

# Vermont Occupational Therapy Association

## WINTER FOCUS GROUPS

EARN CEUs!

Free for members!

Virtual Focus Group Sessions via Zoom:

Jan 27th 5-6:00pm

Jan 30th 9-10:00am

Feb 2nd 5-6:00pm

Feb 6th 10-11:00am

Feb 8th 6-7:00pm



Attend 2 or more to earn CEU hours by participating in our discussions (Trauma-informed Care, Low Vision Supports, Preschool Evaluation and Supports, OT Entrepreneurship, and UE Rehabilitation).

Visit our events page to register: [Vermont Occupational Therapy Association - Events \(vermontot.org\)](https://www.vermontot.org/events)

We hope to see you there.

~Chelsea Vaillancourt, VOTA VP

### VOTA Student Members:

Check our website for a great way to communicate with other VOTA student members:

Student Forums: [Vermont Occupational Therapy Association - Forums \(vermontot.org\)](https://www.vermontot.org/forums)

### AOTA Vision 2025

An inclusive profession, occupational therapy maximizes health, well-being, and quality of life for all people, populations, and communities through effective solutions that facilitate participation in everyday living.



## Winter Quarterly 2021

### *VOTA Officers:*

- President: Caren Maslowsky
- Vice President: Chelsea Vaillancourt
- Secretary: Nicole DeVoid
- Treasurer: Karen Downey
- Newsletter Chair: Kristen Jackson
- Membership Chair: Viki Delmas
- Legislative Chair: Todd Patterson
- Public Relations: Patty Thomas
- RA Rep: Ela Dupont

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**Victoria Priganc, UVM OTD Program Director, offered this information at the November 2020 VOTA Board Meeting-**

\*Development of the entry level OTD program at UVM is underway but a formal announcement cannot yet be made as it has not yet had final approval from UVM. Hopeful that the vote for approval will be made in mid-December.

\*OTD Entry Level Program is "on track" to take entry level OTD students in the Fall 2022.

\*UVM is prioritizing the establishment of the entry level OTD program at this time. The post-professional OTD program has passed every approval at UVM and would start after the entry level program is up and running.

\* Please contact Victoria for any additional information about these OTD programs: [victoria.priganc@med.uvm.edu](mailto:victoria.priganc@med.uvm.edu)

**Ellie (Margaret) Meyer, the newly hired UVM OTD Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, also joined the November VOTA Board Meeting-**

\*To fulfill the ACOTE standard, Ellie needs Letters of Intent from facilities stating they can take Level II fieldwork students starting 2024. ACOTE requires designation of 2 potential fieldwork placements for each entry level student, so UVM needs to secure at least 80 potential fieldwork placements as they plan to enroll 40 students in each cohort. Ellie is reaching out to facilities to provide information and request written Letters of Intent for future OTD student placements

\* The first confirmation of a Letter of Intent was made by Jan Johnson, OTR, at Woodridge Rehab in Berlin, Vermont! Thank You Jan!

\*Please contact Ellie Meyer directly for more information and if you are interested in taking future UVM OTD fieldwork students. Ellie can be emailed at: [margaret.meyer@med.uvm.edu](mailto:margaret.meyer@med.uvm.edu)

RA update from Ela Dupont

Our fall online RA meeting was held November 4, 2020. If you'd like to watch the video, the link is located here: <https://www.aota.org/AboutAOTA/Get-Involved/RA.aspx>

**Upcoming RA Meeting Schedule:**

- Requests for action due March 8, 2021
- Online RA meeting held April 21, 2021

Requests for RA action are accepted all year long. We encourage AOTA members to contact us in advance to discuss your ideas and solicit help to draft your request. Deadlines are set in order for requests to be considered in advance of upcoming RA meetings. You can also learn more about submitting a request for action at the link listed above.

The AOTA is offering a free, online CE series focused on COVID-19 and OT. Links to free recorded webinars are available at: <https://www.aota.org/Conference-Events/Coronavirus-COVID19.aspx>

You can earn 1-1.5 contact hours per session!

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### ***Interested in attending AOTA's Annual Conference? Apply today!***

The Diane Aja Scholarship is awarded to an active VOTA member to receive AOTA member rate admission fee to the annual AOTA Conference

As with so many aspects of our lives right now, the AOTA Annual Conference will be different in 2021 as well.

From the AOTA Website:

***Share, Connect, Learn and Be Ready for the Future!***



AOTA INSPIRE is more than a conference. It is *the multidimensional learning and engagement experience for the occupational therapy profession in 2021—lifting us as individuals and a profession. All educational sessions and other valuable content will be available on demand.*

*The in-person component of AOTA INSPIRE in San Diego will take place if the state of California determines it is safe to host large events. Watch [www.aota.org/inspire](http://www.aota.org/inspire) for the latest information on INSPIRE 2021.*

Answer the following questions and submit via email to [votapublicrelations@gmail.com](mailto:votapublicrelations@gmail.com)

Or visit our website to submit your application: <https://www.vermontot.org/diane-aja>

The selected candidate will be asked to submit an article or reflection of their experience after the conference.

1. Tell us about yourself, including the strengths and talents that would contribute to the growth of VOTA.
2. Describe one goal for professional development as an OT provider, and how you would use the experience to further this objective, were you selected to attend the national conference.
3. What actions can you take in your OT practice and workplace to ensure the core values of diversity, equity, and inclusion for people from differing backgrounds that vary by race, gender, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, education, age, physical ability, religion, etc.?

**TRIPSCY Director:** Adrienne Miao, PhD, OTR, is the new OTR Director of TRIPSCY at UVM Center for Disability and Community Inclusion. If you are not already a Member of TRIPSCY please check out the UVM TRIPSCY at CDCI website ([TRIPSCY | Center on Disability and Community Inclusion | The University of Vermont \(uvm.edu\)](http://TRIPSCY | Center on Disability and Community Inclusion | The University of Vermont (uvm.edu))), or contact Adrienne directly at [adrienne.miao@uvm.edu](mailto:adrienne.miao@uvm.edu)



VOTA is now on [LinkedIn](#) as Vermont Occupational Therapy Association



### Remote Learning for Fieldwork Students: Making It Happen

By Kristen Jackson, MOT, OTR/L

I never expected to get creative and work out ways for Fieldwork students to join me during my everyday OT practices. Carrying my laptop through hallways of the school and having teachers look at me as if I'm talking to myself was a fun new experience and gave us reasons to laugh and smile. I would position my laptop in the best way to allow my Fieldwork student to observe, although try not to disrupt the class. I would share my screen to allow her to view my documentation. I would also be sure to email her resources and additional information I couldn't share in person. I encourage all practicing OTs to consider Fieldwork I and/or Fieldwork II students. Getting creative is what we do and making it work is our everyday practice.



### Pediatric Teleservice Tips

by Lindsey Justice, MOT, OTR/L

1. Think ahead! Consider what materials your client may need for your session (scissors, pencil, manipulatives etc.), and send an email to your client's family or educator to ensure they are ready for the start of the session. This will maximize productive time during your therapy activities and minimize time spent searching for materials. Ensure your virtual link has been sent ahead, and trial your virtual call ahead of time to ensure all potential technology glitches are addressed before the session begins.
2. Keep it simple! Not all families have similar resources within the home. Consider using readily available materials such as magazines or newspaper ads (manipulation, bimanual folding skills, digit strength), drawing supplies, clothing fasteners, and kitchen/cooking supplies. This will allow therapeutic objectives to be achieved while ensuring the child or family feels capable of addressing therapy objectives within their own environment.
3. Incorporate technology! Look into the use of slide decks, create Power Points, and link to Youtube videos, etc. Technology can be a great way to maintain engagement, keep sessions lively, and provide visuals which can be a great additional learning tool through screen sharing.
4. Access Resources! There are many practitioners who are reaching out and providing additional tips and strategies for teleservice. Some great resources include: Youtube: "Adam the OT", The OT Toolbox: Free slide decks, The Inspired Treehouse: Virtual therapy tips and resources.
5. Remember Rapport! Even though the world of therapy has shifted virtually for many of our clients, as practitioners, we can't lose our relationships with our clients. It can be challenging to have less face-to-face time, but remember that great outcomes often stem from great therapeutic relationships. Don't neglect the importance of taking a moment to find out highlights from your client's week, incorporate client-centered activities, and address meaningful goals.



## My top 5 clinical tips for hand therapy teleservice

Many changes have happened in our professional role in the last few months. Changes can be so difficult, but sometimes we need to embrace changes and make the best out of them! After figuring out all the pre-requisites, we jumped into outpatient teleservice! It was quite challenging at first, but I learned and even got to enjoy it!

The logo for occupational therapy, featuring the words "occupational" and "therapy" in a sans-serif font. "occupational" is in a light blue color and "therapy" is in white. The text is set against a solid black rectangular background.

Here are a few clinical tips that were helpful to me:

1. Have a “check in” session prior to your first “real” therapy session.  
Our secretaries send invites for a Zoom meeting to me and to my patient. It can be very frustrating to lose 10 or 15 minutes of our treatment session because of technical difficulties (although it could happen any time after!). It has been helpful to have a quick check in session, just for 2-3 minutes, making sure they can access the link (which means correct email too), checking for proper functioning of the camera, the audio, the internet connections, etc.
2. Plan.  
I always let my patient know what we will be doing in our next session so they can have daily items available. Examples of what I have asked for different size glasses (working on web space ROM), utensils and plate to work on cutting food, containers and jars (working on wrist and hand strengthening), and clothespins (working on dexterity and pinch strengthening).
3. Use daily activities to assess progress with strength.  
Pick 2 or 3 meaningful activities that they cannot complete yet or are difficult to perform. I have used activities like opening a peanut butter jar, wringing a cloth, turning a doorknob, and squeezing toothpaste . If they cannot make it into the clinic for a formal progress summary, I used those same activities, in the same context, and describe objectively how they complete it and ask them for their subjective comments of how difficult it is for them to complete.
4. Use 2 laptops  
The ideal for me was to use 2 laptops at the same time (I used an older one available in our department); I used one to have a full screen view with my pt (with focus on his/her wrist and hand), and I used the other one to document on our electronic medical record system. I am then able to document during our session while still having a good size image of them performing exercises or activities.
5. Be creative!  
We are used to having our clinical materials (putty, hand exerciser, etc.) when we are working with patients in our clinic, but I discovered many other different ways to work on hand functions using daily items found at home and that has led me to become more efficient with occupation based interventions! I had a patient groom her dog using a brush to work on limited thumb and finger AROM. And another who worked on crocheting to work on dexterity and desensitization, or ... be creative while being meaningful too!

Johanne Champigny, OTR/L, CHT

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## Legislative Chair Report December 2020

### FEDERAL

**Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule** CMS released the proposed FY 2021 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule. Some implications for OT include: Proposed 9% reimbursement cut to therapy service codes, increase work relative units for therapy evaluations, seeking comment on permanently adding therapy codes to the telehealth list, add permanent e-visit codes, make a permanent policy allowing OTA to perform maintenance therapy and make a permanent allowance for OT to review and verify student documentation.

<https://www.aota.org/Publications-News/otp/Archive/2020/stop-the-cuts.aspx>

**Medicare COVID-19 Flexibilities Granted to OT: Advocacy to Make These Gains Permanent** In response to COVID-19 needs, CMS waivers have made allowances for OT in telehealth services and for OT opening Home Health cases. AOTA is seeking to submit comments to make these waiver changes permanent.

<https://www.aota.org/Publications-News/otp/Archive/2020/covid-19-flexibilities.aspx>



### CONGRESS

**Congressional Bill to Make OT Permanent Telehealth Providers** A new bill was introduced—the Expand Telehealth Access Act. The bill would make waivers introduced during the pandemic a Medicare benefit following the pandemic.

<https://www.aota.org/Advocacy-Policy/Congressional-Affairs/Legislative-Issues-Update/2020/Congressional-Champions-Introduce-Bill-OT-Telehealth-Providers.aspx>

### STATE

**New HHS Guidance Creates Opportunities for States** New guidance from the US Secretary of Health and Human Services outlines opportunities for states to waive or suspend state licensure, supervision and scope of practice laws during the pandemic. These waivers are intended to extend the capacity of the healthcare system to respond to COVID-19.



<https://www.aota.org/Advocacy-Policy/State-Policy/StateNews/2020/HHS-Guidance-Opportunities-States.aspx>

## VOTA

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### **Follow us on:**

Facebook:

[Vermont Occupational Therapy Association](#)

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/vermontoccupationaltherapists/>

Vermont Occupational Therapy on

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/802OT>

Linked In: Vermont Occupational Therapy Association: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/vermont-occupational-therapy-association-286029201/?jobid=1234>

The mission of the Vermont Occupational Therapy Association (VOTA) is to promote and advance occupational therapy practice, research, legislation, and education, and to support occupational therapy practitioners in Vermont. The Association serves its members by providing support services, acting as a public advocate of occupational therapy, and participating in cooperative interaction to meet the needs of the professional and the public.

**Please visit our website:**

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



## VOTA Membership



Continue your VOTA Membership! Join any time of the year with our rolling membership!

Encourage co-workers and friends who are Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapist Assistants to consider becoming a member of our organization.

Please sign up on our website or request an application form from our membership chair to sign up for a 1 or 3 year membership with VOTA.

Questions?

Please contact:

Viki Delmas

email: [votamembership@gmail.com](mailto:votamembership@gmail.com)

OT 3 Years: \$110

OTA 3 Years: \$70

Student/Retired/Non practicing: \$15

OT 1 year: \$40

OTA 1 year: \$25



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