



News

from the
Kazakhstan Ergotherapy Association

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Word from the president

Greetings from KEA to all of you! Whether you work and live in the beautiful country of Kazakhstan, or whether you support us from abroad: we are thankful for all the connections and support we receive. We often feel very limited in seeing OT develop in Kazakhstan, but looking back on the past few years we realize how much has happened and that gives us hope for the future. We continue to meet enthusiastic health care workers in country who are passionate and motivated to make a change. And that's what we need!

Recently one of the founders of our association - Nathan Visser - returned from the Netherlands for a five days OT training in Atyrau. Read more about this in our newsletter. We love to give training to others, but we also seek for opportunities to grow ourselves in knowledge and skills. Ongoing education is so important - never stop learning! In this newsletter you can read about two of our board members who participated in a conference in Georgia. Enjoy reading our news, and don't forget to drop us an email, like us on Facebook or check out our Instagram account (NEW!).

On behalf of KEA,
Gerdine Lok - Interim-President

Rehabilitation for Children with CP Training, Atyrau March 25th-30th, 2018

Petra Magerl - Occupational Therapist

In late March, I was honoured to be a part of a 5-day training course on 'Rehabilitation for children with Cerebral Palsy'. The course was organised by 'International Medical Exchange' (IME) in partnership with Interteach, the Atyrau adults teaching hospital and the Kazakhstan Ergotherapy Association (KEA). IME offers medically orientated health courses throughout Kazakhstan, inviting expats to teach on topics/methods that are not currently part of the Kazakh medical system. The course was delivered by KEA founder and ergo therapist Nathan Visser.

The course covered the basics of initial interview; assessment of needs and available resources; goal setting; and key treatment options for children with cerebral palsy. Participants numbered 20-30 from Atyrau and surrounds, and included a wide variety of medical and paramedical staff including support workers, rehabilitation directors, nurses, neurologist, massage therapist, and others. Each afternoon, children with a CP diagnosis and their care giver attended the course to give the participants practical application of what had been learnt that day.

The participants found the course and ergo therapy in general to be an extremely helpful and positive treatment approach. They spoke of the respect it gives to the family. They valued learning how to find what the child is already able to do before deciding on the kind of activities and exercises to recommend. They also appreciated learning how to use things the child enjoys to increase motivation and participation in therapy. They agreed these things put together would result in a much more effective treatment for each child.

KEA is committed to establishing ergo therapy as a quality medical profession in Kazakhstan that can offer real assistance to people with disabilities. It was wonderful to see this group of people become aware of the value of ergo therapy and its unique contribution to treatment approaches, as well as developing their own skills.



Osteogenesis imperfecta

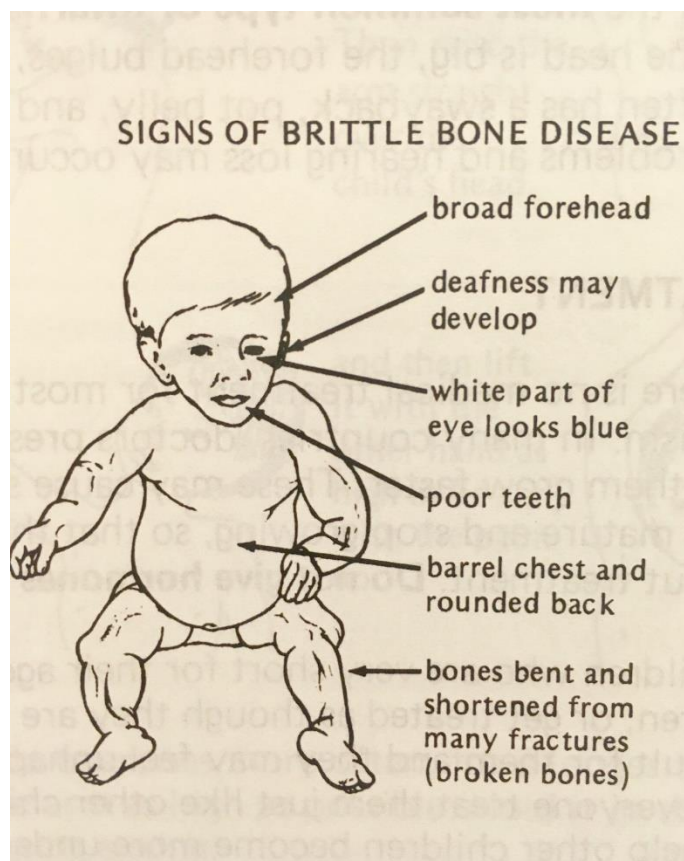
Linda Beadle - Occupational Therapist in Almaty

Brittle bone disease or Osteogenesis Imperfecta is a genetic bone disorder characterized by fragile bones that break easily. The term literally means "bone that is imperfectly made from the beginning of life." There is no medical cure for the disease. Children with brittle bone syndrome may eventually need a wheelchair to move about. They are often very intelligent and do well at school. They need to learn how to protect their body from breaks.

Saul* is 3 years old and has brittle bone disease. We saw Saul after his bone had healed after his third break in a leg bone. As Occupational Therapists we are concerned with a child's quality of life. We want to see children follow normal development as much as possible. For Saul at 3 years old this means that we want to see him walking and playing and interacting with other kids as much as possible!

*name changed

(Info and picture from Disabled village children by David Werner, 1987)



Professional development

Bouwine van Eeden Petersman – Occupational Therapist in Almaty

As Occupational Therapists it is important to share our knowledge in Kazakhstan, but just as important is maintaining and developing our own skills as Occupational Therapists. One way of doing this is through participating in online courses or attending conferences. In May two of our Occupational Therapists went to Georgia to attend the annual meeting of the European Academy of Childhood Disability (EACD). The theme of the international conference was: "Together we are stronger". It was inspiring to hear how the healthcare system in Georgia has improved drastically in the last 10 years. Introducing an early childhood intervention program for children was one of the key elements that made that change happen. Early intervention is very important for children in at-risk situations, with developmental delays (or difficulties), disabilities, and behavioural or mental health conditions. One of the reasons why early intervention is so important is that the brain plasticity (the ability of the brain to change) is higher in the first years of life. This also means that when the brain is damaged, early intervention can change the brain in a positive way. The earlier the intervention, the quicker and bigger is the improvement. Practicing daily activities, such as dressing, eating and playing are really important to stimulate the brain. This is the reason why we want to use daily activities as therapy and why it is so beneficial to practice these activities with the child. In this way, every day there will many learning opportunities in the child's life and we don't want to miss these! As parents and therapists it's a challenge to see these opportunities and use them to improve the life of the child.



30th EACD
CONFERENCE
May 28-31, 2018, Tbilisi, Georgia



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This newsletter will be distributed every three months. Do you have any questions or recommendations? Or do you want to unsubscribe from the newsletter? Please contact info@ergotherapy.kz