

From the Society's Desk – November 2015

Dear members of the Society,

This is, in effect, the first issue of the Journal for the new Hebrew calendar year. I will take advantage of this platform to summarize the Society's activities last year and to briefly describe our plans for the upcoming year. This is also the perfect opportunity to wish you and your families a healthy, successful and productive new year.

So, what did we accomplish last year?

First of all, the new Society website was launched. It is an accessible site designed for occupational therapists and students. Not only does it supply information about our profession and the Society, but also reports on news, events and job vacancies and provides access to the contents of IJOT, the Israeli Journal of Occupational Therapy. Moreover, the Society's Facebook page has also been renovated and we invite you to take advantage of the page to inform and be informed. This year, we were pleased by the publicity generated regarding our profession through various media outlets, thus increasing the general public's awareness of the important and significant work we do. In addition, our professional journal, IJOT, continues to represent a platform for the dissemination of the impressive research and clinical practice activities achieved by occupational therapy professionals.



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This year, the journal published a double issue devoted to occupational therapy in the school system under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. You can read the articles on the Society's website (complete articles from 2010 onwards) or on the JSTOR digital library website (complete articles published prior to 2009).

The Society's committee membership has increased, currently comprising 25 members. They include occupational therapy academicians and clinicians, as well as representatives of students from most of the academic institutions. The 21st annual conference of The Society, in collaboration with Hebrew University and the Ministry of Health was extended to two fully-packed days replete with engaging professional and social experiences.

Recently, the renewed IJOT website has introduced a database listing available professional OT advisors who are

instructors in various specialty areas from different areas in the country. The Society is also striving to create training groups, upon request from the field. This year the licensing exam preparation simulator has also been initiated for use by students. The simulator has been upgraded along with an expanded number of questions. We are continuing our efforts to improve the simulator for the coming years.

An important part of the work done by the Society's committee is the planning and implementation of unique courses and seminars on areas of interest to the profession. This year, for the first time in Israel, a course focusing on Parkinson's disease was prepared for occupational therapists, organized by the Society in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and other organizations. The course was hosted by the Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center and the Meir Medical Center and was conducted by leading occupational therapists in the field. This groundbreaking course proved to be very successful.

Another important project of the Society is to update the Israeli version of the OTPF ("MATAM"). An engaging roundtable session was conducted during this year's annual Society conference, providing an opportunity for those attending to be exposed to some of the activity underway. Finally, the new professional ethical code has been approved and can be found on the Society's website. The code was the subject of the annual award lecture presented during the conference this year.

What happenings await us in the coming year?

The 2015 World Occupational Therapy Day celebrated on October 27th (we posted events and news on the Society's website and Facebook page). Moreover, a special issue of the journal is being planned that will focus on the subject of 'Multiculturalism - Occupational therapy among diverse groups in Israel'.

This year we are also initiating an event for occupational therapy students from the various OT university programs, as well as seminars and courses on various subjects relevant to the OT community, such as "A taste of intervention approaches for rehabilitation". In addition to all of the above, we are continuing to plan for programs both to support the personal professional development of all of our members as well as promote a greater awareness of the OT profession to the general public.

Once again, best wishes for a good new year to all!

Yours,

Dr. Adi Stern

Chairman of the Israeli Society of
Occupational Therapy