

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT & PHYSIOTHERAPIST ASSISTANT EDUCATION ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Update: June 2015

The Occupational Therapist Assistant and Physiotherapist Assistant Education Accreditation Program (OTA & PTA EAP) operates in collaboration with the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) and Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC) as the accrediting agency for occupational therapist assistant and physiotherapist assistant education programs in Canada. Consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders, including education programs who are recipients of the accreditation program, are embraced as two [operational principles](#) enacted by the program.

As of May 2015, the OTA & PTA EAP included 32 affiliated programs, 12 of which were accredited, and 20 with candidacy status. (BC=4, AB=4, ON=20, NS=3, NL=1). 21 were publicly funded and 11 were privately funded; 29 were English and 3 were French.

Here are the highlights of the work completed since the last update in November 2014:

Newly Accredited Program

Two programs were accredited in the spring of 2015. Congratulations to the Occupational/Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Medicine Hat College and the Occupational Therapy/ Physiotherapy Assistant Program at Nova Scotia Community College – Cumberland Campus!

Programs with Candidacy Status

One program was awarded candidacy status in the spring of 2015. Congratulations to the Occupational Therapist Assistant/ Physiotherapist Assistant Program at St Clair College!

Please see the complete list of
affiliated programs on our website:

[English](#)
[French](#)

Impact of Accreditation

Since the inception of the OTA & PTA EAP, there have been some significant shifts in the OTA/PTA practice environment;

- Both the Vancouver Health Authority and the Nova Scotia Health Authority offer fieldwork placements only to OTA/PTA students from programs affiliated with the OTA & PTA EAP.
- The Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA) and the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) have established criteria for membership which include eligibility for membership as a graduate of a program with accreditation status (or which is awarded accreditation status within three years of graduation). Both also offer free membership for OTA/PTA students in programs with accreditation or candidacy status.
- As of 2011, the Board of Directors of CPA includes one member who is a PTA.

- CPA in 2011 and CAOT in 2015 adopted the terms Physiotherapist Assistant (PTA) and Occupational Therapist Assistant (OTA) respectively to replace the title “support personnel”.
- OTNow (a CAOT publication) dedicated a special edition to OTAs in March 2015, and will include a regular OTA column in OTNow beginning in 2016.

These shifts demonstrate an awareness of the value of accreditation by key stakeholders in the profession.

Knowledge translation

In March 2015, the OTA & PTA EAP was described in an article in OTNow, a monthly publication produced by CAOT. March’s edition was dedicated to OTAs – a copy of the OTA & PTA EAP article is available on our website in [English](#) and in [French](#). A similar article is expected to be published in a fall edition of CPA’s Physiotherapy Practice magazine.

In May 2015, the OTA & PTA EAP was highlighted in a poster presented at World Confederation for Physical Therapists (WCPT) Congress in Singapore. Congress included several posters and a podium presentation about PTAs, as well as a facilitated networking session on PTAs for PT delegates who work with PTAs, described as “relatively informal with no fixed agenda to allow opportunity for delegates to network and pursue issues of common interest”. A copy of the poster can be found on our website [here](#).

Policy update

The following key documents have been approved or revised following extensive discussion at the February JAC meeting. **Please read through this information in order to be fully informed about all new and revised policies.** All policies are available for review on the website under About Us/Policies and Procedures (<http://otapta.ca/english/about-us/policies-and-procedures.php>) (French: à propos/politiques et procédures)

Document Name and/or Number	New or Revised	Rationale
ACC-12 Deferral of Accreditation Review	New	A policy has been created regarding when and under what conditions education programs with candidacy or accreditation status can request a delay of their scheduled accreditation review.
TOR-02 Joint Accreditation Committee (JAC)	Revised	As part of the revision of the MOA between PEAC and CAOT, the Terms of Reference of the Joint Accreditation Committee were also reviewed and revised. Changes to note include the addition of one extra member representing privately funded education programs, and a more clear description of the terms of office and of appointment to the committee and as Chair of the committee.

Document Name and/or Number	New or Revised	Rationale
GUIDE-04 – Recruitment of JAC Members	Revised	As part of the review of the MOA, GUIDE-04 was also reviewed. A number of changes were suggested primarily around succession planning, and the process to recruit new members when necessary.

Peer Review Team Members required:

The following describes upcoming reviews and the required Peer Review Team members. If you or your colleagues are eligible to join the pool of peer reviewers, and are interested in volunteering for any of these upcoming reviews, please contact Kathy Davidson as soon as possible to begin your training. Eligibility is described in GUIDE-05 found here in [English](#) and here in [French](#):

Date/Location		Volunteers required
Spring 2016	Central/Northern Ontario	1 OT and 1 PT
Fall 2016	Southern Ontario	3 OTs and 3 PTs
Spring 2017	Edmonton	1 OT and 1 PT
Spring 2017	Southern Ontario	3 OTs and 3 PTs
Fall 2017	Southern Ontario	5 OTs and 5 PTs
Spring 2018	Vancouver	1 OT and 1 PT
Spring 2018	Southern Ontario	1 OT and 1 PT
Fall 2018	Vancouver	2 OTs and 2 PTs
Fall 2018	Okanagan	1 OT and 1 PT
Fall 2018	Southern Ontario	1 OT and 1 PT
Fall 2018	Nova Scotia	1 OT and 1 PT - francophone
Total 2016-2018		20 OTs and 20 PTs

*****We urgently require OTA/PTA educators who are PTs to join the pool of peer reviewers*****

Results of Annual Survey of OTA/PTA Programs

Each year OTA/PTA programs are required to complete a survey providing contact, demographic and program information. A document which summarizes key data from the 2014 annual review, and provides an overview of OTA PTA education in Canada for 2014 can be found here:

<http://otapta.ca/english/about-us/news.php>

Recruiting for a Program Manager for the OTA & PTA EAP

PEAC is inviting applications from occupational therapists and physiotherapists for the position of Program Manager. A position overview, including responsibilities and key competencies, is available in the position description found here: <http://otapta.ca/english/about-us/news.php>. Anticipated start date is January 2016; closing date for applications is August 15, 2015.

Annual Education Session

The OTA & PTA EAP annual Education Session took place on Tuesday May 26, 2015 in Winnipeg, MB, to coincide with the annual COPEC meeting and CAOT Conference. For those who were unable to attend (or for those who would like to hear parts of the session again) the URL link to the recording is available here: <http://www.otapta.ca/english/resources/education-sessions-01.php>

T-Res pilot project

The data collection phase of the T-Res project is complete. While there have been some concerns expressed about the validity of the data collected, analysis is underway. Recommendations will be provided in a summary report in the fall of 2015, and accuracy of the data will be considered during creation of the report. The OTA & PTA EAP thanks the five programs who volunteered to participate in this project for their time – Vancouver Community College, Mohawk College, Sault College, Centennial and Nova Scotia Community College.

Questions?

Please ask Kathy Davidson, Program Manager, if you have any questions about anything anytime!

kathy.davidson@otapta.ca 250-494-0677