

HOW DO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS PROVIDE THESE SERVICES?

Occupational Therapists work collaboratively with clients of all ages, their families and carers and other professionals in the home, school/preschool and community.

INTERVENTION IS PROVIDED THROUGH A VARIETY OF MEANS INCLUDING:

- Consultation/collaboration with client/ parent/ carer/ teacher/ other service providers.
- Individual intervention and programming
- Group programming
- Education and training.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY ARE EMPLOYED BY:

- The Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
- The Spastic Centre
- Department of Health
- Centacare
- Private Practices
- The Department of Education & Training

- Other Non Government Agencies

For information on how to contact an Occupational Therapist suited to your needs contact your local Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care office and ask for Disability Services or the Community Support Team.

WHAT IS SPOT ON DD?

SPOT on DD is a group of Speech Pathologists, Physiotherapists, and Occupational Therapists who together aim to provide:

- promotion of best practice of therapy in the area of developmental disability.
- professional support
- continuing education information

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SPOT ON DD WRITE TO:

SPOT on DD
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Occupational Therapy



Working with people who have a developmental disability

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

Within the field of developmental disability, occupational therapists work as part of a team to improve a person's ability to function in the family, at school/preschool, work, play and in the community.

The person with a disability can benefit from an assessment from an occupational therapist when:

- ◆ They have an identified neuromuscular condition such as cerebral palsy, which is likely to affect performance of functional activities.
- ◆ They have no specific condition, however have difficulty performing functional activities which are appropriate for their developmental level.
- ◆ They appear poorly coordinated in gross or fine movements, which affects performance in functional activities.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CAN ASSIST IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

1. Self Care Skills

- ◆ Promoting independence and offering advice in areas of daily living for example, how to maximise a persons involvement in dressing.

2. Physical Management

- ◆ Positioning to ensure comfort, safety and a good body posture for motor control for example, seating for meals.
- ◆ Promoting and maintaining the development of motor skills necessary for participation in every day activities for example, use of hand for holding a spoon.



3. Hand Skills

- ◆ Developing skills necessary for purposeful use of hands for example, eye contact, attending to a task.
- ◆ Developing reach, grasp and release in functional activities for example, dressing, school work.
- ◆ Development of skilled use of the hands ie. eye hand coordination, fine motor control and bilateral coordination.
- ◆ Splinting to reduce muscle tightness and improve function.

4. Sensory Perceptual Motor Skills

- ◆ Developing good body awareness to improve motor planning and performance for example, dressing, handwriting.
- ◆ Promoting the integration of the senses (hearing, vision, touch, taste, smell and movement) so the person is able to function within their environments, that is, home, preschool/school/work and the community.

5. Leisure and Recreation

- ◆ Adapting activities or the environment to promote participation in leisure within the home and community for example, modification of stereo for switch access.

6. Assisted Mobility

- ◆ Wheelchair prescription and modification.

- ◆ Promoting movement to develop optimal mobility for example, training in how to use an electric wheelchair.

7. Environmental Modifications

- ◆ Advice on modifications and adaptations to promote access and independence for example, ramping the front access to a home.

8. Transport

- ◆ Advice on transport in line with the Australian Standards for example, which wheelchairs are appropriate to be used for transporting a person in a bus.

9. Equipment

- ◆ Providing information and access to specialised equipment.

