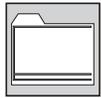


Occupational Therapy

Includes:

- Occupational therapist
- Occupational therapy assistant

Occupational Therapist



Occupational Description

Occupational therapy is the use of purposeful activity and interventions to achieve functional outcomes to maximize the independence and the maintenance of health of any individual who is limited by a physical injury or illness, a cognitive impairment, a psychosocial dysfunction, a mental illness, a developmental or learning disability, or an adverse environmental condition.



Job Description

Occupational therapy services are based on assessment methods, including the use of skilled observation or the administration and interpretation of standardized or nonstandardized tests and measurements to identify areas for occupational therapy services.

Occupational therapy services include, but are not limited to, the assessment, treatment, and education of, or consultation with, the individual, family, or other persons; interventions directed toward developing daily living skills, work readiness or work performance, play skills or leisure capacities, or enhancing educational performances skills; providing for the development of sensory-motor, perceptual, or neuromuscular functioning, or range of motion; and emotional, motivational, cognitive, or psychosocial components of performance.

Occupational therapy services may require assessment of the need for and use of interventions such as the design, development, adaptation, application, or training in the use of assistive technology devices; the design, fabrication, or application of rehabilitative technology such as selected orthotic devices; training in the use of assistive technology and orthotic or prosthetic devices; the application of physical agent modalities as an adjunct to or in preparation for purposeful activity; the use of ergonomic principles; the adaptation of environments and processes to enhance functional performance; or the promotion of health and wellness.



Employment Characteristics

The wide population served by occupational therapists is located in a variety of settings, such as hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation facilities, long-term care facilities, extended care facilities, schools, camps, and the patients' own homes. Occupational therapists both receive referrals from and make referrals to the appropriate health, educational, or medical specialists.

AOTA studies indicate that the average entry-level salary for occupational therapists is \$40,000.



Educational Programs

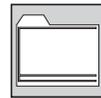
Length. Programs at the baccalaureate level entail 4 years of college or university preparation. Postbaccalaureate programs leading to a certificate or master's degree are generally 2 to 3 years. Following completion

of all educational requirements, individuals take a national certification examination. All states also regulate the practice of occupational therapy.

Prerequisites. Applicants to baccalaureate programs should have a high school diploma or equivalent. A baccalaureate degree is a prerequisite for postbaccalaureate occupational therapy programs.

Curriculum. Curricula of accredited programs are required to include basic human sciences, the human development process, specific life tasks and activities, health and illness, and occupational therapy theory and practice, which includes a minimum of 6 months of supervised field experience. The education of the occupational therapist is broadly based in human anatomy and physiology, behavioral sciences such as psychology and sociology, humanities and the arts, specialized professional subjects, and fieldwork experience.

Occupational Therapy Assistant



Occupational Description

Under the direction of an occupational therapist, the occupational therapy assistant directs an individual's participation in selected tasks to restore, reinforce, and enhance performance; facilitate learning of those skills and functions essential for adaptation and productivity; diminish or correct pathology; and promote and maintain health. The occupational orientation of the assistant is that of guiding the individual's goal-directed use of time, energy, interest, and attention. A fundamental concern is the development and maintenance of the capacity throughout the lifespan to perform with satisfaction to self and others those tasks and roles essential to productive living and to the mastery of self and the environment. Under the therapist's direction, the assistant participates in the development of adaptive skills and performance capacity and is concerned with factors that promote, influence, or enhance performance, as well as those that serve as barriers or impediments to the individual's ability to function. The occupational therapy assistant provides service to those individuals whose abilities to cope with tasks of living are threatened or impaired by developmental deficits, the aging process, poverty and cultural differences, physical injury or illness, or psychological and social disability.



Job Description

Entry-level occupational therapy assistant technical education prepares the individual to:

- Collaborate in providing occupational therapy services with appropriate supervision to prevent deficits and to maintain or improve functions in the activities of daily living, work, and play/leisure and in the underlying components, including sensory-motor, cognitive, and psychosocial
- Participate in managing occupational therapy service
- Direct activity programs
- Incorporate values and attitudes congruent with the profession's standards and ethics



Employment Characteristics

Occupational therapy assistants assist in the planning and implementation of treatment of a diverse population in a variety of settings, such as nursing homes, hospitals and clinics, rehabilitation facilities, long-term care facilities, extended care facilities, sheltered workshops, schools and camps, private homes, and community agencies.

AOTA studies indicate that the average entry-level salary for occupational therapy assistants is \$30,000.



Educational Programs

Length. Education may be acquired in either a 2-year associate degree program or a 1-year certificate program. These technical-level education programs are

located in 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities, and postsecondary vocational/technical schools and institutions and include academic and fieldwork components, as do the professional level programs. Following completion of all educational requirements, individuals take a national certification examination. Many states also regulate the practice of occupational therapy assistants.

Prerequisites. High school diploma or equivalent. A foundation of liberal arts, sciences, and technical education, as well as biological, behavioral, and health sciences, may be prerequisite to, or concurrent with, the technical education of the program curriculum.

Curriculum. Curricula of accredited programs are required to include normal and abnormal conditions across the lifespan, occupational therapy principles and practice skills, the occupational therapy process, treatment planning, implementation of skills and

knowledge, documentation of services, direction of program activity, and fieldwork education.



Inquiries

Careers

Education

American Occupational Therapy Association

4720 Montgomery Ln

PO Box 31220

Bethesda, MD 20824-1220

301 652-2682

www.aota.org

Certification

National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT)

800 S Frederick Ave/Ste 200

Gaithersburg, MD 20877-4150

301 990-7979

www.nbcot.org

Program Accreditation

Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education

4720 Montgomery Ln/PO Box 31220

Bethesda, MD 20824-1220

301 652-2682

301 652-7711 Fax

www.aota.org