



# NOTA ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2024-JUNE 2025

PREPARED BY:

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NOTA, INC. PRESIDENT

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# A Message from the President

Erin Westover, OTD, OTR/L, BCP

What a year it has been, NOTA members! I am humbled and honored to serve as president of this incredible organization that works tirelessly for our members, the profession of occupational therapy, and the Nebraskans we serve. My first year in this role has been nothing short of inspiring, and as I reflect, one word rises to the top: **gratitude**.

Gratitude for our **MEMBERS**. This year, I've had the privilege of connecting with so many OT practitioners and students, who clearly have a huge heart for the profession. Your membership and engagement speak volumes about your commitment to ensuring that OT will thrive and persist in our state. It's truly your support that allows NOTA to advocate for fair policies, host meaningful events, and build a strong, united OT community across Nebraska. THANK YOU!

Gratitude for our **SCOPE OF PRACTICE TASK FORCE**. Led by Melissa Kimmerling, this dedicated team worked tirelessly to successfully modernize Nebraska's OT scope of practice. Countless hours and energy were poured into composing our application, collaborating with interdisciplinary stakeholders, moving through the technical review, drafting legislation, and leading advocacy efforts at the Capitol. Thank you, as well to all members who followed and engaged in advocacy efforts like Lobby Day and letter-writing campaigns. While the bill's passage was a major milestone, our work continues as we support the translation of statute into regulation and keep OT practitioners informed.

Gratitude for the **NOTA EXECUTIVE BOARD**. This behind-the-scenes dream team makes so much of our meaningful work possible, such as planning NOTA's networking and educational events, managing communications, monitoring needs in their area of practice, and spearheading advocacy efforts. A special thank-you to Kristin Gzehoviak, our administrative assistant. She is truly the glue that holds NOTA together through monitoring and managing the infrastructure behind our organization. Though only an "honorary OT," she's truly essential to NOTA's impact!

As you read through this report, I hope you feel the same pride and optimism I do. The dedication, collaboration, and passion within our NOTA community are what make this organization so impactful. I'm excited for what lies ahead and confident that, together, we'll continue to grow, advocate, and inspire. Let's carry this momentum into another year of meaningful progress and connection!

# Meet Our Executive Board

## Voting Executive Board Positions

1	President
2	Vice President of Academia
3	Vice President of Acute Care
4	Vice President of Hands & Orthopedics
5	Vice President of Mental Health & Wellness
6	Vice President of Neuro-Rehabilitation
7	Vice President of Pediatrics
8	Vice President of Policy & Advocacy
9	Vice President of Rural Health & Community Services
10	Vice President of School-Based Practice
11	Vice President of Skilled Care, LTC, & Home Health
12	Secretary
13	Treasurer

## Non Voting Officers

14	Past President
15	Administrative Assistant (Contracted)
16	Lobbyist (Contracted)
17	AOTA RA Rep (AOTA Vote)
18	Conference Chair 1
19	Conference Chair 2

## 2024-2025 Board Members

Erin Westover
Tara Ruppert
Kristin Mills
Lauren Erickson
Michael Tambone
Rebecca Kinnison
Emmilie Kosiba
Candice Mullendore
Amanda Hegy
Amy Schnacker
Nicole Chipy-Hammack
Megan Classen
Kylie Widhelm

## 2025-2026 Board Members

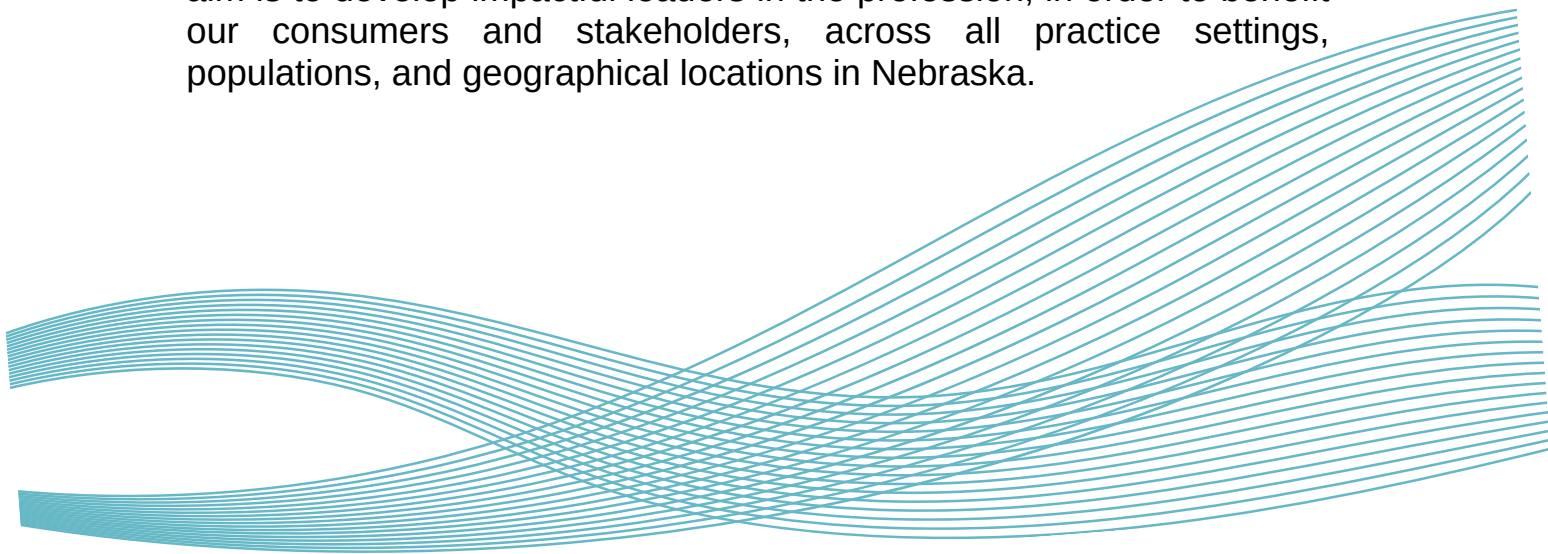
Erin Westover
Tara Ruppert
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Megan Classen
Michael Tambone
Becky Kinnison
Emmilie Kosiba
Candice Mullendore
Amanda Hegy
Amy Schnacker
Nicole Chipy-Hammack
Courtney Robertson
Kylie Widhelm
Erin Westover
Kristin Gzehoviak
Julie Erickson
Amanda Wise
Lauren Erickson
Nicole Chipy-Hammack

# Our Vision

We envision the Nebraska Occupational Therapy Association as a collaborative community of occupational therapy leaders who emphasize the distinct value of occupational therapy in maximizing quality of life through participation in meaningful occupations that promote recovery, rehabilitation, and wellness

# Our Mission

The mission of the Nebraska Occupational Therapy Association is to advance the occupational therapy profession in Nebraska through advocacy, policy, and professional development. We strive to build a membership of occupational therapy practitioners who take actionable steps to promote the highest standards of evidence-based care. Our aim is to develop impactful leaders in the profession, in order to benefit our consumers and stakeholders, across all practice settings, populations, and geographical locations in Nebraska.



## NOTA's Guiding Documents

Bylaws

Job Descriptions

Executive Board Flow Chart

# MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Reduced rates for continuing education, including our Annual Conference and other CEU opportunities!
- Zoom access for all meetings is available for practitioners throughout the state to participate in regular meetings.
- FREE CEUS on Aspire OT!
- Annual conference with affordable CEUs and access to all recorded sessions on Aspire OT.
- Networking! NOTA brings therapists throughout our state together to share ideas and work to make occupational therapy practice in Nebraska great.
- Monthly email updates and biannual newsletters to keep you informed on what occupational therapy is doing in Nebraska and beyond.
- Access to a Lobbyist to keep you up to date on legislation and regulations impacting OT and how you can make an advocacy difference for OT in Nebraska.
- Leadership opportunities available in all areas of the state. Help make a difference for practitioners in your local area and statewide by joining NOTA!
- A group of 13 Board Members and many other volunteers who work behind the scenes to advance and protect the OT profession in Nebraska.



# Membership Facts



Nebraska has 1900 licensed Occupational Therapy Practitioners in the state



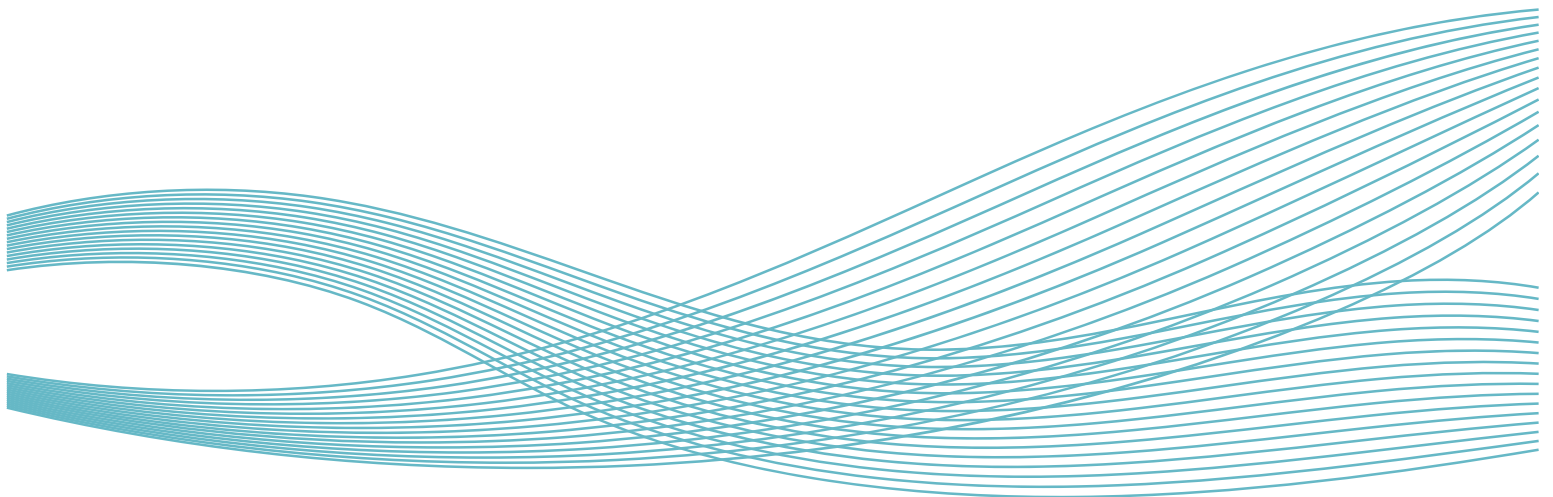
NOTA's current membership is 283



This means only 15% of Nebraska Occupational Therapy Practitioners are part of NOTA



Personal invitations are the best way to gain new members. Ask a friend to join today!





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# NOTA in Numbers



100% of Board Positions are Filled

18 Attendees at Lobby Day

1000+ Estimated Volunteer Hours to  
Keep the Organization Running

6th Annual Elections Held and Voted  
on by Members

Annual Conference Held in Person

283 Current Members





**OT and the Power of You!**  
**NOTA CONFERENCE 2025**

2025 Conference Highlights



In Person Conference at College of Saint Mary in Omaha, NE



85 attended in person



One day conference layout including four 2 hour sessions in the morning to choose from and four 2 hour sessions in the afternoon to choose from. Sponsors & Posters offered over the lunch break.



Gold Sponsor: College of Saint Mary, 4 Silver Sponsors, 3 Bronze Sponsors, and 7 Friend Sponsors



Some session are LIVE on Aspire OT

# NOTA 2024–2025 Policy & Advocacy Update

The 2025 legislative session wrapped up June 2nd. Despite budget challenges, there were several key wins and issues that affect OTs in Nebraska:

## ✓ Big Win – Scope of Practice Updated

- After an 8-month review and legislative process, OT's updated **scope of practice** passed into law (LB 257 with AM 866).
- This is one of the **fastest scope updates in Nebraska history**.
- Next step: NOTA will work with DHHS and the licensure board on rules and regulations to implement these changes. This means **greater clarity and protection for OT services in Nebraska**.

## 🏛️ Lobby Day Success

- In February, NOTA hosted a **Lobby Day with senators** to push for scope of practice updates.
- We had **record attendance** from both senators and NOTA members.
- Your participation and advocacy helped build momentum that carried through the legislative session. Thank you for showing up for OT!

## 💰 Medicaid & Rates

- No Medicaid rate cuts were made in the new budget.
- A new bill (LB 257) requires Nebraska to submit a Medicaid plan amendment that could bring in **over \$200M in new provider funding** in coming years. If implemented, this will likely increase non-hospital provider rates (including therapy). Federal approval is pending.

## 🏥 Insurance & Prior Authorization

- LB 77 began reforming **prior authorization** in private insurance. The bill passed in a slimmed-down form, but more work is needed. NOTA will continue collaborating with partners to push for stronger reforms.

# NOTA 2024–2025 Policy & Advocacy Updates Continued...



## Budget Concerns

- Nebraska is facing long-term budget deficits due to prior tax cuts and reliance on reserves.
- While no immediate cuts were made to therapy services, **future state budget pressures could impact Medicaid and other programs.** NOTA will continue to monitor and advocate.

## NOTA Priorities for 2025–2026

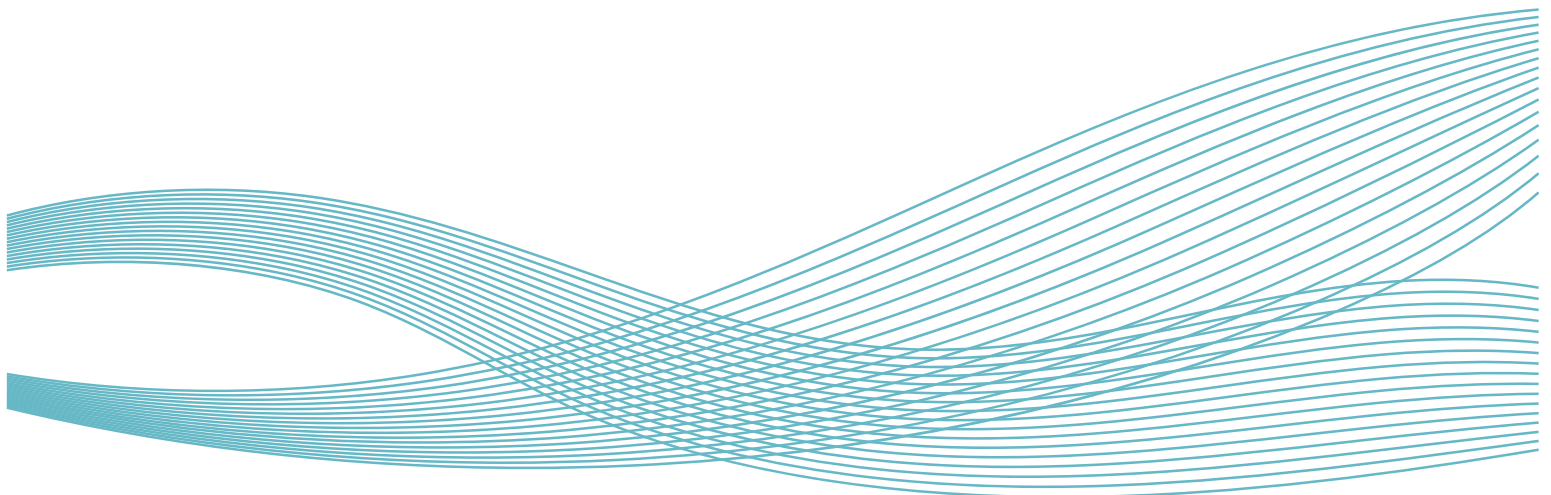
NOTA will focus on three key advocacy initiatives moving forward:

1. **Add CPT code 97535 (self-care/home management training) to the Medicaid fee schedule** to expand reimbursement opportunities for OTs.
2. **Continue bi-annual meetings with Medicaid MCOs** to proactively advocate for OTs in Nebraska and resolve barriers.
3. **Collaborate with our lobbyist, PT, and SLP associations** to create a strategic plan that positions rehab professionals strongly in the face of legislative and health care changes.



## What This Means for You

- **Scope of practice update = more protection for your role** and better alignment with what OTs do today.
- **Medicaid funding changes** could eventually improve reimbursement rates.
- **Prior authorization reform** is underway but needs continued advocacy.
- **Future priorities keep OT at the table** as health care evolves in Nebraska.





# THANK YOU!

Your  
membership  
makes a  
difference!

Thank you to all of our long-standing members and those who are newer to the organization. Each of you make a difference for the occupational therapy profession in our state, whether it is from your membership, your feedback, writing letters to senators, or being involved on committees. We appreciate each and every one of you! Ask a friend to join so the benefits of NOTA can be shared with more practitioners across the state.

**[www.notaonline.org](http://www.notaonline.org)**

**Instagram:**  
**@nebraskaOT**

**Facebook:**  
**Nebraska Occupational  
Therapy Association**