

Occupational Therapy and Primary Care

Removing the Barriers to Participation

Occupational therapists
working with GPs can
support people to live
independently in the
local community



Royal College of
Occupational
Therapists



How can **occupational therapists** support you in Primary Care?

Occupational therapists enable people living with a range of health problems and chronic conditions to overcome the barriers so they can participate in everyday life, and improve their health and wellbeing.

Occupational therapists assess the needs of people to do what they need and want to do (occupations). They develop plans with patients, so they can re-engage in everyday life, despite their health and social difficulties.

Through intervening early and taking a collaborative approach occupational therapists are able to address what matters to people. This can minimise crisis situations, prevent further deterioration and promote independence and social inclusion.

Occupational therapists help GPs to support patients who:

- Are frail, with complex needs
- Live with chronic physical or mental health conditions
- Manage anxiety or depression
- Require advice to return or remain in work
- Need rehabilitation so they can continue with previous occupations (activities of daily living)



How occupational therapists can work within your practice:

- Triage – allocate patients to best and appropriate treatment
- Review – pinpoint and resolve underlying issues that result in frequent visits to the GP's surgery e.g. social isolation
- Refer to other services when required e.g. reablement teams memory services
- Conduct home assessments to reduce risks e.g. falls
- Teach self-management strategies for fatigue, anxiety, memory loss and many other symptoms
- Provide rehabilitation to restore abilities to undertake everyday occupations
- Provide advice and access to equipment and adaptations for the home
- Advise on and develop return to work plans
- Recommend ongoing support through community networks
- Advise carers on how to manage their caring responsibilities, and to also look after their own health

How patients benefit from occupational therapy:

- Improved confidence and ability to manage their health condition(s) and daily life
- Increase in the number of occupations they are able to engage in
- Support to remain safe and live independently at home
- Early intervention to prevent situations becoming a crisis
- Increased awareness of services and support available
- Return to work or remaining in employment

How your practice can benefit from occupational therapy:

- Reduction in number of GP appointments and home visits
- Fewer unnecessary admissions to hospital
- Timely response to crisis situations
- Appropriate referral on to other services

To find out more about how an **occupational therapist** can help your practice, please contact:

Royal College of Occupational Therapists Limited

The UK professional body for occupational therapy staff

(The Royal College of Occupational Therapists is the trading name and a subsidiary of the British Association of Occupational Therapists)

www.RCOT.co.uk

Royal College of
Occupational
Therapists

