Association Policies

Policy: 1.11
Subject: The Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy
Effective: 4/79
Revised: 6/03
Reviewed BPPC: 10/01, 01/02, 1/03
Code: RA Resolution #531-79, RA Motion 2003P19
Purpose: To establish a single philosophical base for the profession.

It shall be the policy of AOTA that:
1. There will be a single philosophical base for the profession.
2. The philosophical base will encompass the following points:
   a. Humans are active beings whose development is influenced by their participation in meaningful occupations and the context in which they perform these occupations.
   b. Occupations are activities that people name, categorize, infuse with meaning, and do to participate in daily life.
   c. Occupations occur within context unique to the individuals.
   d. Human beings are able to influence their health, well-being, and life satisfaction through active engagement in meaningful occupations.
   e. Human life requires a process of ongoing adaptation to personal environmental factors.
   f. Adaptation is a change in function that promotes survival, learning, and participation in daily life activities.
   g. Personal and environmental factors affect the adaptation process throughout the life cycle; those that interrupt the adaptation process restrict participation in daily life activities.
   h. Engagement in meaningful occupations facilitates the adaptive process and participation in daily life.
   i. Occupations have intrinsic and therapeutic value and may be used to increase life satisfaction and to support health, well-being, and participation in daily life activities.
   j. Engagement in occupations to support participation in daily life activities by individuals is the focus and outcome of occupational therapy intervention.
   k. The understanding and use of occupations shall be at the central core of occupational therapy practice, education, and research.

Policy: 1.47
Subject: Association Ad Hoc Bodies
Effective Date: 5/02
Revised: 6/03
Reviewed BPPC: 1/03
Code: RA Motion 2002P24, RA Motion 2003P55
Purpose: To establish policy defining ad hoc bodies.

It shall be the policy of AOTA that:
1. All bodies not identified in the Bylaws will be ad hoc.
2. An ad hoc body has the following characteristics:
   a. Body members shall be appointed.
   b. The body shall be charged with a specific task.
   c. The body shall not duplicate a task of an existing body.
   d. The body shall present a final report to the appropriate body by a designated date.
   e. The body shall be discharged after presentation of final report.

Policy: 1.8
Subject: Standards of Practice
Effective: 10/77
Revised: 4/00, 6/03
Reviewed BPPC: 10/01, 01/02, 1/03
Code: RA Resolution #497-77, RA Motion 2003M51
Purpose: To establish policy identifying the Association’s responsibility in providing standards of practice for occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants.

It shall be the policy of AOTA that:
1. Standards of practice are requirements for the occupational therapist and occupational therapy assistant for the delivery of occupational therapy services that are client centered and interactive in nature.
2. Standards of practice identify the minimum standards for occupational therapy practice.
3. Standards of practice serve as a means for the profession to define and control its own practice.
4. Standards serve to provide a method to evaluate the quality of services, to protect the rights of consumers, and to provide direction to the educational programs in the preparation of occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants.
5. Revision of the standards of practice may be necessary to reflect the changing scope of practice as well as advances in the theoretical basis upon which the practice rests.
6. The primary responsibility for implementing standards of practice rests with the occupational therapist and occupational therapy assistant.
7. The procedures for management of standards are contained in the Association’s Procedural Manual.

Policy: 3.4
Subject: Education of Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants
Effective: 4/89
Revised: 4/97, 4/98, 4/00, 6/03
Reviewed BPPC: 10/01, 01/02, 1/03
Code: RA Motion 4/89 Supersedes action of 4/83 and 4/87
Purpose: To state the entry-level education required for entry into occupational therapy.

It shall be the policy of AOTA that:
1. The American Occupational Therapy Association supports multiple levels of occupational therapy education, including education at the associate degree level for occupational therapy assistants and professional level education at the master’s and doctoral degree levels for occupational therapists.
2. Consistent with the Association’s desire to improve practice, education, and research, the Association will take active steps to promote new programs at the graduate level and to assist existing professional programs to develop in ways that are congruent with the preparation of graduates who have the ability to frame, analyze, and solve complex clinical problems.

Policy: 5.11
Subject: Proactive Positioning of Occupational Therapy Services Across the Life Continuum
Effective: 3/92
Revised: 4/99, 6/03
Reviewed BPPC: 10/01, 01/02, 1/03
Code: RA Resolution 4/90 RA Motion 3/92
Purpose: To state the Association’s proactive position regarding occupational therapy in long term care.

It shall be the policy of the Association that:
1. The profession develops client-oriented and responsive service delivery models that maximize the skills of occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants in meeting the client needs.
2. Members will be made aware of the potential for significant changes in occupational therapy reimbursement by public and private payers.
3. Occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants will be prepared to assume effective roles in emerging client-centered models across the life continuum.
4. Members will be educated to better understand the importance and critical need for active participation in local, state, and national policy formation and implementation.
5. Educators will be encouraged to address the service delivery issues for the increasing numbers of people who will require sustained services and are seeking services to support engagement in occupations in their homes and communities.

Policy: 5.14
Subject: Diverse and Inclusive Membership
Effective: 6/03
Reviewed BPPC: 1/03
Code: RA Motion 2003P107
Purpose: To state the Association’s position that a diverse and inclusive membership is promoted and encouraged in Association membership, activities, documentation, publication, and presentations sponsored by the Association.

It shall be the policy of AOTA that:
1. The Association shall seek a diverse and inclusive membership.
2. The Association shall promote full participation in Association activities regardless of race, gender, disability, physical appearance, age, religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, or level within the occupational therapy profession.
3. There be a waiver of membership fees for OT and OTAs who have a permanent disability and are no longer employed due to the permanent disability.
   a. To qualify for the waiver, the OT or OTA must:
      i. have been a member at the onset of the present disability and
      ii. provide satisfactory verification of the permanent disability and unemployed status by such
means as: the Social Security Administration, Veterans Administration, Workers Compensation, or a qualified physician.

b. The waiver of membership fees is granted only at the time of membership renewal. No partial period of waiver will be made.

c. Membership waiver shall include basic membership fee and one special interest section.

4. Individuals with disabilities have access to events, activities, and services sponsored by the Association.

a. The Association shall encourage the participation of individuals with disabilities at Association sponsored events.

b. The Association shall utilize facilities and information technology to communicate and provide services for events and activities that are accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.

c. The Association shall provide information to participants at events and activities regarding available resources to assist individuals with disabilities to participate whenever reasonably feasible.

d. Upon request, the Association will provide reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities to assist them in arranging to participate in Association sponsored events and activities.

e. The Association shall provide written notification to participants regarding their opportunity to request auxiliary aids and services in advance of the Association sponsored event or activity.

f. The intent of this policy shall be communicated in appropriate promotional materials for Association sponsored events and activities and communicated on the Association’s website.

5. Appropriate Association documents and publications will include multicultural content and gender-neutral reference.

a. The Association shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, or other basis proscribed by applicable law.

b. Authors and editors of Association publications, and presenters at Association events, shall be advised that the Association encourages the use of gender neutral language and multiculturally appropriate material.

c. The term “chairperson” shall be used in place of chairman throughout the Association and Association documents.

Policy 1.25: Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants and Modalities (1983 Policy) was rescinded by the RA in April 2002.