

Health Care: A Career For Life

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

JOB DESCRIPTION

Occupational therapy is the art and science of enabling engagement in everyday living, through occupation; of enabling people to perform the occupations that foster health and well-being; and of enabling a just and inclusive society so that all people may participate to their potential in the daily occupations of life (Townsend & Polatajko, 2013, p. 380).

Occupational therapists are highly trained health-care professionals. Effective 2008, entry level education requirements in Canada include a professional Master's degree in occupational therapy.

Occupational therapists define an *occupation* as much more than a chosen career. Occupation refers to everything that people do during the course of everyday life. Each of us have many occupations that are essential to our health and well-being. Occupational therapists believe that occupations describe who you are and how you feel about yourself. A child, for example, might have occupations as a student, a playmate, a dancer and a table-setter.

Responsibilities/Activities

Occupational therapists use a systematic approach based on evidence and professional reasoning to enable individuals, families, groups, communities, organizations, or populations to develop the means and opportunities to identify and engage in the occupations of life. This collaborative process involves assessing, planning, implementing, monitoring, modifying and evaluating the client in relation to occupational engagement in self-care, work, study, volunteerism and leisure. Occupational therapists use key enablement skills such as adaptation, advocacy, coaching, collaboration, consultation, coordination, designing/building, educating, engaging and specializing to enable occupation. Occupational therapists may assume different roles such as advising on; health risks in the workplace, safe driving for older adults, or programs to promote mental health for youth. Occupational therapists also perform functions as managers, researchers, program developers, educators, and practice scholars in addition to the direct delivery of professional services.

Practice Settings

Occupational therapists are generally employed in community agencies, health care organizations such as hospitals, chronic care facilities, rehabilitation centres and clinics, schools, social agencies, industry, or are self-employed. Some occupational therapists specialize in working with clients within a specific age group or disability such as those with arthritis, developmental coordination disorder, mental illness, or spinal cord injury.

<http://www.caot.ca/default.asp?pageid=1344>

SALARY RANGE

\$58,000-\$86,000

RECOMMENDED HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

Senior 4

Biology 40S

English 40S

Math 40S

(Pre-Calculus or Applied)

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Providers Network**
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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program consists of an integrated schedule of academic and fieldwork components that take place over a two-year period.

Academic courses utilize teaching and learning methods that include a combination of seminars, lectures, clinical skills laboratory sessions, case studies, tutorials, problem solving exercises, independent study, collaborative group work, and development of a professional portfolio.

Fieldwork is interspersed throughout the program and progresses from basic to advanced. Students will be given the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge in a variety of practice settings.

Together, fieldwork and academics provide exposure to a variety of Occupational Therapy roles in a wide variety of settings allowing for the **integration of theory and practice**.

The first year of the program takes place over 40 weeks. It consists of:

- 28 weeks (12 weeks and 16 weeks) of academic study and
- 12 weeks (4 weeks and 8 weeks) of fieldwork experience.

The second year of the program takes place over 46 weeks. This includes:

- 32 weeks (16 weeks and 16 weeks) of academic study and
- 14 weeks (8 weeks and 6 weeks) of fieldwork experience.

LINKS TO SITES

Manitoba's Society of Occupational Therapist <http://www.msot.mb.ca/>

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapist <http://www.caot.ca/index.asp>

University of Manitoba http://umanitoba.ca/rehabsciences/ot/ot_overview.html

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