

# Iceland

In October 2003, an Icelandic occupational therapist, Elin Ebba Asmundsdottir was awarded the Mental Health Promotion Gold Star at a ceremony on the occasion of World Mental Health Day for her outstanding work in a 3 year long national campaign called “mental health fitness”. Elin Ebba collected a variety of practical ideas from occupational therapy and put them into user-friendly formats which were publicized and distributed to the public.

The editor of an Icelandic newspaper, who presented her with the award, gave an inspiring speech about Elin Ebba's contributions and the whole OT profession! He said he felt privileged to know a number of strong women who are members of a very important profession, a profession which works with people in a totally different way from other health professions, a profession which has a different vision, a profession which truly knows what is important to clients.

Elin Ebba was further honored by the Icelandic Occupational Therapy Association which plans to take advantage of her celebrity as a marketing tool. She writes frequently in daily newspapers and websites and has often been interviewed on radio and TV. She is the chief OT in the psychiatric division of the national hospital in Iceland as well as a teacher at our school of occupational therapy. Elin Ebba has done research in recent years which focuses on the views of consumers of mental health services. She has become a spokesperson and advocate on their behalf, campaigning for major reform in mental health services based on clients' priorities.

Elin Ebba's research and work in mental health promotion not only in the community but on a nationwide basis is making a difference in Icelandic society. It is raising public awareness of mental health issues and the importance of client centered practice. The publicity about her pioneering work is helping the whole profession. She is known as an entertaining speaker who does not take herself too seriously and blends knowledge and humor together in a very effective way. The Icelandic Occupational Therapy Association therefore would like to share this resource person with OTs in other countries. Elin Ebba can be contacted at [ebba@landspitali.is](mailto:ebba@landspitali.is)

# India

The 41st Annual National Conference of All India Occupational Therapists Association

**Theme: Reaching to the Unreached - An Occupational Therapy Perspective.**

**Dates: 20, 21 & 22 March 2004.**

**Venue: NCUI Auditorium, 3 Siri Institutional Area, August Kranti Marg, New Delhi 110016.**

**Language: English**

- ❑ Original Scientific papers (individual and collaborative) from WFOT member countries are welcome for presentation.
- ❑ A generalized presentation should be preferably avoided.
- ❑ Registration/ Reply/Abstract form, conference information and details of the Scientific Program can be down loaded from AIOTA Website : [www.aiota.org](http://www.aiota.org)

**Registration fee for Overseas Delegates:**

Before 15th Jan US \$ 125.00 \ Before 25th Feb US \$ 150.00 \ Spot 175.00

(Kept minimal to promote international participation)

**Per conference CME (20th March 2004): No additional payment.**

CME 1: Learning Disability: Current Trends

**Resource person: Dr. Rajeev Nandi, New Delhi.**

CME 2: Haemophilia Rehabilitation

**Resource person: Dr. Mrs. Jaya S. Kale, Mumbai**

**Organizing Secretary: Dr. R.K.Sharma (New Delhi)**

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**Chairperson**

**Scientific Program Committee : Dr. Mrs. Jyothika Bijlani, (Mumbai)**

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# Mauritius

## OT PROGRAMME IN MAURITIUS

At long last Mauritius has started an OT programme. The University of Mauritius along with the Ministry of Health & Quality of Life started an Occupational Therapy Programme on the 15 August 2003. It is offering a 4 years Diploma/BSc (Hons) to Mauritians as well as to overseas students. At present 14 students are following the course but the aim is to get 20 students in the next group. The curriculum was prepared by Mrs Imme Shipham, Head of the Occupational Therapy School from the University of Pretoria in South Africa and it has been set taking into consideration the minimum standard of WFOT.

Already the Programme in Occupational Therapy is being talked about. On the occasion of the World Mental Health Day celebrated at the University of Mauritius on the 10 October 2003, two Students in Occupational Therapy, Mr Vicky Damree and Miss Patricia Felicite, who is from Rodrigues Island, won second prize in their presentation of Mental Health in Mauritius. It was a great day for Occupational Therapy. The profession is on its way for many years to come.

We thank the WFOT for their support and particularly Mrs Caroline Webster and Mrs Rosemary Crouch who left no stone unturned for the success of this endeavour. We are grateful to the Minister of Health & Quality of Life in Mauritius and all his team to whom the profession owes this land mark.

# Sweden

At present the FSA is working on a quality tool to be used in order to get to know how we live up to the quality indicators given for good quality education according to the FSA Quality Policy for clinically applied education.

As we mentioned in an earlier Newsletter we have produced a document called 'Descriptions of Professional Requirements for Occupational Therapists' approved by the National Board of Health and Welfare. These professional requirements will be presented in English on our web site [www.fsa.akademikerhuset.se](http://www.fsa.akademikerhuset.se) at the beginning of 2004.

The FSA has now formally started work to prolong the OT education to four years, an issue that has been discussed in the Association for the last ten years.

At the moment we have an ongoing study in the FSA regarding the expectations of the patient/client when meeting the occupational therapist. The result will hopefully be presented before the coming summer.

The FSA recently received a report from a project concerning the development and distribution of knowledge for OTs in today's and tomorrow's primary care. The report is an empirical material for continued reviewing and will be of great importance in various education policy activities.

## United Kingdom

The British Association and College of Occupational Therapists has welcomed a new President, Baroness Rosalie Wilkins. Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal GCVO, Patron of the College, presented Baroness Wilkins with her chain of office on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2003. Baroness Wilkins was made a life peer in the House of Lords in 1999 after a career pioneering television programming for people with disabilities. As a student she sustained a spinal injury herself and is a wheelchair user with a very personal as well as professional understanding of the work of occupational therapists. Baroness Brenda Dean of Thornton-le-Fylde was thanked for her 8 years of service to the college as its past President.

2004 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Dr. Elizabeth Casson OBE MD DPM. Dr Casson, a social housing manager with Octavia Hill in the south London of the early 1900s, went on to qualify as a doctor, specialised in psychological medicine after the first world war and opened the first school of occupational therapy in Dorset House in Bristol in 1930. Dr Casson was made one of the first WFOT Honorary Fellows in 1952 shortly before her death in 1954, in recognition of her contribution to the profession. The Princess Royal launched a year of events in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2004. Wisbech is the location of the Octavia Hill Birthplace Museum and therefore a very appropriate location to start the year.

The College's 2004 annual conference 'Occupation Matters' will be held in Harrogate, Yorkshire 8-11<sup>th</sup> June. The Elizabeth Casson Memorial Lecture will be a special high spot this anniversary year.

For further information on these items please visit

[www.cot.org.uk](http://www.cot.org.uk)

[www.hamptonmedical.com](http://www.hamptonmedical.com) (Conference 2004)

[www.octaviahillmuseum.org](http://www.octaviahillmuseum.org)