

Student Day and more

As Theresien and Maria Daniela have explained Student Day has given us a great opportunity to get in contact with future OTs around the world. Thanks to Student Day we could easily recognise each other at the congress. The Swedish occupational therapy students organised a picnic for all the students on Wednesday 26th June. The message about the picnic was passed round by word of mouth. The picnic was a great success as it enabled us to get to know the students on a personal level. We got to know more about their life, their country as well as the areas they would like to specialise in after they graduate. The Swedish students tried to involve us in a traditional game which resembles baseball... hopefully I will never have to play this game again. Telling you I was hopeless at it would be an understatement. On the last day of the congress all the students wrote their email address and area of interest at the reception desk and the list was mailed to us last week.

The People who helped us

Since it was our first time at a WFOT Congress, being with people who have already experienced it, such as Maryanne Sacco Peterson, Demis Cachia and Mr. Busuttil was a real help. Maryanne Sacco Peterson introduced us to many OTs we have only heard about in books. Their humility was admirable. Maryanne also gave very useful suggestions about the sessions we should not miss, especially those regarding our continuing education. Demis Cachia helped us understand the Congress Programme and gave us useful tips about how to get around. Mr. Busuttil gave us a helping hand making sure we experienced the WFOT Congress to the full.

The Exhibition

During the week of the congress an important exhibition was arranged at the congress venue, Stockholm International Fairs. 59 companies and organisations from all over the world displayed products and services within the field of occupational therapy. The exhibitors included Occupational Therapy Associations from different countries such as America and Japan, companies displaying their latest products such as splinting material and different equipment which can be used in treatment, as well as companies selling books and journals.

The Posters

The poster presentations were, in my opinion, a very important part of the congress. The authors were at their poster during the assigned sessions and they were all very eager to explain their studies and the implications of their findings. The topics were various and ranged from the effectiveness of standardised assessments with different populations to very interesting topics unique to our profession such as 'How do we keep our male students?'

One particular poster presentation which I found really interesting was entitled '*Braiding Test: A method of evaluating the remaining ability in the elderly with severe dementia.*' The author gave anyone who was interested in her research a Braiding Test Kit which included a manual as well as the tools, that is the coloured cords required to administer the test. The author was also very willing to give a detailed explanation regarding this test. Braiding is a familiar activity all over the world as hairdo. The author has developed a new method of evaluating the remaining ability in the elderly with severe dementia. The subjects are given a set of three cords – red, yellow and blue, and instructed to braid them. The performance was graded into 5 steps of instructions given to the subjects before starting braiding. The five steps are the following:

- Step 1 Cord was shown and the subject starts braiding by verbal instructions given*
- Step 2 The subject starts braiding after seeing a sample*
- Step 3 The subject starts braiding with new cords after practice following a demonstration*
- Step 4 The subject cannot start with new cords, even though he/she has practiced, following a demonstration*
- Step 5 The subject does not participate in braiding*

The braiding test is quick and safe to perform and most of the subjects are pleased to braid. The reliability and validity of the Braiding Test were examined. The test-retest reliability and inter-rater reliability were sufficient. According to Spearman's correlation coefficient, the correlation between Braiding Test and 6 standard evaluating scales for elderly were statistically significant. With the Braiding Test, subjects with severe dementia could be divided into 4 grades. The Braiding Test is useful for evaluating elderly persons with severe dementia.