

# Primary Health Services

The focus of Occupational Therapy (OT) is holistic, person-centered care. Our interventions consider the person, their whanau, their roles and values and support quality of life, wellbeing and function. The term “Occupation” in this context is a broad category and considers all aspects of daily life.

Supporting health and wellbeing in order for people to remain well at home for longer is a strong theme in this climate of change in our health service. Occupational Therapy is integral in enabling this vision.

**notia** Occupational Therapy provides a wide variety of specialist services across the West Coast. These include:

- Advice regarding housing modifications
- Anxiety management
- Assessment and intervention to facilitate independence in all occupations of daily living
- Cognitive assessment
- Driving assessment and rehabilitation
- Energy conservation
- Equipment solutions
- Manual and patient handling
- Paediatrics
- Palliative care
- Pressure care
- Rehabilitation
- Sensory processing and modulation
- Supervision
- Training and development for staff
- Wheelchairs and seating

### Prices:

Individual OT assessment and intervention	\$85 per hour
Training and staff development	\$100 per person per training
Professional supervision	\$100 per hour
Moving and handling	- see separate sheet for options

All costs are exclusive of GST. GST of 15% will be added



# Emerging Areas in OT

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The demand for [occupational therapists](#) (OTs) -- professionals who help individuals with physical, cognitive or emotional limitations achieve independence in their daily living or working environments -- is on the upswing. After a period of layoffs and hiring freezes spurred by federal legislation that limited reimbursement for therapy services, the OT profession has bounced back and is branching out in new directions. While job opportunities in hospitals, schools and other traditional settings remain strong, many OTs are blazing trails in areas connected with the aging population. Carolyn Baum, a past president of the [American Occupational Therapy Association](#), notes five aging-related practice areas that are spawning new business for OTs:

## **Support for 'Aging in Place'**

Older Americans prefer to stay in their own homes rather than enter long-term-care facilities, and OTs help make that desire a reality. OTs consult with elderly individuals, families and architects on [designing or modifying homes](#) so they are more accessible and less dangerous for people with poor mobility, vision loss or other limitations. OTs also work with architects and city officials to help them understand and incorporate the needs of seniors into city planning. In enclaves populated by large numbers of elderly people, for example, there is often a need for more senior-friendly signs, crosswalks and sidewalks.

## **Driver Assessments and Training Programs**

Making sure older drivers do not injure themselves -- or anyone else -- on the road is another growth area for OTs. Because more physicians are addressing driver safety issues with their patients, the demand for evaluating questionable drivers is growing. OTs are equipped to perform driver screenings, evaluations and interventions. OTs also offer driver rehabilitation services.

## **Community Health and Wellness**

More healthcare systems are launching community health initiatives, and OTs are getting involved. Specifically, OTs are taking the lead when it comes to educating people who have had strokes about how to manage their condition and prevent recurrences. Medical advances now enable more patients with chronic health issues to survive, and OTs are instrumental in helping these individuals lead productive, independent lives.

## **Addressing the Needs of Children and Youth**

About 30 percent of OTs currently work in schools, and the workload in K-12 education is increasing as services for disabled students are expanded and extended. OTs help children with disabilities prepare to enter special-education programs and also work to create the proper learning and environmental conditions for children with conditions such as autism.

## **Ergonomics Consulting**

Older workers make up one of the fastest-growing segments of the workforce, and OTs are working with employers to develop strategies that support older workers' productivity. Furthermore, as employers become more aware of the link between [ergonomics](#) and workplace injury, OTs are stepping in as injury-prevention and workplace-modification consultants.

## **Technology and Assistive-Device Development and Consulting**

OTs are at the forefront in using technology to help individuals compensate for cognitive, functional or mobility limitations. For example, OTs are involved in developing robots that climb steps and perform simple tasks for people with disabilities.

These areas represent just a small part of the profession's potential scope of practice, Baum says. An OT's mission -- to help people with limitations fully participate in life -- can be accomplished in many settings and capacities. "Occupational therapists find it very hard to get bored with their work," says Baum, who is also professor of occupational therapy and neurology at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. "There are always new places to take their knowledge."