

CAOT Chapter Document

April 6, 2020

The CAOT chapters are the collective voice of occupational therapists in their respective province or region. The purpose of the chapters is to represent, promote and engage occupational therapists and meet their regional needs through professional practice support; advocacy and stakeholder engagement; education and networking; and fostering a professional community.

Chapter Structure and Governance:

CAOT chapters are guided by CAOT's strategy, mission and vision, in their endeavor to strengthen and build excellence for the profession, while ensuring that chapter activities are reflective of the regional community and responsive to local needs and issues. The CAOT staff residing in these Chapters have networks within the region's professional community, stakeholders, and governments. These local connections ensure the CAOT chapters are connected to the relevant issues and environments that are central to each region's occupational therapy practice. This has both top down and bottom-up benefits for CAOT.

Efficiencies are gained by CAOT and the CAOT chapters through shared organizational and administrative functioning. CAOT chapters adopt the strategic direction, mission, vision and values set out by CAOT, and have the responsibility of prioritizing and implementing these strategic priorities within their respective regional context. Administrative activities such as membership, finance, human resource and communications are centralized through CAOT for all CAOT chapters. CAOT chapters remain autonomous in their day-to-day operations to best reflect the unique regional "colours" of their province or region in a timely manner.

Each Chapter has a volunteer-based advisory committee that supports the operationalization of the regional strategic priorities. It is important to note that the advisory committee does not operate in a directive capacity, as this is the role of CAOT Board of Directors and Senior Management Team (SMT). CAOT chapters contribute to the development of CAOT strategic directions by communicating the regional needs of their members. CAOT chapters then implement an operational plan that compliments the CAOT strategic directions, with guidance from the membership and Advisory Committees to ensure provincial or regional relevance. The function of the chapter Advisory Committee is to support information sharing and provide input on how to best operationalize CAOT's strategic directions locally. The Advisory Committee acts as a sounding board for CAOT chapter staff, providing context and perspective from the different geographical and practice areas within each chapter's respective region.

From a national occupational therapy community perspective, CAOT chapters are peers to the existing provincial professional Occupational Therapy Associations and on topics relating to this community continue to be based on the same mission, vision and values of CAOT, but will contribute to these activities with a provincial or regional lens or perspective.

Chapter Activities:

Chapters remain autonomous from CAOT on topics of regional importance in order to be able to be reactive and responsive on behalf of occupational therapists in their region. These issues include regional policy or legislative changes, consultations with key stakeholders, member

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requests or other arising issues that require a timely response from CAOT. As occupational therapists based in their respective regions, CAOT chapter staff have the unique knowledge, experience and perspective that makes them best suited to respond to regional issues. Having the autonomy to do so allows CAOT chapters to address issues in a timely and responsive manner. In turn, this unique perspective and understanding of the regional practice landscape, as well as connections with key stakeholders and networks, make Chapter staff a valuable resource to CAOT on topics of national importance.

Practice support activities such as advocacy, educational initiatives, and practice networks are managed through a collaborative relationship between CAOT and CAOT chapters where some may be managed nationally and others regionally. Communities of practice can and should be managed in a collaborative approach between CAOT chapters and CAOT, as this collaboration ensures that a coordinated approach is taken in overlapping areas of focus (e.g. Extended Health Benefits coverage). Tools, strategies, frameworks and other supports are shared in a timely manner in order to maximize efficiency in coordinated efforts. For instance, Chapters share their resources with peer associations to support the overall practice of Canadian OTs (e.g. private practice fee schedule). Overall, Chapters have the autonomy to implement initiatives that serve an un/under met need in their respective region (e.g. Networking & Education Days), some of which may develop as “grass roots level” activities that are later adopted at a national level or by other chapters, as appropriate. This allows for a “testing ground” at a smaller scale prior to initiatives being carried out at the larger national scale.

Overview of CAOT Chapters:

Chapter Purpose

- Each chapter shall carry out the purposes and strategic initiatives of CAOT in the province or territory and shall endeavor to be the voice of occupational therapy in that province or territory.
- Each Chapter shall promote information sharing and coordinated planning on provincial or territorial issues related to occupational therapy.

Chapter Structure

- A Chapter does not maintain separate bank accounts or investments, purchase property or hire employees.
- A Chapter does not have the legal authority to sign contracts, incur liability on behalf of CAOT or to otherwise bind CAOT.

Chapter Staff

- Some duties of Chapter staff members may include the following: preparing for and, where required, attending Advisory Committee meetings; working with Chapter members and other CAOT staff members to plan and coordinate activities that address the strategic priorities of the Chapter; consulting with and providing feedback to the Advisory Committee; representing the Chapter at meetings with members or external representatives; preparing reports for the CAOT’s Board of Directors