



EMBARGOED TILL 6 OCTOBER, 9.00AM

**3RD NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CONFERENCE TO
ADDRESS NEEDS OF ELDERLY AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
Profession to take creative approach in transcending boundaries
in care settings to better serve community**

Singapore, 6 October 2012 – Jointly organised by the Singapore Association of Occupational Therapists (SAOT) and Malaysian Occupational Therapists Association, the 3rd National Occupational Therapy Conference 2012 will be held from 5 to 6 October. With Dr Amy Khor, Singapore's Minister of State for Health and Manpower as Guest-of-Honour, the Conference is held in conjunction with the 10th Singapore Malaysia Occupational Therapy Symposium.

Designed as a knowledge exchange and dialogue platform for the occupational therapy community in Singapore and the region, the Conference features the theme, "Transcending Boundaries Towards Seamless Care", which was developed with an aim to nurture a holistic and inclusive long-term care environment in Singapore and regionally. Acute hospital-based systems can no longer support a rapidly ageing population. The prevalence of chronic diseases and various disabilities is also rising. Occupational therapists therefore need to move out of traditional care settings into the community to collaborate with other care providers to deliver coordinated, coherent and quality care to various patient groups.

Says Ms Florence Cheong, President of SAOT, "To better cater for the evolving needs of our society, the Association seeks to lead the profession out of conventional environs to work more closely with other allied health and medical professionals in providing long-term care for the community. Bearing this objective in mind, we have put up a comprehensive two-day programme and are confident that the Conference will be a conducive platform for meaningful conversations and a springboard for new initiatives for the industry."

On 5 October, delegates can choose to participate in one or more of the five different workshops to be held concurrently. On 6 October, besides a keynote by Ireland's Dr Deirdre Connolly, plenary sessions by Singapore's Dr Patricia Lee and Dr Wong Loong Mun, a lunchtime talk by Ms Nancy Krolkowski from the United States, and paper presentations, the programme includes the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SAOT and Singapore's Health Promotion Board (HPB), to be witnessed by Dr Khor. Back in September, the two organisations had established a strategic partnership on training Health Ambassadors to conduct falls risk assessments and impart



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home safety tips. This MOU will therefore expand on this partnership to build capacity of occupational therapists in health promotion initiatives.

Says Mr Ang Hak Seng, Chief Executive officer, HPB, "With population ageing, the number of hospitalisations for hip fractures in seniors is expected to triple to 6,000 by 2030. Falls account for about 85 per cent of all injuries in elderly persons, and about three quarters of these falls occur at home. This MOU expands the role of occupational therapists beyond providing clinical care to community and home settings as well. HPB's Community Falls Prevention Programme is a good example wherein occupational therapists can volunteer their time as Health Ambassadors to visit the elderly residents' homes, detect fall hazards within homes, and make appropriate recommendations for changes to home environment. Through accessible and convenient home-based services, our occupational therapist Health Ambassadors aim to make the home environment a safer place for our older adults."

For more information on the Conference, please visit <http://www.notc.com.sg/>.

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Notes to Editor

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About the Organisers

Singapore Association of Occupational Therapists

The Singapore Association of Occupational Therapists (SAOT) was founded on 11 January 1975 as a professional body to represent Occupational Therapists in Singapore. We became a full member of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists in 1992. There are currently approximately 650 Occupational Therapists in Singapore, of which 334 are ordinary members of the association. Additionally, we have 143 student members out of a current cohort of 195. The vision of SAOT is to



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bring occupational therapy to all in Singapore for health and quality of life, and to inspire, lead and provide opportunities for occupational therapists to excel professionally. To realise this vision, the mission of SAOT is to shape and advance the quality and access of occupational therapy through standard-setting, advocacy, education, and research.

Malaysian Occupational Therapists Association

The Malaysian Occupational Therapists Association (MOTA) is a professional independent and non-political organisation. A full member of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) in 1990 after the College of Occupational Therapists in Kuala Lumpur Hospital was accredited by WFOT and the Malaysian Public Services Department, MOTA aims to promote the profession and support the development, use and practice of Occupational Therapy in Malaysia and the world. This is achieved through programmes related to education and research, professional development and promotion, publication, membership drive and quality and standard. Currently, MOTA has 250 members, with eighty per cent working in government hospitals and the remainder in privately owned agencies, NGOs and owned practices.

About the Event Manager

Singex Group

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