



## COT/ BAOT Briefing

### Publishing your work in partnership with the College of Occupational Therapists

**Revision Date:** April 2009  
**Lead Group:** Professional Practice  
**Review Date:** Ongoing

**Please note that this is a working document that is revised regularly as a result of feedback we receive from groups progressing through the process. Please email the Quality Programme Manager (page six) to obtain the latest version. Please also note that this briefing is to be read in conjunction with The College of Occupational Therapists Practice Publications Group (PPG) '10 Stage Publication Process'** (available at: <http://www.cot.org.uk/members/profpractice/briefings/cot-info.php>).

#### Introduction

This briefing is intended for members who wish to produce a publication in collaboration with the College of Occupational Therapists. This may be in conjunction with other occupational therapists, for example via a forum such as a Specialist Section or Regional/Country group. As such groups are sub-groups of the College, the College is ultimately responsible for any information or guidance that these groups formally produce that represents the 'professional opinion'\* of occupational therapy (College of Occupational Therapists 2004).

In order to provide accurate and timely information for occupational therapists nationally, the College has established a clear and rigorous publication process. This process is overseen by the College's Practice Publications Group (PPG); a group that consists of occupational therapy practitioners/managers from a range of clinical backgrounds, with an interest in, and experience of, the production of professional documentation and evidence-based practice. The group has the option to co-opt relevant specialists and experts when necessary. The group also includes three College officers with relevant experience and expertise in the production of publications. These officers represent the Professional Practice, Research & Development and Marketing groups of the College. Their contact details are provided on page six.

The PPG works with the College to produce information in-house and also to support members to develop material that has national application and is of benefit to the profession. The remit of the PPG is to perform a quality assurance function, and the group provides information, advice, professional comment and feedback. The College also provides library resources, professional design and publication services, and support in the promotion and distribution of publications. The PPG Terms of Reference and further information on the group membership are available from the College website ([www.cot.org.uk](http://www.cot.org.uk)). It should be noted that refusal of a potential publication via the PPG means that the document, if then subsequently published elsewhere, cannot bear the College or Specialist Section name or logo or be placed on the College's website (including the Specialist Sections area).

\*The College needs to be involved when documents contain material that is the 'professional opinion' and is for widespread distribution. This would include practice guidelines, guidance, position statements, briefings, service user information, and material that is nationally applicable. It does not include local protocols or guidelines, departmentally-produced service user information, newsletters etc.



## Definition of publication types

The PPG will consider requests from Specialist Sections, Regional Groups or Country Groups to develop *Practice Guidelines* and *Guidance* documents. To assist with the planning and development of publications, the definitions used by the College for these document types are as follows:

- **Practice guidelines** outline the nature and level of intervention that is considered best practice for specific conditions, in specific settings. They should be systematically developed, evidence-based statements, which assist occupational therapy staff and service users in making decisions about appropriate interventions for a specific condition or population, incorporating and abiding by the *Professional standards for occupational therapy practice (2007)*. Please note that the College will only consider endorsing or publishing practice guidelines that have been developed in line with the College's *Practice guidelines development manual (2004)*.
- **Guidance documents** provide background information and direction on topics relevant to occupational therapy. They may be particular to certain areas of practice, such as acute healthcare; or they may be shared across the profession, for example, risk management or record keeping. Guidance documents are not expected to provide very detailed recommendations for user intervention or action, as this is the role of practice guidelines. Instead guidance documents generally contain descriptive and continuous text, which is appropriately referenced.

Following the review of all College practice publications in 2002, it was agreed that there would be a single set of core standards, which was subsequently produced by the College in 2003 and updated in 2007 (*Professional Standards for Occupational Therapy Practice*). As these are applicable to all occupational therapy staff across all settings, the College will not endorse further standards for specific fields of practice. Information defining best practice in these fields should be developed as practice guidelines.

### The College will consider endorsing/ publishing:

- Practice guidelines for specific conditions, settings or circumstances.
- Guidance to be applicable UK wide.
- Service user information that is to be distributed nationally.

### The College will NOT consider endorsing/ publishing:

- Local standards for specific conditions, settings or circumstances.
- Local practice guidelines.
- Local service user information leaflets.

## Next steps

If you are considering developing a publication it is vital that you familiarise yourself with *The College of Occupational Therapists' Practice Publications Group (PPG) 10 Stage Publication Process (2009)* (available at: <http://www.cot.org.uk/members/profpractice/briefings/cot-info.php>).

Expanded guidance for each of the stages is provided below. Please note that timescales are approximate, and that the development of a high-quality national publication does take a significant amount of work and time. It is essential that you contact the Quality Programme Manager at the College to discuss your ideas. This will ensure that you do not duplicate work that is known to be happening elsewhere and can clarify any questions you may have concerning the process.



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## Expanded guidance for the *The College of Occupational Therapists' Practice Publications Group (PPG) 10 Stage Publication Process*

### Initial planning stage (approximately 6–8 weeks)

#### 1. **Form project group**

These initial planning stages are the most important; if the project is supported by a robust and comprehensive proposal it will make the approval and development stages significantly easier. When you form the project group and agree the type and topic of your proposed publication it is essential that it is supported by a clear need and rationale. The group should be prepared to answer the question: 'Why is this particular publication needed at this particular time?' If the group decide they wish to produce practice guidelines, then *all* group members must ensure that they are familiar with the College's *Practice guidelines development manual* (2004) (free member download available from:

<http://www.cot.org.uk/public/publications2/showpublication.php?c=2&pubid=18>).

Group members are also requested to familiarise themselves with the NHS Evidence criteria for the accreditation of guidance producers (page 26-28, available at:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/media/238/B5/NHSEvidenceAccreditationManual020209.pdf>) as

these are standards that College practice publications are expected to adhere to.

All group members must also appreciate the time commitment involved when developing a high-quality national publication, as the overall project is likely to take about two years and the majority of the work will be undertaken during unpaid time.

#### 2. **Ensure project group has the correct skill mix**

The group must ensure that it is self-sufficient in terms of the skills required to develop the proposed publication. This means that the group must include *both* an expert in the clinical area *and* someone with experience in document development. It is crucial to include someone with experience in critically appraising literature and also someone who is confident in writing for publication. Someone with overall responsibility for editing the developed document should be appointed (the Editorial Lead). If it is envisaged that the project may involve the utilisation of research techniques (e.g. Delphi or nominal group to reach expert consensus where evidence is lacking) the group must include someone with experience in carrying out work using that particular method. If the group cannot recruit someone with the required skills, arrangements need to be made for such skills to be purchased (e.g. the services of a professional writer or editor). This stage should also include consideration of service user representation within the group, and a member of the group also needs to be willing to assume the role of Project Lead; it is preferable if this person has some skills and experience in project management. The Project Lead will be the link to the College and the PPG. At this stage the group must also consider whether the publication would be best produced in collaboration with another professional body or organisation, or whether another organisation might already be engaged in similar work. Any such organisations should then be approached, as this could have a significant impact on how the work proceeds.

#### 3. **Written approval for the project and confirmation of funding amount**

If the proposed publication is being produced via a forum such as a College Specialist Section or Regional/Country Group, then it must have the written support of the Section or Group Chair. The proposed publication should be discussed with the whole committee and committee networks should be utilised to recruit group members with specific skills as required (e.g. using the Research and Development committee member to identify a researcher). Discussions with the committee should also result in an



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agreement of an amount of funding that will be ring-fenced to support the development of the proposed publication. It is important that the amount of funding is established at an early stage, as this will very much influence the scope of what the group can undertake and achieve. It can also help the group to decide whether additional funding needs to be sought from other sources. For information on potential external funding sources please contact the Research and Development Officer. Some funding is available from the College, but only for particular aspects of the publication development (please see appendices for further details). Please note that the College funding is also only available for a maximum period of two years.

#### **Proposal stage (approximately 14–16 weeks)**

##### **4. Request, complete and submit the PPG 'Request Form'**

Once the above planning and preparatory work has been completed, the group will be ready to request and complete the PPG 'Request Form'. This can be obtained by emailing the Quality Programme Manager; please note that when requesting the form the group should be prepared to provide written confirmation of the Section or Group Chair's support and the amount of funding that has been secured. Once completed the form should be returned to the Quality Programme Manager so that it can be considered by the PPG. The group should aim to submit the form one month prior to the PPG meeting. Please note that request forms cannot be considered outside of PPG meetings. The PPG meets three times a year and to assist you in the planning of your application, the PPG meeting dates are available on the College website ([www.cot.org.uk](http://www.cot.org.uk)). Please check the website before submission as the meeting dates do occasionally change. If the form does not contain all the required material that the PPG needs to make a decision, you may be asked to gather more information and to resubmit your request. If the request is refused outright, then the group cannot proceed any further with the application. If the group decides to proceed independently with the project then the College / Specialist Section logo or name cannot be used on any subsequent publications of the produced document or be placed on the College's website (including the Specialist Sections area).

##### **5. Prepare and submit project scope and ethics application(s)**

If the PPG approves your initial request then they will recommend the proposed publication to the College's Head of Professional Practice for funding approval. You will receive confirmation of this in writing. If approved, this letter will also be accompanied by some guidance in terms of what ethics application(s) are necessary. It will be necessary to submit the project for ethics review by the College's Research and Development group, but further approvals may also be necessary if the project involves collecting data from health professionals and/or service users. Guidance in relation to ethics submissions can be obtained from the College's Research and Development Officer. Preparing and submitting the ethics application(s) should then run in parallel to preparing and submitting the full project scope to the PPG. This is an important stage and the group must ensure that all aspects of the project are well thought through and that it is accompanied by a robust proposal. The scope must also be accompanied by a detailed Gantt chart (action plan), which needs to include the number of group members involved and the estimated cost per meeting.

If the forms do not contain all the required material that the PPG and/or ethics review panel needs to make a decision, you may be asked to gather more information and to resubmit. If the PPG or the ethics review panel refuse the application outright, then the group cannot proceed any further with the application. If the group decides to proceed independently with the project then the necessary ethics approval(s) will still need to be obtained, and the College / Specialist Section logo or name cannot be used on any



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subsequent publications of the produced document or be placed on the College's website (including the Specialist Sections area).

## **Development stage (approximately 52 weeks)**

### **6. Project scope and ethics approval(s)**

If the PPG approves the project scope and the project also obtains the necessary ethics approval(s) then the group can proceed with undertaking the project work necessary to produce the intended publication. Once this stage has been reached a number of College resources will be available to the group; these are listed in the appendices on page six. These resources include a literature search, conducted by a College librarian. In the first instance the Quality Programme Officer will inform the library of a request for support, typically in the form of a literature search, and introduce a representative of the group to a COT librarian skilled in electronic database searching. A literature search form will be supplied and should be returned by post to the library. The librarian will negotiate with the group representative either by phone and/or email and attend any group meetings, if deemed appropriate, at the COT headquarters. Once the terms and scope of the search have been determined and negotiated, over the course of weeks, then the search will be carried out. This service incorporates individual searching of a range of electronic databases and other resources. The search will usually be delivered by email. Start-to-finish time including relevant correspondence is three months. The library can offer one in depth search of this type per quarter so advanced planning and notice is advised and required. Group members are asked to note that this search is not exhaustive and that they will also be expected to conduct additional literature searching (for example hand searching of relevant reference lists).

Whilst completing the development stage the group must bear in mind that any significant revisions to the original project scope may necessitate re-submission to the PPG and/or for ethics approval. Again, guidance on this issue can be sought from the College's Research and Development Officer. During this stage the group member designated as Editorial Lead should manage the editing of the document.

### **7. Produce first draft**

Once the group has got to the stage of producing a first draft of the publication, this should be submitted to the PPG via the Quality Programme Manager, who will then collate the PPG comments into a single response and return them to the project group. Please note that the first draft should be a *complete document*, which is fully referenced (both within the text and within the reference list) and has been proofread (ideally by someone outside of the group). Incomplete text and missing references can significantly delay the publication process. If the document includes images or diagrams then these must be included, and evidence of any relevant permissions should also be submitted. Draft documents may be circulated and commented on by email, should the draft be unavailable at the time of the PPG meeting. The group should advise if they have any particular launch date/event in mind, as this will need to be approved and timescales will need to be realistic and feasible.

### **8. Produce second draft**

Comments provided in response to the first draft can then be used to guide the group in formulating a second draft, which should again be submitted to the PPG via the Quality Programme Manager. At this stage the group should also apply for any external endorsements they wish the publication to have, have the foreword written and also distribute it amongst relevant stakeholders for consultation. The PPG may co-opt a specialist practitioner and/or service user to review the document. Following the comments and revisions that are necessary in relation to the second draft, if the publication is a practice guidelines document it will then need to be piloted in the



relevant clinical setting. Any comments and feedback received during the pilot can then be incorporated to produce a final version. The group must ensure that all contributors are acknowledged and listed in this version. This final version will then be considered by the PPG and, if all criteria are met, will be approved. Once approved, the final draft will then be handed over, via the Quality Programme Manager, to the College's Library for a full reference check.

## **Formatting and print stage (approximately 16–24 weeks)**

### **9. Submit final draft**

The group's final version of the publication should then be submitted to the Quality Programme Manager, who will then liaise with the Publications Officer in order to manage the final stages in between manuscript and print. This will include copyediting, typesetting, professional proofreading and front cover design. First proofs of the publication will be sent to the project group for approval. The group can then return any amendments to be incorporated in the final version.

### **10. Publication launched and promoted**

Once printed the publication will then be ready for promotion and launch, which is an event that needs to be agreed and planned well in advance. The College will enter the publication into its stock system and sell copies as requested.

## **Timeframe**

In total (from planning right through to publication) you should expect the project to take 88–100 weeks (two years). It is important that group members are realistic in terms of the time they can give the project and that they allow sufficient time for piloting, peer-review, service-user consultation, endorsement, holidays and the risk that some group members may leave.

## **References**

College of Occupational Therapists (2007) *Professional standards for occupational therapy practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: COT.

College of Occupational Therapists (2004) *Practice guidelines development manual*. London: COT.

College of Occupational Therapists (2009) *10 stage publication process*. London: COT.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2009) *Process manual for accrediting producers of guidance and recommendations for practice: a guide for producers and stakeholders [consultation document]*. London: NICE.

## **Contacts:**

### **Julia Roberts – PPG link**

Quality Programme Manager  
Tel: 020 7450 2334  
[julia.roberts@cot.co.uk](mailto:julia.roberts@cot.co.uk)

### **Anna Pettican**

Research and Development Officer  
Tel: 020 7450 2363  
[anna.pettican@cot.co.uk](mailto:anna.pettican@cot.co.uk)

### **Tessa Woodfine**

Publications Officer  
Tel: 020 7450 5475  
[tessa.woodfine@cot.co.uk](mailto:tessa.woodfine@cot.co.uk)

### **Andrew Hughes**

Assistant Librarian  
Tel: 020 7450 2316  
[andrew.hughes@cot.co.uk](mailto:andrew.hughes@cot.co.uk)



## Support and resources available to groups developing practice guidelines/guidance in conjunction with the College Occupational Therapists

Please note that the support and resources listed below are only available following approval of the project scope from both the PPG and the relevant ethics review panel(s).

### Resources, advice & support:

The College will provide:

- Use of the College's meeting rooms. To ensure you are not charged for these rooms, please book as '*COT / Specialist Section Guideline Development Project*'.
- Advice and support during the development stage through the PPG, Quality Programme Manager and Research and Development Officer.
- Advice and support during final manuscript to print stages through the Publications Officer.
- Front cover and document design.

### Library Services:

For each publication project the College's Library will provide:

- One top-level evidence-based literature search (approximately 3–5 hours).
- Two hours' desk research by a librarian (this time could be used for further literature searching).
- Photocopies provided under the College's copyright licence.
- Free personal use of the library.
- Advice on referencing – including a copy of the College's referencing guidelines.
- Final search strategy, which will contain separate searches from different databases. Please note these searches will contain duplicates.

However, sufficient time must be allowed for the Library to carry out these services. Please note that in order to provide a full and appropriate service, the Library will require a copy of the Project scope and a detailed discussion with the Project Lead/subject expert, to identify specialist terminology and identify the search question. This service does not include the librarians obtaining materials from other libraries unless this is a stated need and forms part of a contract, i.e. commissioned work. Requests for Library services should be made through the Quality Programme Manager. This is to ensure that a complete record of each project is kept on file.

### Funding:

Group members should note that the College funding *only* covers:

- Travel costs for group members (maximum of six) to attend up to a maximum of four meetings per year. This will be subject to:
  1. Receipt of a detailed Gantt chart (action plan), which must include the number of group members involved and the estimated cost per meeting (this should be submitted to the Quality Programme Manager).
  2. Stated purpose for each meeting.
- Printing and production costs involved in producing hard copy documents.

Group members should note that exceeding the two-year overall project timescale will result in the College funding being withdrawn.

### On completion of the project the College will:

- Provide sufficient number of complimentary hard copies for the development group/ contributors/ Specialist Section forum (if applicable) to receive one copy each, plus copies for relevant outside agencies. It is the responsibility of each Specialist Section to disseminate the hard copies.
- Market the document in line with the College's Publications Marketing Strategy.
- Provide reference copies of the final document for the College library.