

【Title】

Professional Continuing Education at the Japan Occupational Therapy Association

【Speaker】 Saeko Takenaka

【Abstract】

The Continuing Education of the Japanese Association of Occupational Therapists (hereafter JAOT) began in 1998 as the "Continuing Education Credit Recognition System. It was later revised to the "Professional Continuing Education System" in 2003.

The current Continuing Education System has undergone four revisions and has been in operation since FY2023.

The Continuing Education System consists of three certification systems: the Basic Training System, the Certified Occupational Therapist System, and the specialized occupational therapist system.

In the basic training system, trainees learn basic and common knowledge for clinical practice as occupational therapists. It is a system to deepen understanding of the significance and direction of lifelong learning and to learn the basics of clinical practice. The system consists of a common training program and an elective training program for incumbents, each consisting of compulsory training and free elective training.

The two mandatory training programs are operated in cooperation with prefectural occupational therapist associations.

The Certified Occupational Therapist System aims to improve the quality of occupational therapists and maintain and raise the standards for occupational therapy. In order to further establish the expertise and social status of occupational therapists, JAOT trains, examines, and certifies occupational therapists by setting certain standards. The objective is for certified occupational therapists to contribute to the health, medical care, and welfare of the nation. 1,390 people have been certified as of May 2023.

The specialized occupational therapist system educates practitioners with outstanding clinical practice skills. The objective is to provide high quality and effective occupational therapy services to people with disabilities and to contribute to the support of their lives. As of May 2023, a total of 152 individuals in 11 fields have been certified.

Each of the above three certification systems by JAOT has a five-year validity period for renewal of certification. As of fiscal year 2023, the renewal requirement for completion of basic training requires completion of the clinical practice instructor training course designated by the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare.

This renewal is related to compliance with the following ethical requirements set forth by the JAOT:

"2. Occupational therapists shall maintain the highest standards of knowledge and skill."

"9. Occupational therapists shall be mutually disciplined in their academic studies and character development."

It is essential that all occupational therapists, not only members of the JAOT, be aware of these principles in their daily clinical practice, education, research, and administration.