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OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST TO HELP SET CA WORKERS' COMP GUIDELINES

Perspective of OT Specifically Included, Will Improve Treatment Under Workers' Comp

(Bethesda, MD)—The California Division of Workers Compensation (DWC) recently named AOTA Past President Mary Foto, OT, FAOTA, CCM to serve on a distinguished panel that will be reviewing medical treatment guidelines for the state's workers' compensation system.

“AOTA and the Occupational Therapy Association of California requested that DWC add an occupational therapist to the Committee at a hearing in August 2006. The original proposal included an OT or a PT on the Committee,” said Foto. “Occupational therapists deal with industrial industries in a very integrated way. OTs evaluate and treat not only physical and functional limitations, but also the injury's impact on cognitive, sensory, motor and psychosocial skills.”

DWC's Medical Evidence Evaluation Advisory Committee will provide recommendations to the Medical Director on matters concerning the state's medical treatment utilization schedule for workers' compensation. The committee is comprised of 15 individuals from a variety of health professions that provide care to injured workers. The committee members are experts that have personal experience in treating work-related injuries and will make recommendations to the DWC on diagnostic and treatment issues.

Ms. Foto has experience in practice, consulting, and policy relating to rehabilitation and workers' compensation. She is past President of the American Occupational Therapy Association (1995–1998) and currently serves as co-chair of the Health Care Professional's Advisory Committee of the American Medical Association. She has provided consultation services for numerous clients including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

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.