

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA FACT SHEET

OT and Community Mental Health

The overall goal of occupational therapy in community mental health is to help people develop the skills and obtain the supports necessary for independent, interdependent, productive living. Particular emphasis is given to interventions that result in improved quality of life and decrease hospitalization.

Occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants provide purposeful, goal-oriented activities that teach and facilitate skills in:

- assertiveness;
- cognition (e.g., problem solving);
- independent living including using community resources, home management, time management, management of medication, and safety in the home and community;
- avocational interest and pursuits;
- self-awareness;
- interpersonal and social skills;
- stress management;
- activities of daily living (e.g.; hygiene);
- role development (e.g., parenting);
- self-sufficiency and interdependency; and
- wellness.

Occupational therapy services include:

- adapting the environment at home, work, and school to promote an individual's optimal functioning
- providing education programs, experiential learning, and treatment groups or classes;
- consulting with employers responding to requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act;
- functional evaluation and ongoing monitoring of clients for placement in jobs and housing;
- providing assistance or guidance with client-run support groups;
- goal setting and rehabilitation plan development with client; and
- providing guidance and consultation to persons in all employment settings, including supportive employment.

Occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants working in the area of community mental health are employed by or provide consultation to:

- adult day care centers,
- day treatment centers,
- home health agencies,
- community rehabilitation programs,
- community mental health clinics,
- clubhouse programs,
- outpatient psychiatric clinics,

-- more --



VISION STATEMENT:

A world where all people
participate in meaningful
occupations to optimize their
life experience.

MISSION STATEMENT:

OTAC is the collective voice that
serves, promotes, and supports
the profession of occupational
therapy and its practitioners.



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OT and Community Mental Health, *cont.*

- foster care residents,
- sheltered workshops,
- group and private homes,
- community support programs.

Occupational therapists work as members of community treatment teams and receive referrals from:

- case managers,
- psychiatrists,
- social workers,
- psychologist,
- nurses,
- clients themselves,
- family,
- courts,
- school guidance counselors,
- teachers,
- foster care providers,
- family physicians,
- vocational counselors, and
- other health professionals.

Occupational therapists hold a bachelor's, master's or doctorate degree and are licensed (OTR/L) by the California Board of Occupational Therapy. Licensed occupational therapy assistants earn an associate degree. All occupational therapy practitioners must complete supervised clinical field-work in a variety of health and educational settings and must pass a national certification examination. In addition, most states have regulatory laws that cover occupational therapy practice.

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Developed by the Occupational Therapy Department, Springfield Hospital Center, Sykesville, Maryland.

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