

## Quick Guides to the Health Professions

# Occupational Therapists

### *What is an occupational therapist?*

Occupational therapy is a health profession concerned with promoting health and well-being through occupation. Occupation refers to everything that people do during the course of everyday life (CAOT Position Statement on Everyday Occupations and Health, 2003). The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in the occupations which give meaning and purpose to their lives.

### *What do occupational therapists do?*

An occupational therapist (OT) works with anyone who is having difficulty doing the activities that are important to them in the areas of self-care, leisure, and productivity.

### *Where do occupational therapists work?*

Occupational therapists are generally employed in:

- Community agencies
- Hospitals
- Chronic care facilities
- Rehabilitation centres and clinics
- Schools
- Social agencies industry
- Private practice

### *Education and preparation*

Occupational therapy is offered as university program at a Baccalaureate or a Master's level. Programs include practice component with a minimum of 1000 hours of fieldwork education.

Occupational therapists must successfully pass the certification examination administered by the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists or meet provincial registration qualifications.

### *Licensure*

Occupational therapy is listed under the Health Professions Act, 1991. Occupational therapists must be registered with their provincial regulatory organization in order to legally practice occupational therapy in Canada.

### *Professional organizations*

Alberta College of Occupational Therapists  
<https://acot.ca>

The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists  
<http://www.caot.ca>

### *Contributors to this guide*

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<https://www.uwo.ca/fhs/education/ipe/index.html>



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