

Occupational Therapist

What Does an Occupational Therapist Do?

Occupational therapists are health professionals who work with people to promote their competent performance in daily life occupations (at work, at home and in their local community). Occupational therapists work with adults and children whose performance abilities have been impaired by disease, physical injury, developmental disability, emotional trauma, psychological problems or social disadvantage. Through the use of therapeutic occupations and specialised equipment and techniques, occupational therapists assist their clients/ patients to regain lost function and develop their existing or potential abilities to live with dignity and purpose

What do I study to become an Occupational Therapist?

- Bachelor of Health Science (Occupational Therapy) – Charles Sturt University
- Bachelor of Health Science (Occupational Therapy) – University of Newcastle
- Bachelor of Applied Science (Occupational Therapy) – University of Sydney
- Bachelor of Applied Science (Occupational Therapy) – University of Western Sydney – Campbelltown
- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy – Monash University – Victoria
- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy – James Cook University – Townsville
- Bachelor of Occupational Therapy – University of Queensland – St Lucia

A day in the life of a Rural Occupational Therapist

- Improve the play and motor skills of a baby or child with a disability
- Visit a disabled or elderly person and organise their home to be modified to suit their needs
- Visit work sites to assist people to modify their jobs and design better work areas.
- Help children develop fine and gross motor skills in school and pre-school programs.
- Assess the driving ability of someone with a disability
- Help people select the right equipment to suit their needs. This can include wheel chairs, chairs, cutlery and other assistance devices
- Use therapeutic occupations to assist a person's recovery following disturbances to his/her physical status (eg. A stroke) or psychological wellbeing (eg. Depression).

Career Opportunities

- Public & Private Hospitals
- Community health centres and mental health clinics
- Private occupational therapy practices
- Rehabilitation and supported employment services
- Nursing homes and day centres for elderly people
- Schools and early intervention services
- Specialised programs for people with developmental disabilities
- Industry
- Health Service Management

What sort of person should I be?

- Have good organisational and problem solving skills
- Possess ability to organise staff
- Have good communication skills
- Be interested in statistics – an analytical mind
- Achievement oriented
- Able to interact with a broad range of people