

The Development of an Access and Registration Framework for Internationally Educated Occupational Therapists: Summary Report 2007

**Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations
Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs
Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists**

The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those
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Executive Summary

The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT), the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO), and the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs (ACOTUP) have been addressing a number of strategies in response to current and foreseeable shortages of occupational therapists, following the completion of an extensive examination of the assessment and ultimate integration of Internationally Educated Occupational Therapists (IEOTs). *The Enabling the Workforce Integration of International Graduates: Issues and Recommendations for Occupational Therapy in Canada* (hereinafter *Workforce Integration Project*) report reviewed all aspects of the process an IEOT must navigate to become a practicing member of the occupational therapy workforce in Canada, and described a number of issues including barriers and challenges to the process. Seven overarching recommendations are presented for improvements in the facility and timelines of the process as well as in resource optimization.

In follow-up to the work completed in the *Workforce Integration Project*, the three organizations embarked on a project aimed to develop a unified framework to address five of the seven recommendations identified in the report. The overall objectives are to: 1) identify the pathway(s) followed by IEOTs, from the point of initial consideration of immigration, to access to the profession in Canada, to successful registration, and finally to integration into the Occupational Therapy workforce; 2) describe the types of activities and processes needed at key points on the pathway(s); and 3) facilitate the identification of processes and related timing for assessment, remediation, and supports as the IEOT moves through the pathway to registration and integration into the profession.

The project consisted of two phases. The first phase involved the identification of the challenges and initiatives in the IEHP environment; the identification of best practices and/or success factors; and the identification of the potential components of the framework. Phase two pertained to the validation and confirmation of the proposed framework. A combination of primary and secondary research methods was employed in the first phase, which included a review of both published and unpublished (grey reports) literature, and completion of nine consultations with key informants in nine health professions.

The information resulting from the first phase was used to guide the development of the proposed draft *Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs*. The proposed draft framework was then

validated in phase two, which consisted of a two-stage process. The first stage of validation was through an on-line survey of members and stakeholders from CAOT, ACOTRO, and ACOTUP. The input obtained from the survey was presented and discussed in three consultative sessions involving the members of ACOTRO and ACOTUP, and the CAOT Board of Directors; this advisory action formed the second stage of the validation process. Results from the consultative sessions were used to revise and prepare the final framework, which was reviewed and approved by the project's Steering Committee.

The *Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs* identifies the pathway for IEOTs to follow, from the point of their initial consideration of immigration, to access to the profession in Canada, to their successful registration, and finally to their integration into the occupational therapy workforce. The framework also describes the type of activities and processes needed at key points on the pathway, and facilitates the identification of the processes and related timing for the assessment, remediation, and supports as the IEOT moves through the pathway to registration and integration into the profession.

Seven underlying principles and values were used to characterize the components and elements of the framework respecting the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved. There are five components to the framework and a number of decision points along the pathway. The five components include: information; assessment; preparation and support; entry into the occupational therapy workforce/provisional registration; and integration into the occupational therapy workforce. Each component in turn is defined by a number of elements.

The findings of this project reflect much of the information contained in the *Workforce Integration Project* report. The recommendations made in that report are further supported by the observations in this project. The framework positions those recommendations for coordination of action. Taken together, the results suggest that several elements of the framework are partially or not at all developed and must be put into place before the framework can be implemented. This will take time and resources but is a necessary first step.

A number of recommendations are proposed for the three-member organizations to consider in moving forward. These include: creating one information gateway; establishing a process to develop and validate tools that will standardize assessment of IEOTs

to enhance fairness in recognizing international qualifications; developing programs, processes, and tools to support the knowledge and competency development of IEOTs; establishing and

providing appropriate workplace and financial support for IEOTs; securing funding to begin to develop the tools and programs that comprise the framework; and completing periodic evaluations.

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1.0 Introduction

Canada has a long history of relying on Internationally Educated Health Professionals (IEHPs) during times of shortages of health professionals. Physicians and nurses are the most commonly targeted groups for international recruitment. In the 2006 report entitled *Enabling the Workforce Integration of International Graduates: Issues and Recommendations for Occupational Therapy in Canada* (hereinafter *Workforce Integration Project*), it was noted that from the years 2000 to 2005 there were 262 new international registrants in occupational therapy (von Zweck, 2006).

Recent reports have indicated that to meet the needs of Canadians (CAOT, 2001), there is a current and foreseeable shortage of occupational therapists. Other health professions find themselves in a similar situation with predictions of dire shortages threatening the integrity of the health care system¹. Significant numbers of health professionals will be retiring over the next five to ten years and there are not nearly enough new graduates to replenish the workforce. Consequently, Canada will remain highly dependent on internationally educated health professionals for the foreseeable future.

In response to these shortages a number of strategies have been suggested. These include: increasing the number of student seats in health professional schools and faculties; introducing incentives to retain currently practicing health professionals; finding innovative initiatives to retain staff beyond planned retirement; and improving Canada's capacity to integrate internationally educated health professionals. The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT), the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO), and the Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs (ACOTUP) (Appendix A provides further information about the three organizations) have been addressing a number of the above strategies following an extensive examination of the assessment and ultimate integration of IEOTs in Canada (von Zweck, 2006)².

The report reviewed all aspects of the process an IEOT must navigate to become a practising member of the occupational therapy workforce in Canada. The process begins with an assessment of the home country conditions and quality

of the education offered, moving through immigration policies and practices, to entry, to practice requirements³ such as credential recognition, certification examination, language assessment, work experience, and finally integration into an employment position. A number of issues, including barriers and challenges, are described in this very comprehensive report. Seven overarching recommendations are presented for improvements in the facility and timelines of the process, as well as in resource optimization.

Following the work completed in the *Workforce Integration Project*, the aim of the three member organizations was to develop a unified framework to address in part five of the seven recommendations made in the first report. These are:

- coordinate and centralize registration requirements and processes for working as an occupational therapist;
- improve national certification examination access, preparation resources, and assistance;
- provide clear and accessible information to help international graduates to work in Canada;
- increase access to academic upgrading and language training to help international graduates meet registration requirements; and
- help international graduates become linked with employers, occupational therapists, and professional resources.

More specifically, the objectives of the project are to:

- identify the pathway(s) followed by IEOTs, from the point of initial consideration of immigration, to access to the profession in Canada, to successful registration, and finally to integration into the occupational therapy workforce;
- describe the types of activities and processes needed at key points on the pathway(s); and
- facilitate the identification of processes and related timing for assessment, remediation, and supports as the IEOT moves through the pathway to registration and integration into the profession.

A Steering Committee consisting of a representative from ACOTRO, ACOTUP, CAOT guided and directed the project, with the advice of Health Canada, and Human Resources and Social Development Canada. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between ACOTRO, ACOTUP, and CAOT, which outlined the purpose, background, and objectives of the

¹The term "system" is used liberally as there are several systems.

²The final report of this project is entitled *Enabling the Workforce Integration of International Graduates: Issues and Recommendations for Occupation Therapy in Canada* (hereinafter *Workforce Integration Project*) and was funded by the Government of Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition Program.

³Occupational therapy is a regulated profession in Canada and sets high quality standards of education and practice for Canadian educated occupational therapists. These standards apply to IEOTs as well.

project, as well as the terms and conditions for each partner organization. The CAOT provided the project management and administrative services to the project on behalf of the Steering Committee. Association Strategy Group was selected to complete the research and develop the *IEOT Access and Registration Framework*.

2.0 Approach and Methods

The project consisted of two phases. The first phase involved the identification of the challenges and initiatives in the IEHP environment; the identification of best practices and/or success factors; and the identification of the potential components of the framework. Phase two pertained to the validation and confirmation of the proposed framework. A combination of primary and secondary research methods were employed in the first phase, which included a review of the relevant literature (both published and unpublished [grey reports]), and completion of consultations with key informants in nine organizations (physicians, nurses, medical radiation technologists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, midwives, medical laboratory technologists, and one program, the Atlantic Canada's IEHP program).

The information resulting from the literature review and key informant interviews was used to guide the development of the proposed draft Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs. Upon approval by the Steering Committee, the proposed draft framework was validated in phase two, which consisted of a two-stage process. The first stage of validation was through an on-line survey sent to 59 members and stakeholders: 15 to CAOT members, 9 to provincial/territorial professional organizations, 10 to ACOTRO members, and 25 to ACOTUP members. Thirty-one completed surveys were received representing a 53% response rate. The majority of respondents (15) were CAOT members/stakeholders, 8 were ACOTRO members, and 8 were ACOTUP members.

The second stage of the validation process was the consultative sessions involving the members of ACOTRO and ACOTUP, and CAOT Board of Directors. The intention of these sessions was to generate discussion about how to further enhance the draft framework. Results from the consultative sessions were then used to revise and prepare the final framework, which was reviewed and approved by the project's Steering Committee.

Limitations

The focus of the project was to develop an access and registration framework for IEOTs. As such, not all aspects

of the pathway proposed for the framework were assessed and reviewed in depth. A second limitation pertained to the participants of the on-line survey. The sample selected was not a random sample but rather a selected one. The decision of choosing which participants to survey, was made by the Steering Committee; participants were selected based on the objectives of the survey and its needs. The specific expertise and knowledge sought from the participants in the validation phase resulted in the small sample size.

Linked to the sample size selection is the lower than expected response rate for the survey. A 53% response rate was achieved and even though the participants were selected from the three organizations, a 90%+ response rate had been expected. The lack of response from ACOTUP and the professional provincial/territorial organizations identified by CAOT is suspected as the main reason for the lower than expected response rate.

3.0 The Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs

The *Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs* presents the overall pathway an IEOT is required to follow to practice occupational therapy in Canada; it also recognizes that there are differences between provinces in the licensing and registration of candidates. The framework establishes the context to implement actions and identify the key roles and responsibilities of the stakeholder groups in the occupational therapy community.

The following underlying principles and values⁴ characterize the components and elements of the framework respecting the different roles and responsibilities of the parties involved:

1. **Accessibility:** the components of the framework are accessible to IEOTs and to the stakeholder groups responsible for the development and implementation of the framework.
2. **Equitability/Fairness:** the process is unbiased and applied consistently to all parties.
3. **Feasibility:** the components and process of the framework are feasible to IEOTs and to the stakeholder groups responsible for the development and implementation of the framework.
4. **Optimization of resources:** the IEOTs resources are used effectively in the process and resources are optimized by stakeholder groups responsible for the development and implementation of the components of the framework.

⁴ The project's Steering Committee approved the underlying principles in April, 2007.

5. **Sustainability:** the process is sustainable in the long term.
6. **Transparency:** the components and process of the framework are transparent for IEOTs and for stakeholder groups.
7. **Accountability:** the framework is reliable and valid.
8. **Effectiveness:** the components of the framework meet the needs of IEOTs and of the stakeholder groups responsible for the implementation of the framework.

The draft *Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs* was developed using the schematic represented in Health Canada's draft of the *Internationally Educated Health Professionals: Components of Successful Integration into the Canadian Health Care System* (2007) as a starting point. Results of the literature review and key informant interviews fed into the preliminary drafts of the framework. Revisions to the draft framework were made by the Steering Committee prior to the draft being considered final and ready for validation. The input received from the participants in the validation phase of the project informed the final decisions taken by the Steering Committee to produce the final *Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs*.

3.1 Navigating the Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs

Figure 3.1 illustrates the proposed framework. There are five components to the framework and a number of decision points along the pathway. The five components include: information; assessment; preparation and support; entry into the occupational therapy workforce/provisional registration; and integration into the occupational therapy workforce. Each component in turn is defined by a number of elements. Figures 3.2 to 3.6 provided at the end of the section, outline the elements in each component of the framework.

3.1.1 Information Component

The framework recognizes the IEOTs as graduates living in their country of origin, or actually having moved and living in Canada when they first express an interest in registering as an occupational therapist in Canada. In either case, the IEOTs first require consistent and thorough information about the registration and licensure process in Canada; the Canadian health care system and the occupational therapy environment; and, about Canada. The IEOTs also benefit from having tools and information to self-assess and links to various Web sites that will provide the IEOTs with the necessary information (e.g., immigration requirements and processes). Information about the Canadian occupational therapy education program and its requirements will also benefit the IEOTs who may choose to augment their existing occupational therapy skills

and knowledge by pursuing a Canadian occupational therapy education, thereby graduating from a program in Canada and following the traditional pathways of the Canadian graduate. It is proposed that this information reside on a portal or Web site with links to relevant sites. This will ensure that the information provided on the portal/Web site is consistent, accurate, and as up-to-date as possible.

3.1.2 Assessment Component

The IEOTs continuing along the pathway proceed to the assessment process, understanding that the process will help identify the preparation and support they require prior to licensure and registration. It should be noted that each province/territory has its own regulatory body and therefore, its own regulations and processes for assessing and licensing/registering candidates. There are essentially four areas of assessment. The first is the assessment of the candidates' academic credentials. This involves the authentication and assessment of credentials according to its equivalency to the Canadian education. The academic credential review is typically completed first in the assessment of a candidate. The next three areas of assessment occur in no particular order. One area pertains to reviewing the candidates' profession-specific language capabilities. Another area assesses the candidates' employment eligibility (criminal record checks and immigration status). The final area reviews candidate's professional credentials (competency; work experience, including Prior Learning Assessment Recognition; currency; exam).

3.1.3 Preparation and Support Component

The assessment process will assist the IEOTs and the regulatory body in identifying where further preparation and support is required prior to proceeding to the licensure/registration/practice permit process. The IEOTs may either be required to obtain this support because they do not meet all the requirements necessary to proceed to the licensure/registration/practice permit process, or they may voluntarily choose to enhance their skills, knowledge, and/or education prior to completing the assessment process and once they have reviewed the information about the pathway to becoming an IEOT. This component of the pathway includes offering the candidate bridging programs for them to further enhance their educational and/or clinical competencies; language training specific to the profession; financial support and examination preparation support; and an orientation program to Canada's health care sector and to the occupational therapy environment in Canada. It is proposed that the completion of the orientation program be mandatory for the IEOTs prior to proceeding to the licensure/registration/practice permit component. This

program will be modular, thus permitting the IEOTs to follow only those modules that they are lacking.

The preparation and support component of the framework also includes preceptorship. Faculty/preceptor development is included because it is critical that faculty and preceptors have the skills and knowledge to assess and deliver the training to the IEOTs. In addition, employer support is included. It is recognized that employers will use the framework to understand the pathways and processes the IEOTs follow to become fully integrated into the occupational therapy workforce, and that employers will also require support in terms of how to mentor and manage an IEOT who brings a different background and culture to the workplace.

3.1.4 Entry into the Occupational Therapy Workforce/Provisional Registration Component

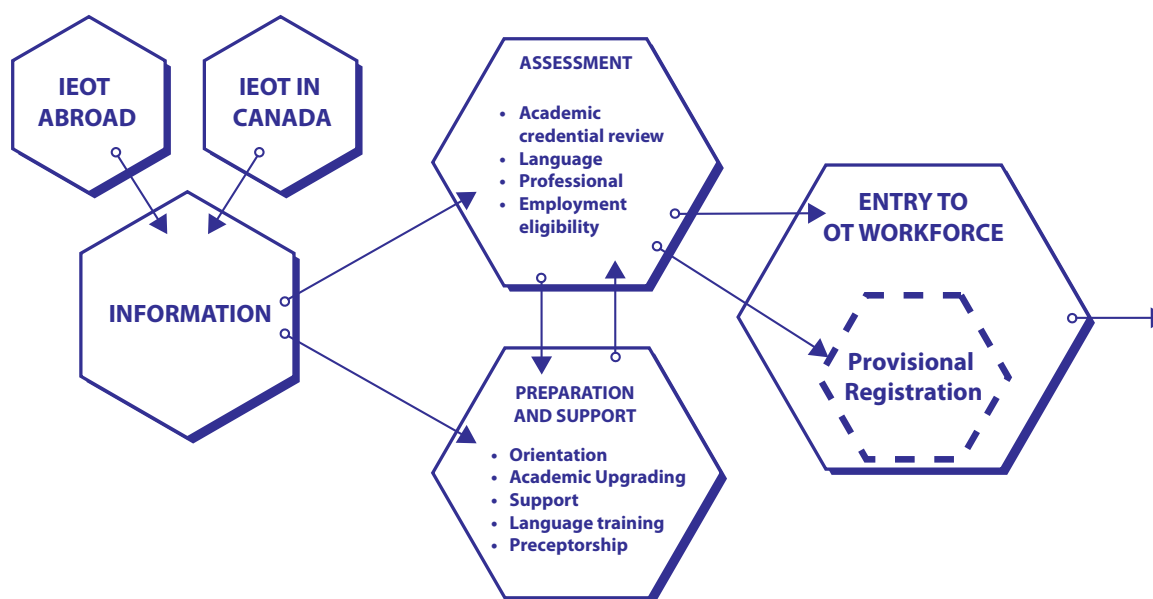
Once the IEOTs have received the preparation and support necessary, they will be re-assessed; once all requirements are met, including the completion of the orientation program, they will proceed to the process of licensing/registering. The IEOTs are either successful and are licensed/registered, or are not successful and attempt the process again following further preparation.

Once licensed/registered, the IEOT enters the occupational therapy workforce. In some provinces/territories, the IEOT can enter the workforce and practice under a provisional registration. An IEOT is supervised by an occupational therapist while practising under provisional registration and can access the support they need to meet the requirements for licensing/registration by accessing the programs identified in the support and preparation component. The framework identifies a number of possible types of support that should be provided to the IEOT once in the workforce such as further orientation to the workplace; mentorship; bridge to work programs; profession-specific language training; and links to other professionals in the workplace and community. Orientation to support employers to work with and manage the IEOTs is also suggested to ensure a positive integration of the IEOTs into the workforce.

3.1.5 Integration into the Occupational Therapy Workforce

The final component of the framework is integration into the occupational therapy workforce. This is the ultimate goal for the IEOTs and an opportunity for the IEOTs to give back to the profession by becoming mentors and/or preceptors. The IEOTs will achieve their own professional identity and further work toward developing their career.

Figure 3.1: IEOT Access and Registration Framework



It is important to note that the elements within each component of the framework are not final or complete. They serve as a starting point for implementation.

INTEGRATION IN THE OT WORKFORCE

Figure 3.2: Information Component



Figure 3.3: Assessment Component

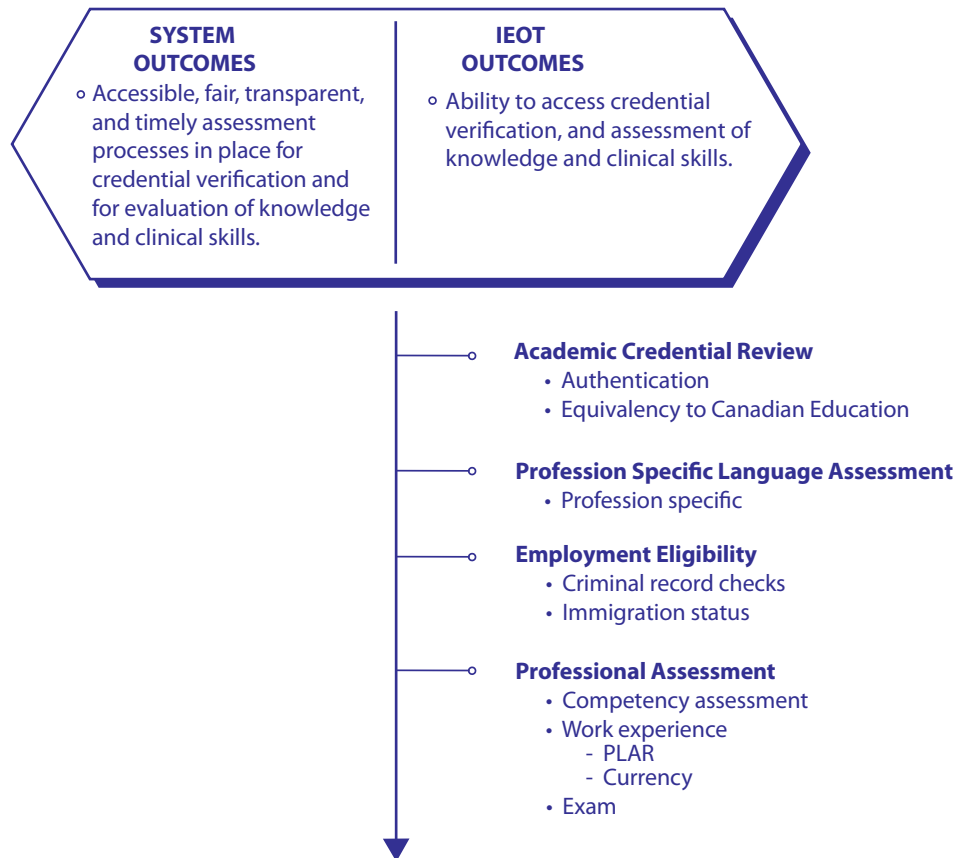


Figure 3.4: Preparation and Support Component

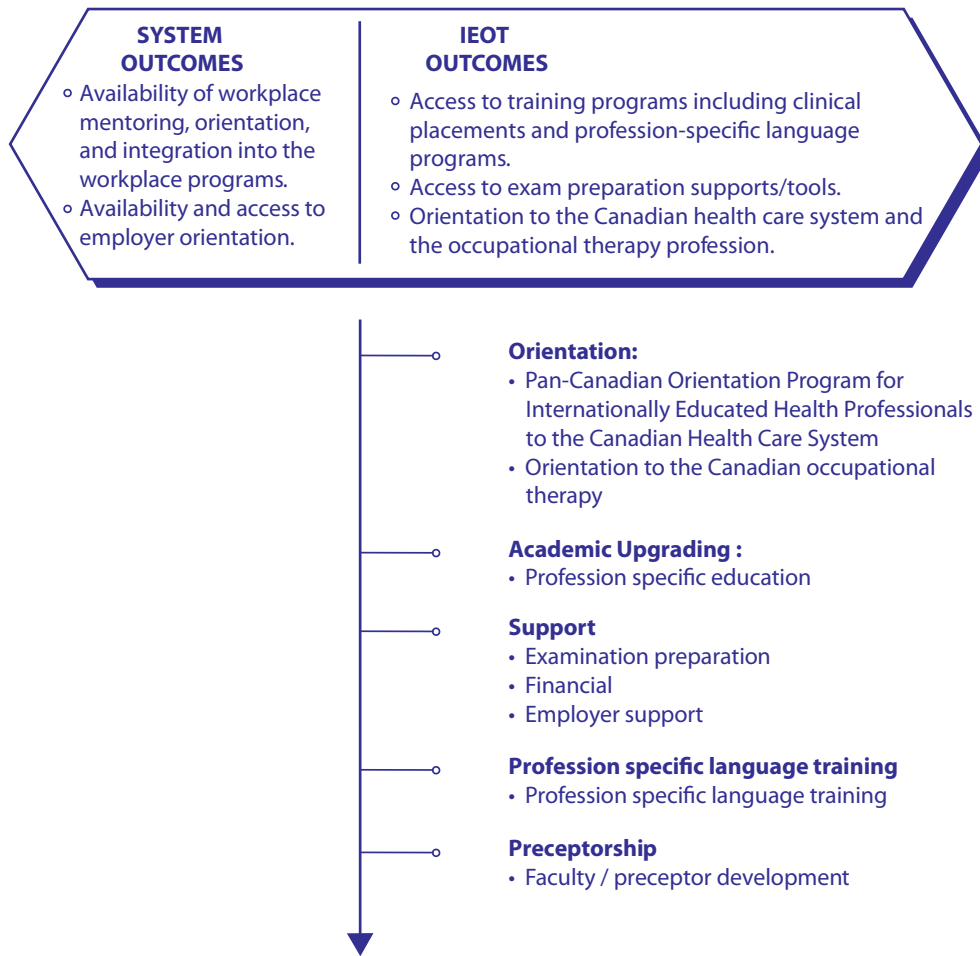


Figure 3.5: Entry into the Occupational Therapy Workforce / Provisional Registration Component

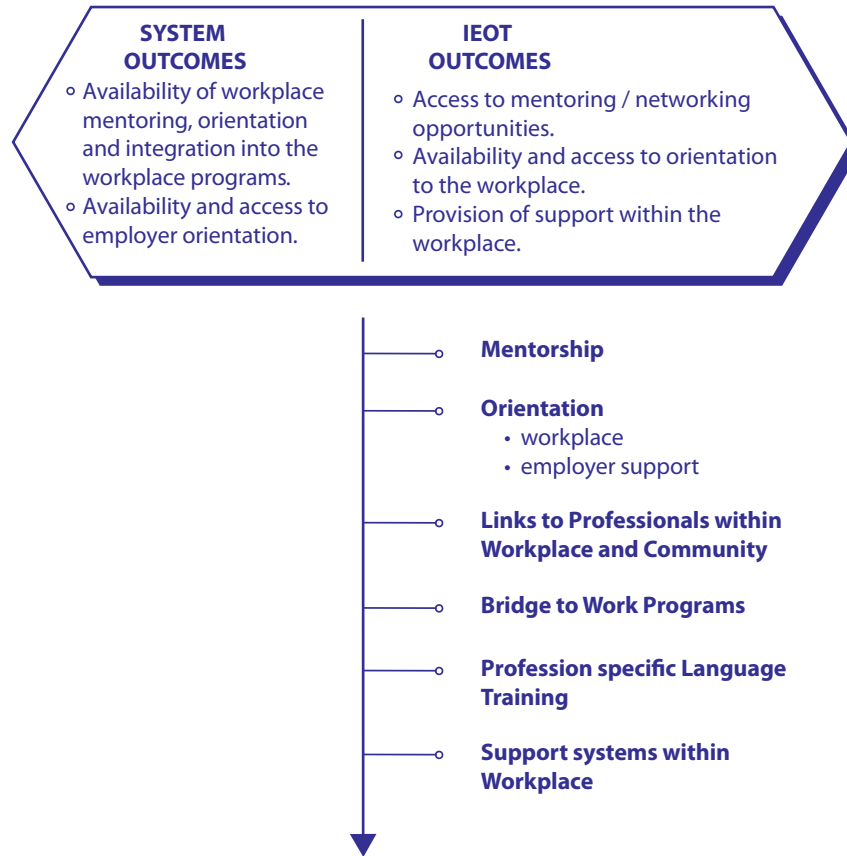
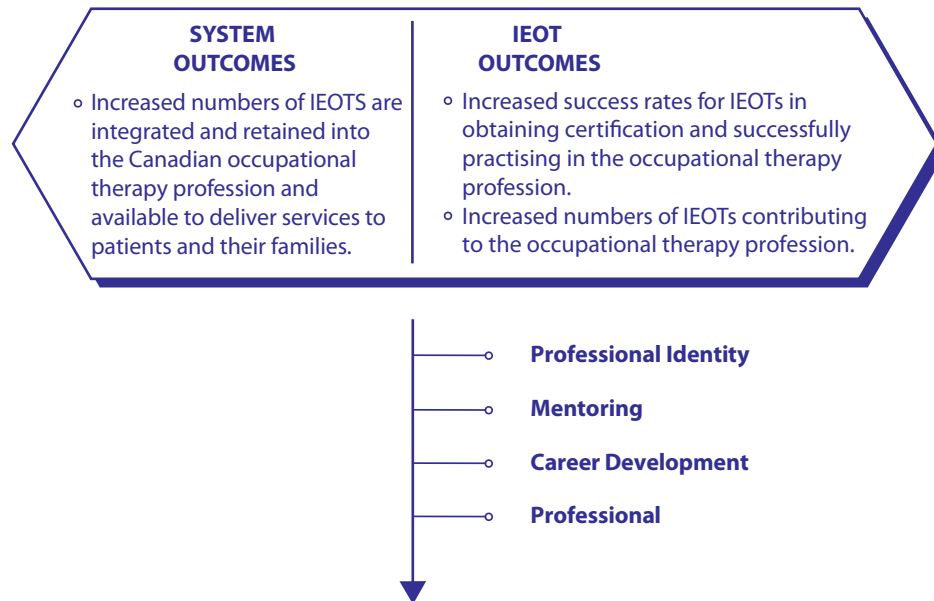


Figure 3.6: Integration into the Occupational Therapy Workforce



4.0 Conclusion – Moving Forward

The findings of this project reflect much of the information contained in the *Workforce Integration Project report*. The recommendations made in that report are further supported by the observations in this project. The framework positions those recommendations for coordination of action. Taken together, the results suggest that several elements of the framework are partially or not at all developed and must be put into place before the framework can be implemented. This will take time and resources but is a necessary first step.

The proposed framework contains elements whose basic infrastructure is only partially or not at all developed. For example, there is currently no common portal or Web site with clear information on the entire process of assessment and registration for the IEOTs. Such a site will need to be developed and linked to other relevant sites, which add value/new information for users. The current assessment approach includes credential, language and competency assessment, as well as eligibility for employment. Each provincial/territorial regulatory body undertakes these assessments and there are some variations from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Improvement to the assessment approaches will be required to implement a more harmonized and consistent national approach. Consideration may be given to a distributed approach so that each province/territory does not duplicate each aspect of the process.

There is considerable work to be completed to provide for a number of the elements identified in the preparation and support component of the framework. For example, tools can be developed to assist the IEOTs in self-assessment, while knowledge modules for practice can be made available on-line. The development of bridging programs⁵ for the IEOTs would facilitate the registration/integration process. Tools may also be developed to enhance readiness to undertake the registration examination. It may be possible to engage other health professions in developing a health-specific language course and assessment tool, adding appropriate occupational therapy language where applicable. Likewise, additional modules that pertain to occupational therapy in Canada can be added to an orientation program for IEHPs currently being developed collaboratively by a number of health professions.

⁵For the purposes of this project, bridging programs refer to an educational program that is specifically designed to assist international graduates who completed their basic occupational therapy education in countries other than Canada to: meet the licensing/registration requirements in a Canadian province/territory; integrate into the Canadian occupational therapy system; and develop language and literacy competency specifically related to health care and occupational therapy terminology.

Taken together, the results suggest that several elements must be put into place before the framework can be implemented. It is hoped that through a collaborative effort, the occupational therapy profession in Canada will achieve a high quality, timely process for the registration/licensure and integration into the workforce of the IEOTs who wish to live and practise their profession here in Canada.

A number of recommendations are proposed. They are based upon the current directions being taken by several health professions in the assessment and integration of internationally educated graduates. The recommendations respect the principles upon which the proposed *Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs* was founded.

Recommendation 1: Create one information gateway

Accurate, timely, and consistent information for the IEOTs about coming to Canada and the steps for assessment for registration/licensure is key to a more efficient process. Having to navigate several Web sites, including Citizenship and Immigration Canada, national occupational therapy associations, provincial/territorial regulatory organizations, and other sources of information about Canada and the Canadian health system is cumbersome, time consuming, and confusing. It is highly recommended that one gate/portal be created for IEOTs, encompassing all the relevant information, and potential assessment and educational tools as included in the framework of Figure 2. Moving forward, occupational therapy associations should keep abreast of other IEHP initiatives in this area. For example, there are current discussions about creating one portal for IEHPs with appropriate discipline-specific links.

Recommendation 2: Establish a process to develop and validate tools that will standardize the assessment of the IEOTs to enhance fairness in recognizing international qualifications

A similar approach to assessment of credentials and competencies would ensure similar national standards. Some thought may be given to a distributed model of assessment; that is, some aspects may be regionalized or nationalized, whereas others would require local/jurisdictional attention. Again, a collaborative approach among occupational therapy regulators and stakeholders will enhance the planning process and maximize the use of resources and time.

Recommendation 3: Develop programs, processes and tools to support the knowledge and competency development of the IEOTs

Resources, professional collaboration, and expertise will be required to develop the type of programs, processes, and tools essential for the IEOTs to use to develop the knowledge and competency they require to meet the assessment requirements. Some of the types of programs required include: accessing academic upgrading; language training; supervised fieldwork; and mentoring programs. Some of these programs, processes, and tools may be easier to develop than others since there may be opportunities to collaborate with existing or planned initiatives such as the orientation program for IEHPs.

There are some programs and tools currently available across Canada to assist the IEOTs in acquiring the knowledge and develop the competencies they need to meet the assessment requirements. There is a need to review these programs and tools; some of these can be employed in other jurisdictions. In addition to the funding required, human resources will require expertise in teaching the IEOTs. A distributed model of support can be considered in terms of consolidating expertise and infrastructure, and maintaining standards and costs. Some supports such as on-line modules can be centralized in development and accessible locally in implementation. An on-line orientation to health care in Canada course provides one such example.

Recommendation 4: Establish appropriate workplace supports for the IEOTs

Once an IEOT is eligible for licensure/certification, successful integration into the workforce and ongoing professional development will largely depend on workplace system supports such as orientation, mentorship, and continuing education. Professional support provided by provincial/territorial and national occupational therapy associations will also be important to the successful professional development of the IEOTs in Canada. These professional associations should consider professional development programs specifically designed to meet the needs of the IEOTs.

Recommendation 5: Provide financial support for the IEOTs

Regardless of the approach taken to validate the successful licensure and integration of the IEOTs, financial support will undoubtedly be required. This may include support for tuition, child care, housing, and other similar needs.

Recommendation 6: Secure funding to begin to develop the tools and programs that comprise the framework

Before the framework can be fully implemented, a number of elements have been identified in each component that requires development. A plan will be required to set the priorities, timelines, and estimated costs. Occupational therapy stakeholders would benefit from working with appropriate federal and provincial/territorial government departments, other health professions, and private foundations to secure adequate funding to move forward.

Recommendation 7: Complete periodic evaluations

An ongoing review and assessment process of the pathway and activities within each component is recommended. These evaluations will ensure that the material and processes are meeting the needs of the IEOTs, and addressing the challenges of the IEOTs and other stakeholder groups such as regulatory bodies and employers. The evaluation plan(s) should be designed early on so that results from the evaluations will be used to continuously enhance the material and processes.

The *Access and Registration Framework for IEOTs* identifies the pathway for the IEOTs to follow from the point of their initial consideration of immigration, to access to the profession in Canada, to their successful registration, and finally to their integration into the occupation therapy workforce. The framework also describes the type of activities and processes needed at key points of the pathway, and facilitates the identification of the processes and related timing for the assessment, remediation, and supports as the IEOT moves through the pathway to registration and integration into the profession.

One of the first steps in moving forward will be to develop a workplan that identifies the activities and timelines for the implementation of the framework. Key to this activity will be the setting of short-, medium- and long-term priorities, as well as determining which stakeholder groups will assume leadership roles and which groups will need to be involved in the implementation of the components and their activities. The three partner organizations, ACOTRO, ACOTUP, and CAOT have been and can continue to lead in moving this initiative to its next phase.

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Appendix A

Background Information about ACOTRO, ACOTUP and CAOT

Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy Regulatory Organizations (ACOTRO)⁶

ACOTRO is the national federation of occupational therapy regulators in Canada. All ten occupational therapy regulatory organizations belong to ACOTRO, each of which has been granted the authority in law to regulate the practice of occupational therapists in their respective province with the mandate to protect the public.

As the collective of all provincial occupational therapy regulators who have the responsibility to protect the public, ACOTRO's mission is to advance the quality of occupational therapy regulation in Canada.

The core roles of ACOTRO include:

- Provide leadership to achieve excellence, continuity, and congruence in quality regulation for the occupational therapy profession.
- Promote competence and facilitate mobility of occupational therapists across Canada through essential competencies.
- Partner with other organizations to provide leadership in the occupational therapy profession.
- Identify and act on common issues related to occupational therapy regulation.
- Build capacity to sustain a national perspective related to occupational therapy regulation.

ACOTRO's strategic priorities are to:

- develop consistent and congruent competency assessment based on the ACOTRO essential competencies (such as for determining entry to practice and quality assurance programs);
- ensure an effective role in health and human resource planning;
- formalize our organizational structure and corporate identity;
- evaluate the tools and processes used for the purpose of determining entry to practice and ensuring they are defensible in our respective jurisdictions;
- develop expanded internal resources for all ACOTRO members.

ACOTRO members regulate over 12,000 occupational therapists in Canada. In each respective province, ACOTRO members are accountable for regulating entry to practice through setting registration/licensure requirements such as education; establishing and monitoring standards for practice and ethical conduct; implementing quality assurance programs such as continuing competency requirements to assure continued safe, quality practice; and addressing concerns raised about registrant's practice or conduct through inquiry and discipline.

Association of Canadian Occupational Therapy University Programs (ACOTUP)⁷

ACOTUP is a national organization that promotes and develops occupational therapy education and research with understanding of issues in a global context.

The objectives of ACOTUP are:

- to act as the official body of the Canadian university programs of occupational therapy to achieve and uphold standards of education in occupational therapy;
- to act as the official body responsible for generating and promoting the exchange of ideas and philosophies in occupational therapy education;
- to promote and facilitate research related to occupational therapy education;
- to participate in establishing, maintaining, and reviewing policies which have direct and/or indirect educational implications through representation to the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT/ACE);
- to represent the federation of university programs in its relationships with universities, and other national and international associations and organizations with educational and/or research mandates.

⁶From briefing note to the first Occupational Therapy Council meeting, January 9, 2007.

⁷ ACOTUP, About Us. Retrieved from <http://www.acotup-acpue.ca/AboutUs.htm> on October 1, 2007.

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT)⁸

Established in 1926, the CAOT provides services, products, events, and networking opportunities to assist occupational therapists achieve excellence in their professional practice. In addition CAOT provides national leadership to actively develop and promote the client-centred profession of occupational therapy in Canada and internationally.

Its mission is to advance excellence in occupational therapy, and its vision is that all people in Canada will value and have access to occupational therapy. CAOT operates on the following values: integrity, accountability, respect, and equity.

CAOT's strategic objectives include to:

- Advance leadership in occupational therapy.
- Foster evidence-based occupational therapy.
- Advocate for occupational therapy as an essential service.
- Develop workforce capacity in occupational therapy.
- Advance CAOT as the national occupational therapy professional association in Canada.

⁸ CAOT, About CAOT. Retrieved from <http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=2> on October 1, 2007.