like mental health and particularly with specific interventions. While formal research has always considered to be the responsibility of the universities, research is directed mainly for degree purposes which does not always meet professional needs. As all clinical occupational therapists are accountable to their

patients/clients for the efficacy of occupational therapy services they offer, we need to explore how we can use this information for our professional advantage.

The Research Standing Committee had been tasked with planning a national strategic workshop which was to have coincided with the 2020 Congress in George. As COVID-19 forced the postponement of the Congress this critical workshop did not take place. The Standing committee has sent out a research priority survey to collect some information a national debate is needed to chart the way forward.

11. CELEBRATING 75 YEARS



- OTASA has celebrated 75 years through various means in the year 2020. These include;
 - Design and the use of an official 75th year OTASA logo on all communication platforms. (email signatures, flyers, letterhead. Social media platforms).
 - Each month, interesting facts about OTASA are shared on social media platforms to celebrate 75 years of OTASA.

- OT Week celebrations of OTASA 75th year;
 - The COVID-19 pandemic has brought upon challenges with OTASA and Occupational Therapists hosting face to face events for the celebration of OTASA's 75th year. This led to the decision for virtual celebrations and activities during OT Week from Monday 14th September to Friday 18th September 2020.
 - Celebrations will include an EXCO celebratory webinar, student videos, inspirational OT stories from branches, as well as a social media campaign and exciting competitions.

- OT Week Campaign name
 - 75 years of OTASA Excellence
 - Resilience through adversity

- By lines
 - Re-imagine Doing (World OT Day theme)
 - OTASA Values
Our values are captured in the following statement- **“DOING IT”**

VALUES	WE:
D= Diversity	are connected in diversity
O= Occupation-based	rooted in occupation
I = Inclusive	stand together
N= Networking	network to recognize where change is needed
G = Grounded	are grounded in South African identity
I = Innovative	find new solutions
T = Transformative	Are proactively moving with the times

12. OTASA AWARDS

12.1 Vona du Toit Memorial Lecture 2020

There were two excellent nominations for this prestigious award: Lana van Niekerk and Lee Randall. The nominations were critiqued by a specially selected approval committee and the lecture was awarded to Lana van Niekerk by a Council vote. This lecture which would have taken place at the 2020 Congress and will now be presented in 2020 at the Congress.

12.2 2019-2020 OT week prizes

These prizes will be awarded at the National AGM.

- Edward Luruli Award for Advocacy: **Professor Rosemary B Crouch**
- OTASA Student Award for Excellence in Advocacy: **University of Pretoria**
- Certificate of Excellence in Innovative practice: **Not awarded.**
- Certificate of Excellence in Inter-Professional Collaboration: **Thelle Mogoerane Regional Hospital, OT Department; Witbank Hospital, OT Department**
- Certificate of Excellence in Social Media Presence: **Richter Occupational Therapy Inc.**

12.3 2019 Marie du Toit research prize

This prize, awarded by the Marie and Vona du Toit Foundation, is for the student research project adjudged to be the best research project nationally. The 2019 awarding is still in process.

12.4 2019/2020 Ruth Watson Research Grant

This research prize in memory of Ruth Watson, is to promote research by occupational therapy clinicians. There were two nominees which will be approved at this year's Council.

12.5 2020 Albie Sachs Award

This prestigious award which is sponsored by Life is made to an Occupational Therapist/Occupational Therapy Technician/Assistant who has distinguished themselves through professional excellence and dedication on serving people with disabilities.

We have received three nominations for this award: Loleta Krige, Ulla Worthmann and Corrienne van Velze. The winner will be ratified at the 2020 Council meeting and the prize will be awarded at the AGM.

12.6 Fatima Hendricks Leadership Award

Approved in 2019 and will be awarded during the next financial year.

12.7 Honorary Certificate of Merit

This is awarded to Professor Rosemary B Crouch.

12.8 OTASA Student research prizes

OTASA provides funds for the top research project at each university. These are the 2019 top projects

UNIVERSITY	TITLE	STUDENTS	SUPERVISOR
UWC	Families' perceptions on transmission of entrepreneurship knowledge and skills as part of occupational legacy	Nadia Christiansen Stephanie Kriel Chanté Marone Johané Mason Sihlengiwe Zwane	Dr Thuli Mthembu
UCT	Poverty-Disability Dynamics-An Enquiry into the experiences of families with children with disabilities based on Disability Stoplight	Julie Jones Jodine Klaase Kamogelo Makhele Sanet Tintinger Sphumelele Zondi	Prof EM Duncan, Hanske Flieringa and Adele Ebrahim
US	Primary to secondary transition of learner with traumatic brain injuries in the Cape Metropolitan area: A learner perspective	Kauthar Ally Salmah Khan Asmaa Begum Mustapha Marizaan moolman Misqah Parker	Dr lee Ann Jacobs- Nzuzi Khuabi
WITS			
UF			
UP	Did not apply for the funding		
SMU			
UKZN	Did not apply for the funding		

13. OTASA OFFICE BEARERS

	2019	2020
National Executive		
President	Pat de Witt	Pat de Witt
COO	Elvin Williams	vacant
Treasurer	Riette Smit	Riette Smit
Vice President: Practice Development	Elize Janse van Rensburg	Elvin Williams
Vice president: Marketing, Advocacy and PR	Haneke Jonas	Lesego Mashishi
Vice President: People Development	Lebogang Maseko	Lebogang Maseko
Partners: INSTOPP SAISI National OT forum	Herculene van Staden Marie Greyling Aluwani Manenzhe	Haneke Jonas Marie Greyling Aluwani Manenzhe
Standing Committee Chairpersons		
Ethics	Jo- Celene de Jongh	Jo- Celene de Jongh
CPD	Dorothy Russel	Dorothy Russel
Publication: SAJOT Focus	Helen Buchanan Blanche Pretorius Sylvia Birkhead	Helen Buchan Blanche Pretorius Sylvia Birkhead
Coding: COID RAF	Haley Noval	Hayley Noval Sancha Elliot Righela
Occupational Science	Lizahn Cloete	Lizahn Cloete
Research	Shaheed Soeker	Shaheed Soeker
Education	Amshuda Sondag	Amshuda Sondag
OTASA-S	Ashleigh Richardson	Ashleigh Richardson
Task Teams Chairpersons		
OTT	Carmenita Dampies	
Branch Chairpersons		
E Cape	Chanette van der Merwe	Marlize Watermeyer
S Cape	Lee Ann Arendse	Lee Ann Arendse
W Cape	Rogini Pillay	Rogini Pillay
KZN	Gina Rencken	Gina Rencken
Limpopo	Jean Trusler	Jean Trusler
Mpumalanga	Corlien Mc Donald	Corlien Mc Donald
S Gauteng	Luther Monareng Elvreen Visser	Reesa Essop Bhavna Bahgoo
N Gauteng	Ina Grobler	Ina Grobler
North West	Anneri Myburgh	Anneri Myburgh
Free State /N Cape	Melissa Meyer	Ronel Weyers
Other		
OTASA Historian	Rosemary Crouch	Vacant
WFOT Delegate	Pat de Witt	Pat de Witt
WFOT Alternate Delegate	Helen Buchan	Helen Buchan

OTARG Delegate	Lebogang Maseko	Lebogang Maseko
OT Office Staff		
Financial Coordinator	Aletta Kietzmann	
Office Coordinator	El-lerisa Mahomed	
Cleaner/Additional Administration	Reginah Maremeni	

14. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

OTASA would like to acknowledge Elsabe Klink and Associates, Pietter Griessel Labour Law Consultancy, Blank Page Consulting and Johan de Klerk of Good Letter Best for their continued support in the work that the Executive performs.

CELEBRATING
75
YEARS



012 362 5457



otoffice@uitweb.co.za



www.otasa.org.za

The Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa 2020 ©

(This work is copyright. You may download, display, print and reproduce this material in unaltered form only (retaining this notice) for your personal, non-commercial use or use within your organisation. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act, 1978, all other rights are reserved. Requests for further authorisation should be directed to The President via email at president@otasa.org.za