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NEW ACOTE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS ADOPTED

(Bethesda, MD)—After an extensive 3-year process, multiple surveys to the communities of interest, and several open hearings, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE®) has adopted **new accreditation standards** for professional master's degree occupational therapy programs and occupational therapy assistant programs. The new standards have been disseminated to all educational programs and are available on the ACOTE accreditation section of the AOTA Web site (www.aota.org). Programs will be required to comply with the new 2006 Standards by January 1, 2008.

Jane Olson, Ph.D., OTR, FAOTA, current ACOTE Chairperson and former Chairperson of the ACOTE Educational Standards Review Committee described the new standards as follows: "The 2006 Standards reflect the perspectives of varied constituent groups, including a new emphasis on specifying intervention content and competencies that are drawn from the practice community, a strengthened emphasis on accountability for outcomes that is guided by trends in higher education accreditation, and a more clearly differentiated educational foundation for occupational therapy assistants and occupational therapists with a master's degree. These standards, along with the upcoming OTD standards, will provide a solid foundation for educating professionals to achieve AOTA's centennial vision."

The Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD) Standards Committee will continue its work on finalizing the accreditation standards for OTD programs and will be disseminating a call for comment on the final draft OTD Standards by early September. Feedback from all communities of interest is requested. It is anticipated that the new OTD Standards will be adopted by ACOTE at its meeting on December 1-3, 2006.

The American Occupational Therapy Association, established in 1917, represents nearly 35,000 members. AOTA is an active advocate for the profession, and for individuals who can benefit from occupational therapy services.