Occupational Therapy – Europe

Report from the Organisational Development Group (ODWG).

Members of the ODWG:
Mette Kolsrud (vice president COTEC), Anne Lawson-Porter (president ENOTHE), Stephanie Saenger (COTEC-ENOTHE link), Anu Söderström (president COTEC).

ENOTHE members will remember voting at last year’s General Assembly for the Board to explore closer collaboration with COTEC to support the need for a stronger and consistent OT voice in Europe. Three working groups have been established as a result of your support for closer collaboration. These are the ODWG, Expert Groups working group and The Common Portal working group.

This report is specific to the ODWG.

In the last twelve months the ODWG has held two face to face meetings which coincided with meetings of the COTEC Executive (which saved on costs) and communication otherwise has been via e mail and SKYPE. What follow is a brief outline of the thinking so far in the process and a series of issues which yet need to be considered. Your comments about the details are most welcome as we recognise that we are on a journey where details and processes can change to reflect the feedback that we receive from members.

Our Aims

- Outline a model of a future organisation based on the collaboration between COTEC and ENOTHE (including ECOTROS)
- Structure the internal and external collaboration highlighting opportunities and obstacles related to mutual and individual interactions
- To finalise prior proposals and outlines for joint European congresses

Clarity of purpose.

- To harmonise the different OT interests into a single European OT organisation.
- Act politically by addressing and engaging with political priorities in Europe.
- Ensure that existing members of COTEC, ENOTHE and ECOTROS see the benefits to themselves and service users of this newly defined organisation, so that they continue to be members.
- Assert that the unique contribution of occupational therapy in addressing health, social and community issues is through the medium of occupation and activities.

In order to achieve the above the ODWG felt that an organisation with credibility and strength in Europe was needed. Credibility could be achieved by this European OT organisation by:
• Being politically aware of the issues impacting on the lives of citizens and develop strategies for OT solutions based on evidence / expertise from practice, education and research.
• Being visible, engaged and continuously present in the European context.
• Articulating the contribution of occupational therapy in providing cost effective strategies / alternative strategies that address the occupational needs of individuals and communities, which sustain health and well-being and which are meaningful to the recipients.
• Making sure that our members support the delivery of what we say we can deliver.

Below are some of our thoughts about a potential structure and, of course, further issues which still need more thinking about. Your thoughts about the points that we have raised and any others that you have concerns about would be most welcome.
General Assembly

OT Europe

Practice (COTEC)   Education (ENOTHE)   Research (ECOTROS)

A number of Expert groups formed to address specific and strategic topics identified by OTEu

Supported by a number of groups with special interests e.g. ageing, mental health, TUNING, PBL
Qualitative / Quantitative research.

Some thoughts......

- The General Assembly is made up of elected representatives from each of the practice, education and research sections (how many, how elected to be decided). Its role will be to vote on strategic proposals put to it by the OT Europe Board.
- OT Europe Board will be made up of an appointed ‘Director’ and two elected representatives from each of the practice, education and research sections. Its role will be to set the strategic direction of OT Europe.
- The Expert Groups will be small groups of expert OTs from each of the three sections brought together for a specific, time limited task, usually in response to a European consultation or something similar. (The Expert Groups Working Group will decide the detail of this, but the ODWG thought that there was some work to do on defining what is meant by an expert)
- The Groups with special interests will be self-supporting but with OT Eu providing a vehicle for networking through website, discussion forums, etc. It is anticipated that it will be these groups from which Experts will be drawn from time to time.
It was recognised that in order for the above model to work well a strong operational organisation would be needed. The ODWG therefore gave some thought to what might be required:

- An appointed Director providing leadership, supported by a secretariat to provide one point of contact and an efficient and effective administrative system.
- An occupational therapy political ‘manifesto” approved by the members
- An effective communication strategy that takes account of:
  - external communication with policy makers, other interprofessional / interagency disciplines (e.g. insurance companies) and user organisations
  - internal communication with individual members and National Associations
- A strong member focus, as well as a political focus, recognising that members and institutions pay a membership fee and will wish to see some benefit for their financial contribution. What do they get out of OTEu? Why would they want to belong? At a time when organisations and institutions finances are stretched these are likely to be very significant questions that would need to have a convincing answer.
- Sufficient finances to support the appointment of a Director and secretariat, develop and manage a web site, undertake administrative tasks, manage membership issues, develop member products and pump prime potential projects. This brought into question what the running costs might be and therefore what the membership fees might need to be, as this would be the main source of income. Alternative sources of income would need to be identified.
- Access to people with journalistic and lobbying skills and experience in social sciences and analysis may also be needed to support Expert Groups and OT EU.
- At the present time ECOTROS is a project group of ENOTHE, so how ECOTROS can be best represented needs to be explored. A meeting has been planned with representatives of ECOTROS to discuss this.

This list is not exhaustive but will provide the basis for further discussion as the proposal moves forward and pending agreement by the ENOTHE and COTEC membership.
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<tr>
<th>Time line</th>
<th>Jan 11</th>
<th>March 11</th>
<th>July 11</th>
<th>October 11</th>
<th>November 11</th>
<th>December 11</th>
<th>Jan/feb 12</th>
<th>May 12</th>
<th>October 12</th>
<th>March 13</th>
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<td><strong>Initiate three working Groups together with ENOTHE</strong></td>
<td><strong>Council meeting</strong></td>
<td>Discuss the possible development of COTEC according to strategic plan ENOTHE Board members to be kept fully informed of developments at their monthly SKYPE meetings</td>
<td>2nd meeting of the Organisation development group where a proposed structure, political platform and process chart will be agreed.</td>
<td><strong>Council meeting:</strong></td>
<td>1. ENOTHE Board to discuss the outcomes of the working groups and formulate a proposal for the GA 2. ENOTHE GA Proposal to be put to the GA re a merged organisation and the required changes to the constitution of ENOTHE</td>
<td>1. NA and Presidents will be informed about the proposal of a new structure 2. Draft of new organisational plan sent to NA 3. Proposed structure to be placed on both organisations web sites for information</td>
<td>1. Draft of political program sent to the NAs. 2. Revision of the standard orders and constitutions will be sent to the NAs These will be discusses on the presidential meeting and council meeting. 3. Joint meeting with COTEC and ENOTHE Boards to agree the final draft of the new structure and to prepare the statements for the Congress in May 2012</td>
<td><strong>Precedential meeting in Stockholm</strong></td>
<td>Present and discuss the new structure of COTEC, the merging with ENOTHE and the changes in the standard order and constitution <strong>Council meeting</strong></td>
<td>Decide on the new structure, merging process and changes in the constitution and standing orders ENOTHE members will also need to be informed in some way at the Congress</td>
<td><strong>Council meeting</strong></td>
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Joint Congress 2016

Following on from the statement posted on both COTEC and ENOTHE web sites in February, it was agreed that a formal bid process to host the first joint congress be prepared. Following discussion of the key points, it was agreed to provide a first draft of guidance for potential hosts and the criteria by which the bids would be judged. It was expected that bids should be received by the middle of Sept 2011, judging of the initial bids being undertaken by the ODWG, so that a proposal and recommendations can be put to both organisations and voted on by the General Assembly of ENOTHE and the Council of COTEC in the autumn of 2011. This work is ongoing and at this point the ODWG has received two bids for consideration.

Anne Lawson-Porter and Stephanie Saenger, 22nd September 2011

Expert Working Group and the Portal working group reports follows.

Summary of Activity for the COTEC/ENOTHE Working Group ‘Expert Working Group’ - Period June – September 2011

Members of the group
Nils Erik Ness (Chair), Maria Daniela Farrugia, Ines Viana Moldes, Sandra M. Rowan (Notetaker)
The group was tasked to submit a proposal which outlines a model for establishing expert groups based on collaboration between COTEC, ENOTHE and ECOTROS.

Progress The group was established in June 2011 and to date has met twice via Skype. They have started work on the criteria for expert groups, the definition of ‘expert’, and the process required to establish expert groups. They have begun the task of identifying the key strategic areas of importance to occupational therapists based on European and WHO strategy documents in the first instance. These strategic areas will be suggested as priorities for the first expert groups. They have begun to outline a communications strategy which will be better articulated when the model for the groups has been further developed.
It is anticipated that the work will be completed by the end of December 2011 and submitted to the COTEC/ENOTHE boards.

Sandra M. Rowan (Notetaker) September 2011
Summary of Activity for the COTEC/ENOTHE the Portal working group

www.occupationaltherapy.eu

"The Door"

(Kick off - 1st of Feb. 2011)

In order to strengthen influential possibilities the access to European Occupational Therapy (professional associations, higher education and research) needs to be clear, easy and sustainable. Therefore a group of 3 persons will be responsible for describing and creating the site map for a joint web site portal – a joint front door.

The portal should as a minimum cover joint statements and promotional materials about occupational therapy in Europe and link to the individual COTEC, ENOTHE and ECOTROS website interactively.

Deadline for description of aim, goal and content of “The Door” and a budget for building up and launching “The Door” are ultimo 2011.

Workgroup members: Brian Ellingham, Sasa Radic, Erwin Vanroye (minutes).

Workgroup meetings: Skype: 08.03.11, 22.03.11, 12.04.11, 09.05.11. Live meeting at Zagreb: 10-12.06.11

Updated report 18.09.11:

- COTEC and ENOTHE agreed on domain name www.occupationaltherapy.eu: officially registered via “one.com” webhosting company on 6th June 2011 by ENOTHE office.

- Workgroup created JOOMLA environment to build website in:
  - = free (world wide open source community)
  - = easy website building
  - = user friendly content management system
  - = multi-user access with different levels (from system admin <<>>> user groups)
• Actions undertaken:
  o Link domain host one.com to JOOMLA (CMS)
  o Proposal site-map idea + content (see below page 3)
  ● Although there is no ECOTROS representative in the working group, ECOTROS was informed and agreed on the idea for a joint portal website and the working methods. Fenna Van Nes will be the contact person.

• To do:
  o Create website template, uniform structure, background etc.
  o We need professional pictures for “rolling banner” at home-page, illustrating Occupational therapy (vivid, edgy, active, uniform format + style)
  o 

• To discuss with COTEC and ENOTHE board:
  o Website maintenance? Editing board (newsfeed) ENOTHE-COTEC-ECOTROS?
  o Proposal: Content competition: We can ask members to define OT in 500 words or less (for the about OT-webpage) or send in some good pictures.
Workgroup Joint portal website project COTEC-ENOTHE-ECOTROS: Brian Ellingham, Sasa Radic, Erwin Vanroye