In evaluating the past year’s program, the Doing, Being, Becoming and Belonging model (Wilcock, 2006) was used to evaluate the purpose of the Geelong regional occupational therapy group at their September meeting. The fundamental question discussed was: How can we, as a group of occupational therapists, enhance our potential as occupational therapists in the Barwon region and contribute to our profession and the community using the Doing, Being, Becoming and Belonging model?

This paper outlines briefly the model’s principles and how these were applied within the meeting’s discussion to plan for 2008. The collective discussion was lively, creative and visionary as became evident in the business planning for 2008.

**Model Principles:**
Wilcock (2006, p.336) states that there are six major functions of occupation:

1. For the attainment of the prerequisites of survival and health, such as sustenance, self-care and shelter.
2. Safety from and apparent superiority over predators and the environment.
3. Balanced exercise of personal, physical, mental and social capacities.
4. The finding of meaning, purpose, choice and satisfaction through doing.
5. Development so that each person and species will flourish.
6. A sense of belonging through shared occupations that cannot be achieved satisfactorily by an individual.

For the purpose of generating discussion this was summarised as:

**Doing:** To satisfy pre-requisites of health.
**Being:** Satisfied; Finding meaning & purpose through what one does.
**Becoming:** Closer to achieving one’s potential through the use of capacities in occupation.
**Belonging:** To communities and groups according to what is meaningful and according to one’s potential.

**Getting the discussion going:**
What is the potential of the Geelong regional occupational therapy group?

What can this group do, so that Barwon OTs will find meaning and purpose in the being in the group, become more efficient at building capacities as a group, so that we may belong to and contribute to our community?

**Doing:** To be a healthy professional group we need provide continued professional development through education, information sharing, networking, mentoring and colleague support.

**Being:** To be satisfied and have meaning and purpose as a regional group we need to have a shared vision of the role of the regional group and the role and potential of our profession in this region.

**Becoming:** To have a clear vision of how occupational therapy has the capacity to provide leadership in the community. We can learn from other occupational therapy groups in Australia and internationally to learn how to achieve our potential.

**Belonging:** To identify key social issues that impact on occupational performance and effect health and well-being, and strategically develop our collective engagement in our community, addressing these issues at multiple levels. This will increase the ‘connectedness’ of OTs to each other, extend beyond the model of ill-health and disability to a model of health for all and, increase community awareness of and raise the profile of the contribution of occupational therapy in our community.

**Issues and practicalities discussed:**
- Regional meetings are provided as an opportunity to grow and develop professionally through education and networking.
- As a member you are encouraged to share your particular areas of knowledge and expertise.
- Using the “expert panel model” the regional group will invite experts to speak on particular topics of interest in line with the regional group’s vision.
- It is understood that many members have limited time to attend meetings, however if a shared vision is created and the group were to collectively engage with the Barwon community at multiple levels, members may re-evaluate the importance placed on attending this regional group meeting and value its contribution to their total professional development each year.
- It is recognised that for many occupational therapists, professional development is limited to maintaining competence in specific areas of practice, therefore participation in the Barwon regional group is not a priority.
- There does not appear to be value in staying connected to the Barwon group of occupational therapists.

However, a stronger regional occupational therapy group can offer leadership and vision to the Barwon region. Where would this group like to put this into practice in 2008?

- It is not expected that all members attend all meetings. You can belong to this regional group without attending meetings but still contribute to achieving the shared vision.

**Applying the elements of the Doing, Being, Becoming and Belonging Model in developing the regional group: A vision for 2008.**

**Doing:** This regional group’s events should continue to do through education, knowledge sharing and presentations by experts. The group can support individuals via networking and mentoring. The group can develop its identity as a professional group, creating opportunities to share and validate the role of occupational therapy in all areas of the community.

**Being:** Change the name from Geelong Regional Occupational Therapy (locally known as GROTS) to ‘Barwon OT Connect’, thus aligning this regional group’s vision to be more involved in the wider Barwon community. Members contributing and sharing in the events, to add value to individual members’ to develop a collective knowledge-base and to create a strong professional identity within the Barwon Region.

**Becoming:** Articulate a clear vision of this group’s contribution to the Barwon region. What are the key problems in the Barwon region and how do we become more visible in the Barwon region as contributors to solving these problems with the community and in doing so, raise the professional profile of occupational therapy?

**Belonging:** Host a number of key events to enhance the members’ belonging to the group. Recognition that a strong regional group ensures that the regional group remains relevant and current to emerging OT needs within the Barwon.

**In summary**
The 2008 plan evolved from this discussion. The focus of the group is now very much about the need to harness the collective strength of the occupational therapy profession in being involved in specific community problems currently affecting the Barwon region.

**Name Change (the belonging):** Change the regional OT group name to ‘Barwon
Doing, being, becoming and belonging as a regional group

OT Connect’ in order to expand our collective attention on the Barwon region, not just Geelong.

Upgrade the regional OT Register, (the being): The Geelong OT Register “Who’s working where?” be updated electronically, by Barwon OT Connect to ensure currency of information. Align this register with relevant databases, e.g. OT Aust-Vic and GP Association or similar.

Welcome new members, (the doing, being, becoming and belonging): Formalise welcoming new graduates, new professionals to the Barwon and 4th year Deakin Students to this group, early in the year. This will be undertaken annually, hosted by the current members with a welcome lunch, in March.

OT Week Event, (the being): Continue to host OT Breakfast (with sponsorship) as a successful event: This breakfast event has become very popular, with many occupational therapists attending. The group acknowledges the contribution of Tina Stenos as current organiser, for once again attracting a sponsor for the morning and for volunteering to organise the breakfast.

Christmas social event, (the being and belonging): Continue to end the busy year with a relaxed social Christmas event such as ‘drinks at the pub’ event offering a relaxing opportunity to socialise together in one of the local entertainment venues, preferably where we can talk, as often the conversation is lively and productive with many suggestions of great potential for the following year.

Promotion (the doing and being): Design a poster/banner promoting this Geelong-Barwon regional group that is readily available for a range of public events. Promoting OT more broadly via other forums, i.e. presentations to aligned groups, thus increasing our public profile e.g. Careers night at Deakin University, coordinated by the Careers Teachers Association of Victoria.

Community project collaboration (the doing and the becoming): Develop a regional group vision i.e. a community project to assist the Barwon community in a significant way. Demonstrate the group’s vision, through the formation of a number of projects affecting Barwon. The focus of the group projects would be to contribute to the community of Barwon, and in doing so raise the professional profile of occupational therapy. Encourage members’ participation within the projects at multiple levels to enhance involvement.

Educational Event, (the being): Invite experts as presenters as an expert panel discussion to encourage ongoing occupational therapy critical analysis of current developments, research and literature.

Reference:

Rachael Schmidt and Anita Hamilton

News from the calming waters of Corio Bay: Deakin University Occupational Science and Therapy

Development of a Wellness Centre
Deakin University is currently well underway with planning for the refurbishment of our second wool store on the waterfront in Geelong. We are very excited that we can now develop the original vision of the Occupational Science and Therapy program to create an Occupational Wellness and Life Satisfaction (OWLS) space. This will build on our current fieldwork and research activities, and give us potential to develop further initiatives within the local community.

Architects’ vision of the Waterfront Wellness Centre

Honours Program
The 2007 program is well underway with all data collection to be completed by the end of September. The 12 projects cover a range of occupational issues, and this year we are pleased that several projects involve practitioners and are based in the local services. Topics include:

- Fine motor skills and handwriting
- Aspects of play for children, in particular pretend play
- Constraint Induced Movement Therapy
- Mentoring for graduates
- Eating independence
- Reliability and validity of visual perception tests
- Occupational therapy students’ attitudes to disability
- Occupational roles and the impact of cancer

Lynne Adamson

Lynne Adamson

Reference:

Rachael Schmidt and Anita Hamilton