

# Editorial comment

It is with great sadness that the Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa learned of the death of Professor Phillip Tobias, Emeritus Professor at the University of the Witwatersrand. Professor Tobias, a world renowned palaeoanthropologist and anatomist, will be remembered by many occupational therapists who trained at the University of the Witwatersrand for the way in which he brought the second year subject of anatomy to life. Who will forget Professor Tobias jumping on to the desk at the front of the Hunterian lecture theatre in the old Medical School in Hillbrow, Johannesburg and showing the class how ancient man moved? Who will forget the living demonstrations of muscles at work when Reg Parks rippled his muscles for all to identify as well as the ballerinas demonstrating the wonders of the human body and the movements that it is capable of. Prof Tobias was the Director of the Sterkfontein Palaeoanthropology Research unit for many years and contributed to the Sterkfontein site's development as the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage site. He was a gentle caring person who never forgot the name of any of his students.

It is not only those of us who were students at the University of the Witwatersrand who will remember him but also the South African occupational therapists at large who will remember the assistance and mentoring provided by Professor Tobias in the dark days of apartheid for Professor Tobias was a well known anti apartheid activist and a member of the Association's Advisory Board. Prof Tobias will be fondly remembered by all who came into contact with him.

In this Journal we have published a "Letter to the Editor"<sup>1</sup>. It is satisfying to know that some of the readers take up issues that are mentioned in the South African Journal of Occupational Therapy (SAJOT) and I hope that this is the beginning of discussions in SAJOT around important issues affecting Occupational Therapy in South Africa.

The first article<sup>2</sup> in this edition provides the results of the research into the relationship between developmental dyspraxia and sensory responsivity. The first part of the research was published in SAJOT in volume 40(3)<sup>3</sup>. This second part focuses attention on the importance of clinical analysis of test results in the diagnostic process and provides interesting information for those occupational therapists using sensory integration techniques in therapy.

The second article<sup>4</sup> is the continuation of the series of three reporting on a study to develop an outcome measure for mental health treatment settings. In this instance the users of mental health services were interviewed to determine their needs and expectations of the occupational therapy service. The results were

compared to the domains identified by the therapists and described previously<sup>5</sup>. It is reassuring to note that domains identified by the occupational therapists who were linked to service delivery were congruent with the needs and wants of the patients.

The article entitled "Assessment of record keeping at schools for learners with special needs in the Western Cape"<sup>7</sup> discusses the status of occupational therapy record keeping at these schools. The importance of accurate records of occupational therapy intervention cannot be over emphasised. It appears from this research that the keeping of records by occupational therapists is somewhat inadequate. The authors of this paper have provided guidelines in the form of a check list to assist therapists to do this important job. It seems that this is an aspect of the job of occupational therapists that should be given more attention in training.

The fourth article<sup>7</sup> takes a look at the scores obtained by children completing the Developmental Test of Visual Perception, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition and the visual closure sub-test in particular as clinical experience showed that children often obtained a below average score on this particular sub-test within the DTVP. This was indeed proved to be the case and indicates the need for South African therapists to interpret the results of the visual closure sub-test with caution.

## References

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3. Karin Buitendag, M.C. Aronstam, The Relationship between Developmental Dyspraxia and Sensory Responsivity in children aged four years through eight years Part I. *SAJOT*, 2010, 40 (3): 16-20.
4. D Casteleijn, M Graham, Incorporating a client-centered approach in the development of occupational therapy outcome domains for mental health care settings in South Africa, *SAJOT*, 2012; 42 (2):8.
5. D Casteleijn, M Graham, Domains for occupational therapy outcomes in mental health practice. *SAJOT*, 2012; 42 (1): 26 – 34.
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