Specialist Section – Children, Young People and Families

Member handbook

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated

Updated September 2023

# Contents

## Introduction from Chair 3

## National Executive Committee 4

## Aims 7

## Member benefits 8

## Clinical forums 9

## Research and development 14

## Background 15

# Introduction from Chair

Dear Member,

I’d like to extend a warm welcome to you on joining us. We hope that this membership handbook tells you all you need to know so that you can get the most from your membership.

Our overarching aim is to provide ongoing support to members, ensuring we continue to improve standards within children’s occupational therapy services across health, social care and independent practitioners. Additionally, our aim is to raise the profile of children’s occupational therapy, in RCOT and beyond. We comment on and contribute to national policy and NICE guidelines, relevant to children, young people and their families.

We are keen to ensure that our National Executive Committee (NEC) keep abreast of current developments within our profession, and we offer appropriate information and support to members.  
  
As a committee we encourage you to be an active member within the group, with regional groups and clinical forums across the UK offering support, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and networking opportunities on a frequent basis.

The benefits of being a member enable you to enhance your practice and increase your access to expert opinion and CPD. We encourage you to use these benefits.

The NEC is run by a group of children’s therapists who volunteer their time to ensure you get maximum benefit from your membership. We are keen for you to be actively involved in the group, give feedback and share clinical knowledge.

If you feel you’d like to be actively involved with the committee either nationally or regionally then please get in touch.

Kind regards

## Dan Waldron and Jessica Pilgrim

## Co-chairs of the National Executive Committee

# National Executive Committee

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Role | Name | Description of role and contact |
| **Chair** | Dan Waldron and Jessica Pilgrim | Lead the Specialist Section National Executive Committee (NEC), ensuring that it fulfils its core business and responsibilities in line with our governance. Work collaboratively with the committee, helping them achieve the aims of the Specialist Section. Chair committee meetings and be our key point of contact. |
| **Vice-Chair** | **Emma Laird** | Support the Chair and the National Executive Committee (NEC), ensuring that it fulfils its core business and responsibilities in line with our governance. Take responsibility for NEC in the absence of the chair. Work collaboratively with the committee, helping them achieve the aims of the Specialist Section. |
| **Secretary** | **Siobhan Scanlon** | Support the management of the NEC with their communication; collate and circulate agenda items, record, and collate minutes distributing them to the NEC and RCOT. |
| **Treasurer** | **Kim Griffin** | Ensure that the Specialist Sections financial affairs are managed in compliance with the current RCOT Standing Financial Instructions and Financial Guidelines. Act as the main point of contact regarding financial matters for the Specialist Section. |
| **Newsletter editor** | **Jessica Pilgrim** | Produce the Specialist Section newsletter with the support from members and the NEC and encourage the writing of news and articles for inclusion in the newsletter. |
| **Research and Development lead** | **Benita Powrie** | Lead and support Research and Development within the Specialist Section and lead on Research and Development enquiries. |
| **Events and CPD lead** | **Rebecca Fortescue** | Take responsibility to lead, facilitate, support, and have an overview on all the Specialist Section Events and CPD offering. Assist the Specialist Section in the running of events and CPD activities. |
| **Social media lead** | **Patricia Terrer-Perez** | Maintain the webpages and engage with social media accounts on behalf of the Specialist Section. Be the first point of contact for members within social media platforms |
| **Clinical Forum lead** | **Dan Waldron** | To act as a link between the Clinical Forums and the NEC providing an overview of activities and member engagement within the Clinical Forums and supporting these activities. |
| **Region lead** | **Zoe Bowman** | To act as a link between the Regions and the NEC providing an overview of activities and member engagement within the Regions and supporting these activities. |
| **Conference Lead** | **Vacant** | To take a lead in the organisation of the Specialist Section conference. |
| **Student Lead** | **Mikaela Shalders** | To support occupational therapy students who are looking to start a career within the area of children, young people and families. To support practice educators to utilise innovative practice placement models in order to maximise placements in CYPF settings. |

To contact a member of the NEC, please email [cypfss@outlook.com](mailto:cypfss@outlook.com).

## Clinical Forums

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Clinical Forum | Lead name | Description of role |
| **Clinical forum – Acute** | **Rakhee Pau** | Support the activities of the clinical forum including member engagement and events and act as a link between the clinical forum and the NEC. |
| **Clinical forum - Autism** | **vacant** | Support the activities of the clinical forum including member engagement and events and act as a link between the clinical forum and the NEC.  This forum is not currently active. |
| **Clinical forum - Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)** | **Laura Dunger** | Support the activities of the clinical forum including member engagement and events and act as a link between the clinical forum and the NEC. |
| **Clinical forum - Leaders and Managers** | **Lucy Robertshaw, Sara Hawker and Mila Johnson** | Support the activities of the clinical forum including member engagement and events and act as a link between the clinical forum and the NEC. |
| **Clinical forum - Physical disabilities** | **Katy Perreault** | Support the activities of the clinical forum including member engagement and events and act as a link between the clinical forum and the NEC. |
| **Clinical forum - Preparation for adulthood** | **Eleanor Davis and Lisa Stoner** | Support the activities of the clinical forum including member engagement and events and act as a link between the clinical forum and the NEC. |
| **Clinical forum – Neonatal** | Beverley Hicks and Ben Scanlon | Support the activities of the clinical forum including member engagement and events and act as a link between the clinical forum and the NEC. |
| **Clinical forum - School based occupational therapy** | **Juliet Hutcheson** | Support the activities of the clinical forum including member engagement and events and act as a link between the clinical forum and the NEC. |

To contact a clinical forum, please email [cypfforums@gmail.com](mailto:cypfforums@gmail.com).

Aims

To support members and develop and maintain good communication channels with the Specialist Section clinical forums and regional groups across the UK.

* To provide national learning events and an annual training event.
* To provide expert opinion in improving standards within children’s services across health, social care and independent practitioners.
* To use recognised clinical experts within occupational therapy who can provide expert advice and support to members, as well as comment on nice standards relevant to children, young people and families.
* To share and demonstrate best practice.
* To raise the profile of occupational therapists working with children.
* To provide resources and information via social media, web pages and newsletters.

The Specialist Section is led by a National Executive Committee (NEC) made up of volunteers elected from the membership at the Annual Review Meeting (ARM).

The NEC meets four times a year and holds an annual conference. The Specialist Section has an overarching annual budget and business plan. We support members at local and national levels across the United Kingdom (UK).

# Member benefits

As part of our Specialist Section, you can access a range of benefits including:

**Newsletter**

You’ll receive a newsletter every other month. This will contain information on upcoming events along with information and resources relevant to members working in children, young people and families. We encourage you to get involved and send us information on work you are doing, any emerging areas or share your skills and expertise. You can also let us know if you have a query that the wider membership can help with. If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please get in touch with our [newsletter editor](mailto:cypfenews@outlook.com).

**Social media**

Please follow us if you are on social media. You will be able to keep up to date between newsletters with information relevant to you. Follow us on:

Twitter: @RCOT\_CYPF

[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/RCOT-Specialist-Section-Housing-110561598311971): [RCOT Specialist Section for Children, Young People and Families | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/RCOTSSCYPF/)

**Specialist Section webpages**

We have [dedicated webpages on the RCOT website](https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/specialist-sections/children-young-people-and-families-rcot-ss/conference). As a member of a Specialist Section, you can access information including member resources, useful links and contact details for NEC members. You should be logged into your RCOT account to access these resources.

**Free and subsidised CPD events**

Each year, we host CPD events that are free to all our members. Our events aim to support members from those who are students, newly-qualified or new-to-paediatrics, through to members who have been working with children, young people and families for many years. Our events are aimed at members working across a range of clinical specialisms. We also offer members subsidised rates for specific training courses.

All events are advertised in your newsletter and OTNews. Events are available for booking through [our events webpage](https://www.rcot.co.uk/events).

**Reduced costs for our conference**

As a member, you benefit from a reduced cost for attending our Specialist Section conference. Information on our conference will be included in your monthly newsletter.

**Clinical forums**

Specialist Section clinical forums are a way of bringing occupational therapists with a common specialist interest together to share expertise, learn, meet and network. These are free as part of your membership. You can find out more about our [clinical forms on our webpages](https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/specialist-sections/children-young-people-and-families-rcot-ss/clinical-forums). All clinical forum events are advertised and you can attend any of these events as a member.

**Awards and learning grants**

Grants are available at different times of the year for research, dissertations and innovative practice. Look out for these via the monthly newsletter.

**Opportunities to be part of your professional community**

There are lots of ways to get involved with policy, practice, strategy, briefings, develop practice guidelines and leadership skills. We share these opportunities widely within our newsletters and on social media and in dedicated communications.

# Clinical Forums

Clinical forums facilitate debate, networking, innovation and news in a specific domain of practice. They host events and study days that influence practice and support the Specialist Section. These study days also support Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activity and the development of occupational therapy in this area.

The Specialist Section has the following clinical forums:

* Leaders and Managers
* Acute
* Autism (not currently active)
* Neonatal
* Child and Adolescent Mental Health
* Preparation for Adulthood
* Physical Disabilities
* School Based Occupational Therapy

All clinical forum events are available for booking on the RCOT website. Events are also advertised in our monthly newsletter and in OTnews.

To contact a clinical forum, please email [cypfforums@gmail.com](mailto:cypfforums@gmail.com).

## Clinical Forum: Leaders and Managers Network

This virtual, nationwide Clinical Forum is aimed at Leaders and Managers working across any setting supporting children, young people and families.

Our aims are:

* To offer a virtual arena for networking with Leaders and Managers in similar settings
* To share practice examples between settings
* To unpick policy updates pertinent to children, young people and families
* To discuss challenges experienced in our setting

The Leaders and Managers Network was established in its current format in 2020. Following a series of surveys with Leaders and Managers and virtual pilot groups in London, the purpose of the network was agreed. Members felt it was important to have a forum through which practice examples and policy updates could be shared and challenges could be discussed with Leaders and Managers in similar contexts.

## Clinical Forum: Acute

The Acute Clinical Forum aims to support paediatric occupational therapists working in a variety of clinical specialty areas including acquired brain injury and neurorehabilitation, long term ventilation, oncology, paediatric intensive care, complex upper limb management, and managers and leaders.

Our aims are to:

* Advocate for the role of paediatric occupational therapists in the acute setting. This will be achieved through links with national bodies, input into local / national projects, and bringing together of specialist skills and experience.
* Provide a space for members to develop skills, share knowledge, and contribute to best practice guidelines.
* Organise and promote Continued Professional Development opportunities relevant to occupational therapists working in acute paediatrics.
* Inform members of acute occupational therapy service developments in the UK.
* Offer peer support to occupational therapists, particularly those working in isolation through meetings and study days.
* Address professional matters that affect acute paediatric occupational therapists and to provide networking opportunities via meetings and study days.
* Keep resources developed through the forum in a central location for ease of access for members.
* Support already developed acute sub-groups to continue to work with those in specialist acute paediatric occupational therapy areas such as:
  + Long-term ventilation.
  + Brain injury and neuro-rehabilitation.
  + Upper Limb.
  + Oncology.
  + Cardiac.
  + Optimize clinical knowledge and promote best practice through sharing of information, teaching, presentations and discussion.

## Clinical Forum: Autism (not currently active)

The Autism Clinical Forum promotes and supports the role of occupational therapists working with children and families with autism.

Current aims of the Autism Clinical Forum include:

* To support best practice in the field of autism
* To be a reference point for national initiatives (e.g. white paper, best practice guidelines)
* To update members of new occupational therapy service developments within autism
* To facilitate learning opportunities for both experienced occupational therapists and those new to working with children and young people with autism
* To inform members of new and exciting Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities and research articles
* To address professional matters that affect occupational therapists working in the field of autism
* To offer support and networking opportunities
* To suggest useful tools or resource ideas
* To disseminate calls for research and support occupational therapists to get involved in research
* To be a link for identifying supervision and mentoring opportunities

## Clinical Forum: Neonatal

The Neonatal Forum promotes and supports the role of occupational therapists working on neonatal units.

Our aims are:

* To support best practice in the field of neonates and standardise our professional practice.
* To update members of new occupational therapy service developments within neonatology.
* To facilitate learning opportunities for both experienced occupational therapists and those new to working within neonates.
* To inform members of new and exciting CPD opportunities and research articles.
* To address professional matters affecting neonatal occupational therapists.
* To offer support and networking opportunities via an email group.
* To suggest useful tools or resource ideas.

## Clinical Forum: Child & Adolescent Mental Health

The [Child and Adolescent Mental Health](https://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/mental-health-services-explained/Pages/about-childrens-mental-health-services.aspx) (CAMHS) clinical form meets to provide support and training for occupational therapists working within CAMHS.

The aim of the group is to improve occupational therapy provision for children, young people and their families in CAMHS. We achieve this through structured continual professional development activities, in line with clinical governance requirements.

We meet with the purpose to facilitate learning, networking, support and communication. This is with a view to:

* Influencing future service development
* Establishing competencies and standards of practice
* Expanding the evidence base

## Clinical Forum: School Based Occupational Therapy

The School Based Occupational Therapy (SBOT) Clinical Forum promotes and supports the role of occupational therapists working in maintained and/or non-maintained mainstream or specialist school provisions through study days and events.

Our aims are to:

* support best practice in the field of school based occupational therapy and standardize our professional practice in mainstream and special school settings
* promote the WFOT (2016) position statement on occupational therapy services in school-based practice for children and youth
* provide support and guidance about how services can be organised within the school system to reach all clients in the support-continuum (including whole classes or individuals) maximizing occupational performance and participation based on international research evidence (WFOT, 2016)
* increase members’ knowledge of national and international policies and guidelines on inclusive education
* inform national policy on the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities
* update members of new occupational therapy service developments within specialist and mainstream school settings
* facilitate learning opportunities for both experienced occupational therapists and those new to working within school based occupational therapy
* offer support and networking opportunities
* inform members of new and exciting continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities and research articles
* suggest useful tools or resource ideas
* offer peer support to occupational therapists, particularly those working in isolation
* optimize clinical knowledge and promote best practice through sharing of information, teaching, presentations and discussion

**Reference:** World Federation of Occupational Therapists (2016). Position Statement on Occupational Therapy Services in School-Based Practice for Children and Youth. [Available at the WFOT reference centre](https://www.wfot.org/resources) (filter for Position Statements).

The aims of our events are:

* Defining and exploring universal provision for children and young people in school settings across the UK.
* Engage in group coaching and problem-solving to discuss practicalities and experiences of universal interventions and service offers.
* Understand RCOT case study templates to support collection of SBOT practice examples.
* Case study exploration with a focus on the school environment, inclusive education, family support and prevention.
* Offer a space to think, reflect and network with other professionals working within this field.

## Clinical Forum: Preparation for Adulthood

Our Clinical Forum aims to support occupational therapists in children’s or adult services, working with young people and families to prepare them for adulthood or transition into adult services.

Our aims are:

* To provide networking opportunities with occupational therapists in similar settings
* To share effective practice examples between settings
* To disseminate evidence-based practice relating to this population

The Preparation for Adulthood Clinical Forum was established in 2020 and hosted its first event virtually in November of that year. It was set up by a group of passionate occupational therapists with a vision to join-up the networks and practices of therapists working with this population. Occupational therapists preparing young people for adulthood work across diverse geographic and practice settings and so the Clinical Forum aims to provide an arena for networking, sharing practice examples and disseminating evidence-based practice.

The Preparation for Adulthood Clinical Forum plans to facilitate 3-4 events annually, with a blend of training and networking opportunities.

## Clinical Forum: Physical Disability

The Physical Disabilities Clinical Forum promotes and supports the role of occupational therapists working with children with physical disabilities in a variety of different settings e.g. community, mainstream, special and residential, acute, rehabilitation, early years settings.

Our aims are:

* To support best practice in the field of physical disabilities and standardise our professional practice
* To update members of new occupational therapy service developments within physical disabilities
* To be reference point for national initiatives such as white papers or best practice guidelines
* To facilitate learning opportunities for both experienced occupational therapists and those new to working within physical disabilities
* To inform members of new and exciting Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities and research articles
* To address professional matters that affect occupational therapists working with children with physical disabilities
* To offer support and networking opportunities via an email group
* To suggest useful tools or resource ideas
* To disseminate calls for research and support occupational therapist to get involved in research.

We aim to host three events each year.

If you would like to know about any future events or contact any members of the clinical forum committees please contact us on the emails in the NEC contact section of this handbook.

# Research and development

RCOT Specialist Section – Children, Young People and Families champions to provide its members with the most up to date information.

Accessing research training and funding

The [RCOT website](https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/specialist-sections/children-young-people-and-families-rcot-ss/member-resources) has information on how to access local and national support including links to funding possibilities.

Research requests  
Part of the research and development officer role is to screen requests to contact member to participate in research projects. We follow the [RCOT policy](https://www.rcot.co.uk/about-us/specialist-sections/children-young-people-and-families-rcot-ss/member-resources) for all requests. We ask that those accessing our members with requests are members themselves (discounted rate for students) and that they write a small piece for the newsletter on completion of their research. If you would like to access members for your own research, please follow the guidelines and contact the research and development officer with the information they need to process your request. We will try to get back to you within two weeks.

## Awards

All information on our awards will be made available to members on the website and in the monthly newsletter.

# Background

The Royal College of Occupational Therapists Specialist Section - Children, Young People and Families (RCOTSS-CYPF) initially started when a group of London based occupation therapists founded the group Paediatric Interest People (PIP).

In the mid-1970s PIP was a multidisciplinary group that welcomed all allied health professionals and was affiliated with Association of Paediatric Chartered Physiotherapists (APCP). In 1988 a call for PIP to become more national was announced in the form of an open letter, in the British Journal of Occupational Therapists by Hilary Tidey, which initiated the start of the National Association of Paediatric Occupational Therapists (NAPOT).

The first Annual NAPOT conference was in 1990, held in Preston. NAPOT was almost wholly responsible for developing post registration training and was involved with advising government departments on paediatric issues. The work of the NAPOT was highly regarded and they had strong linked and worked in conjunction with the College of Occupational Therapists.

In 2006 it formally became known as the Special Section - Children, Young People and Families as a branch of the College and celebrated its 25th Anniversary in 2015.

The RCOT Library holds copies of the following publications:

* RCOT Specialist Section Children, Young People and Families E-News (2009 - present)
* Children, Young People & Families Occupational Therapy Journal / CYPF Journal (2006 - 2020)
* NAPOT [Journal] (1997 - 2006)
* NAPOT Newsletter (1990 - 1997)
* Paediatric Interest People (1986 – 1989)