**First national conference for occupational therapists working in diverse settings, September 7th 2016**

**Biographies of key speakers**

**Dr Nick Pollard**

Nick Pollard teaches occupational therapy students at undergraduate and post graduate level at Sheffield Hallam University. Most of his teaching concerns social contexts for occupational therapy and community based interventions. Nick worked in mental health settings for 12 years before joining the university in 2003. He has written and presented extensively on community based rehabilitation and on critical explorations of occupational therapy, and is a member of the ENOTHE citizenship group. Nick’s recent publications include *Occupying Disability: Critical Approaches to Community, Justice and Decolonizing Disability,* with Pam Block, Devva Kasnitz, and Akemi Nishida, *Meaningful living through occupation* with Moses Ikiugu. A second edition of *Occupational Therapies Without Borders: integrating justice with practice,* which comes out this November*.* Another edited book*, 'And a seed was planted...' Occupation based approaches for social inclusion*, with Hanneke Van Bruggen and Sarah Kantartzis will be published in 2017.

JULIA SCOTT CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION AND COLLEGE OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

Julia started her career in the NHS and went on to work with GPs and Practice nurses on a Heart Attack and Stroke Prevention project. Having moved in to social care, Julia’s career has developed across many areas. She has chaired the London Boroughs OT Managers group and was seconded to the Department of Health to complete policy guidelines. Having completed her MSc in Occupational Therapy at Brunel University, Julia delivered a taught module on Quality Assurance to undergraduates there. Her previous post was Head of Physical Disability services at Kensington and Chelsea Social Services

Julia was appointed Chief Executive at the College of Occupational Therapists in 2006. Prior to this, she held the position of Vice Chair of the COT Council.

Julia was awarded an Honorary Fellowship from Brunel University in 2006 in recognition of her contribution to undergraduate Occupational Therapy education. In March 2011, Julia was awarded a prestigious Social Care Fellowship Care from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE). Julia is one of only 6 recipients of this Fellowship and the only Occupational Therapist to receive such an honour.

**Professor Gaynor Sadlo**

After graduating in occupational therapy in 1968 Gaynor Sadlo worked in vocational rehabilitation, hand therapy, neurology and social services until choosing to become an occupational therapy teacher and researcher in 1983. She gained post-graduate qualifications for teaching and curriculum development in higher education at the University of London in 1987, and was awarded a PhD in Occupational Therapy education from the University of Queensland in 1997. Gaynor was a founding member of the pan-European Master of Science in Occupational therapy which recently gained international awards; she has supervised 10 PhD students to completion and has examined 20 scholars at doctoral level. In 2007 she became a National Teaching Fellow for her inter/national developments in problem-based learning (PBL), and in 2010 she became a Fellow of the College of Occupational Therapists. As Professor of Occupational Science at the University of Brighton until her retirement last year, Gaynor’s “occupassion” is the quest to understand from a neurobiological perspective, specifically how deep engagement in meaningful occupation can support health and wellbeing.

**Gaynor’s presentation: How threshold concepts in occupational science can support occupational therapy in diverse settings.**

This presentation outlines some fundamental theories of occupational science, which occupational therapists and students might find useful in supporting practice in diverse settings. Threshold concepts relate to basic ideas that are important to grasp in any subject, for example, that humans are occupational beings by nature, with a basic drive to participate in complex and meaningful activities. The domains of study within occupational science will be defined, such as occupational Form, Meaning, and Function – the need to focus on *what* people do, *how* they do it, *why* that way, and how that affects their health. The human capacities that enable occupation are our bipedal stance, dexterous and sensitive hands, huge brain, binocular vision, complex social relationships, high self-awareness, creativity and spirituality. Ideas about how loss of occupation severely impairs our lives – through deprivation, alienation, imbalance, or injustice may be more appropriate than the more common medical approach, when identifying occupational issues in diverse settings. Finally, the latest research from neuroscience that shows specifically how participation in meaningful activity supports human flourishing via neuroplasticity will be described, including how Flow states relate to self-actualisation and stress reduction. Gaynor’s current (fun!) research focuses on how contemporary science supports the observations made by the first occupational therapists one hundred years ago.