



# News

from the

## Kazakhstan Ergotherapy Association

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### Word from the President

Health: a simple word but not as simple to define. **When do we live a healthy life?**

Health is related to someone's well-being and therefore has not only a physical aspect to it, but also a mental, emotional and spiritual aspect. Health is holistic. Health is not only an individual issue, but is related to the social environment and the norm that is being accepted.

All these aspects of health are integrated in the way that we as Occupational Therapists work with an adult with, for example, with cardiovascular disease or rheumatoid arthritis, or with a young person who is suffering from a mental illness or a physical disability like an amputation, or with a child facing difficulties with mobility, fine motor skills or learning at school because of Cerebral Palsy. Whether young or old, the main question for us as Occupational Therapists remains the same:

***What are the important activities and roles in life for each individual and the people***

***around them in order to live life to the fullest – to live a healthy life – and how can we achieve this?*** We love to find ways to value everyone's right to health through different interventions. These may include physical exercises, practical daily life activities, use of special equipment, working on lifestyle changes or even interacting with and giving training to employers or school teachers.

I would like to mention a **great training opportunity** for those working with children with special needs. We highly recommend the Occupational Therapy training '...', conducted by Nathan Visser - co-founder of KEA and a well-respected Occupational Therapist living and working in the Netherlands after many years of experience while living in Kazakhstan. The training will be held in Almaty, 21<sup>st</sup> June – 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021. If you are interested in joining, please contact Nurgul Saliyeva for more information.

Be inspired by the story in this newsletter. And don't forget to connect with us through social media or email!

Looking forward to hearing from you,  
Gerdine (B.G.) Lok – B.Health Occupational Therapy  
KEA President



*"The soul is healed by being with children." — Fyodor Dostoyevsky*

## A casestudy

By: Petra, Occupational Therapist in Shelek

I would like to introduce to you my new friend Samat. Samat is an intelligent, friendly young man who loves a good Rom-com and meals with his family. He also has a condition called Brittle Bone disease (or Osteogenesis Imperfecta). This is where his bones, particularly in his arms and legs, are much shorter than normal and they break very easily. Samat has not had access to services so when his bones have broken they have simply re-grown in the position they were in. Consequently, he has many deformities in his arms, legs and joints that mean he can't bend or straighten them like he used to. His muscles are also very weak and he is in constant pain.

More than anything, Samat would like to be able to move around independently in his neighbourhood. Together we are problem solving through the different aspects of achieving this goal: i.e. moving from laying on his bed to sitting; transferring to a wheelchair; getting out of the house; and community mobilisation.

As Occupational Therapists we understand the little tasks that make up an activity, such as moving from laying to sitting. We are applying this knowledge to Samat's physical abilities to find ways that will work for him. We have been experimenting with changing his position and method of sitting up; handles to overcome his wrist deformity so he could push up against the bed; and a rope with handles to pull on. Through these steps we are using the movement and strength he has to find ways that increase his independence and enjoyment in life.

We will now start to look at getting from the bed to his wheelchair, while we get a temporary ramp attached to his front steps. Ultimately, he will need a motorised wheelchair, but that is a challenge for another day.



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