

## ***ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY***

**POLICY NO: B.3.159**

**SECTION: Board/Organizational**

### **B.3.159 STRATEGIC ADVOCACY TEAM – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **PURPOSE:**

To provide strategic advice and recommendations to the Board of Directors relating to emerging trends, policy evolution, research/evidence and emerging legislative issues affecting OSOT members in order to inform OSOT's strategic and proactive advocacy agenda and strategies, and to provide oversight, guidance and monitoring to the advocacy work undertaken by OSOT staff and Teams.

#### **FUNCTIONS/TASKS:**

1. To provide thought leadership and recommendations to the Board of Directors on provincial health policy issues that affect occupational therapy for the purposes of the Board's development and consolidation of strategic advocacy strategies.
2. To monitor policy planning and/or budget cycles in Ontario and identify opportunities for proactive influence of key policy makers/funders during these strategic periods.
3. To identify and recommend annually 3 – 5 strategic issues for attention of the Strategic Advocacy Team that would not overlap with the focus of OSOT Sector Teams and would contribute to strategic positioning of occupational therapists in Ontario.
4. To develop and implement comprehensive advocacy strategies for the issues identified for Strategic Advocacy Team attention each year.
5. To monitor progress of the Society's advocacy initiatives undertaken by staff and OSOT Teams/Task Forces, advising as appropriate.
6. To ensure a regular forum through which to link with OSOT's government relations consultant on a regular basis to facilitate knowledge exchange, advocacy planning and analysis of emerging trends.

#### **REPORTING STRUCTURE:**

1. The Strategic Advocacy Team reports to the Board of Directors through the Executive Director.
2. Team updates, identifying achievements, progress on initiatives/objectives, and/or barriers to goal achievement will be forwarded upon request (6 times per year) to support a consolidated Team Update Report to the Board of Directors meetings.

3. Records of Team meetings will be maintained by the Chair and copies of Team Minutes will be forwarded to the Executive Assistant, OSOT Office.

#### **MEMBERSHIP:**

The Strategic Advocacy Team shall include membership of:

- the President
- Executive Director
- An External Consultant with expertise in government relations and health policy
- the President Elect when in office
- up to 3 additional members who bring strategic insights relevant to Team priorities

Membership will be confirmed in June of each year for the following membership year and will be communicated to the OSOT Office by the Team Chair, identifying any volunteer needs.

Any member interested in joining the Team is invited to submit an Expression of Interest to the OSOT Office. Applications will be forwarded to the Team for review. The Chair will advise the Office of the Team's decisions regarding applicants and provide a final list of members no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>. New Team members will be provided with orientation resources from the OSOT Office.

The Strategic Advocacy Team will be chaired by the Executive Director.

Team participation will be guided by the OSOT Code of Conduct and the OSOT Team Member Practices document.

#### **MEETINGS:**

Meetings of the Strategic Advocacy Team shall be bi-weekly or at the call of the Chair.

To facilitate involvement of members from across the province, communications and consultation via telephone, email and web-based formats will be built into the communications strategy of the Team as required.

To facilitate attendance, the meeting schedule will be pre-circulated for the year by October 30<sup>th</sup>. Team members are expected to attend all meetings. It is, however, recognized that attendance at some meetings may be realistically precluded due to conflicts or unforeseen circumstances. It is expected that regrets will be clearly communicated to the Chair at such times. A member who is absent for three (3) in a 12 month period will be contacted by the Chair to discuss attendance and, further to consultation with the Team, may be asked to resign.

For the purposes of decision-making attendance of a quorum is important. Quorum shall be 50% of the voting membership.

**DECISION-MAKING:**

Whenever possible Team decisions will be made by consensus. The role of the Chair /Co-chair is to effectively facilitate discussion to arrive at consensus. When consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be made via majority vote provided there is a quorum (attendance of at least 50% of the voting membership). All voting will occur during meetings so as to ensure that members are fully informed through materials and discussion. A tie will require further Team deliberation.

**BUDGET:**

OSOT Teams shall be approved a basic operating budget (telephone, printing, photocopy, etc) as per the Budget Planning Process for operational costs to ensure that members do not incur costs for operations of OSOT Teams. Travel expenses for Team members are limited to parking expenses.

In addition, the Team will receive an annual Project Budget in an amount approved by the Board of Directors. This Project Budget is intended to support small projects, allow for engagement in preliminary work to develop a larger project proposal, etc. Access to funds will be detailed in Team Chair orientation and Team procedures.

Access to funds in excess of the basic Operating and Project budgets must be applied for through application to the Board. A Special Project Funding Application may be forwarded at any time during the fiscal year to support strategic projects.

**OBJECTIVES:**

OSOT Teams will establish annual objectives to be approved by the Board of Directors to provide guidance for Team members. Annual objectives will be requested of Teams for June of each year so that budgets and objectives may be finalized for October 1<sup>st</sup> annually

**POLICY APPROVAL: March 22, 2014**

**POLICY REVIEW: June 3, 2017  
December 7, 2019**

**RELATED REFERENCES: Government Relations Consultant Contract, OSOT Strategic Plan**

**FORMS THAT APPLY: OSOT By-laws, September 2008, Article Eight, Section 8.01 - 8.04  
Special Projects Funding Policy  
OSOT Code of Conduct and OSOT Team Member Practices Document**