

Editorial comment

As we reach the end of yet another year, it is good to reflect on the last twelve months of the South African Journal of Occupational Therapy (SAJOT) and to do some planning for the period ahead. In 2009 the SAJOT will have published a total of fifteen articles covering a wide variety of subjects from an analysis of the attitude of the occupational therapists at the University of the Free State towards research and publication to looking at whether visual motor integration affects hand writing ability.

This edition also contains a variety of articles such as the Vona Du Toit memorial lecture delivered by Kitty Uys this year. The second article is an account of a project involving children with Foetal Alcohol Syndrome attending school in a rural area of the Cape, and the third focuses on a subject which is very different and looks at "hedging" in occupational therapy research writing. Hedging "refers to a writer's expressing claims with appropriate levels of tentativeness, or degrees of certainty." The article offers an analysis of students and occupational therapists' research writing which should prove useful to those of you publishing in scientific journals.

The fourth article looks at whether tailoring occupational therapy to the Model of Creative Ability (MCA) for people with diabetes resulting in problems of the feet, achieves better treatment outcomes. What is notable is that the results of treating the group of patients tailored to the level of motivation showed a trend towards more positive outcomes than a group whose treatment was not adapted. This article should contribute to the knowledge and information on the usefulness of the MCA across a variety of conditions. The MCA, a South African model formulated by Vona Du Toit some 35 years ago, was used almost exclusively in SA to structure treatment until an English occupational therapist – Wendy Sherwood became interested in it and initiated the use of the model outside of SA including organising the first "National Model of Creative Ability Occupational Therapy conference" in London. In her article in the August 2009 edition of Focus, Wendy Sherwood asks "Who, or which group of people, have responsibility for the MoCA: its development, utility across cultures, publication of literature in other languages, the direction, collation and use of research in order to update the MoCA and improve its position as a model?" These are extremely pertinent questions as there is a paucity of research

and publication about the model. Therapists, such as Wendy who put in the extra effort needed to learn about and implement the MCA in practice are to be congratulated.

Surely the South Africans, who have been successfully using this model to focus the treatment process and improve outcomes, should be making a major contribution to its development. If we do not publish the research carried out on the MCA done in this country, we will lose the opportunity to direct the path that the MCA should take. We should take note of the Sepedi proverb **Ge o ka bona pholo wa re tuu! wa morago o tla re: "Pholo ya ka!"** "If you hesitate to seize an opportunity, someone else will take advantage of it" quoted by Kitty Uys in the Vona Du Toit memorial lecture (pg 7 of this Journal).

The Editorial in the second Journal of this year i.e. Vol. 39 no 2, debated the merits of specialisation in occupational therapy. This, as was intended, sparked debate within the profession, resulting in a letter to the editor which is published in this volume together with a return comment from the author of the editorial. It is particularly gratifying that a member of the profession responded to the editorial and the Journal Committee would like to encourage more debate of this nature in the future.

As part of the planning for the year ahead the purpose of the SAJOT and whether it is fulfilling that purpose should be considered. The purpose is to spread information about the character of Occupational Therapy in Africa and the very unique research that has been undertaken to develop and evaluate contextually relevant practice. During the course of 2010 we will need to ask you, the readers whether we are achieving that goal and whether the publication is adding value to your practice as occupational therapists. We will also need to obtain an outside opinion regarding the Journal's quality. This is important for developing a publication that is not only relevant to the South African OT community but that also offers value to our colleagues outside the country.

The Committee takes this opportunity to wish all its readers a happy and productive 2010. □

ME Concha
Editor SAJOT

