



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

What is an Occupational Therapist?

Occupational therapists develop individual and group programs with people affected by illness, injury, developmental disorders, emotional or psychological problems and aging to maintain, restore or increase their ability to care for themselves and to engage in work, school or leisure. They also develop and implement health promotion programs with individuals, community groups and employers.

Occupational therapists may specialize in working with specific populations such as children or adults, or persons with distinct problems such as dementia, traumatic brain injury and chronic pain, or provide special interventions such as return-to-work programs.

Occupational therapists perform some or all of the following duties:

- Analyse clients' capabilities and expectations related to life activities through observation, interview and formal assessments
- Develop intervention programs to address client's needs related to self-care, work and leisure activities
- Establish personalized care plans working as a member of an interdisciplinary team
- Consult and advise on health promotion programs to prevent disabilities and to maximize independent function in all activities of life; and
- May supervise support personnel and students and provide training.

A career in Occupational Therapy requires:

- Logical thinking
- Excellent problem-solving skills
- An interest in helping people; and
- Excellent communication skills.

How do you become an Occupational Therapist?

In order to work in Saskatchewan as an Occupational Therapist you need to have:

- A university degree in occupational therapy including supervised fieldwork; and
- Licensure with the Saskatchewan regulatory body: the Saskatchewan Society of Occupational Therapists (SSOT). (www.ssot.sk.ca)
- The Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) exam is not required for individuals who have graduated from a Canadian occupational therapy program. However, it is a requirement for those individuals who have graduated from a program outside of Canada.

In Saskatchewan, Occupational Therapists are governed by *The Occupational Therapists Act, 1997*.

Where can you be trained to be an Occupational Therapist?

Alberta

University of Alberta
Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine
<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/rehabmed/ot.cfm>

Please Note: The Saskatchewan government purchases a number of seats in the Occupational Therapy program at the University of Alberta. These seats are reserved exclusively for qualified Saskatchewan students on a competitive basis.

British Columbia

University of British Columbia
The School of Rehabilitation Sciences
<http://www.rehab.ubc.ca/>

Manitoba

University of Manitoba
School of Rehabilitation Medicine
<http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/medicine/units/medrehab/ot/>

Ontario

University of Toronto
Department of Occupational Therapy
http://www.ot.utoronto.ca/ps/ps_Welcome.asp

University of Western Ontario
School of Occupational Therapy
<http://www.uwo.ca/fhs/ot/>

McMaster University
School of Rehabilitation Sciences
<http://www.fhs.mcmaster.ca/rehab/>

Queens University
School of Rehabilitation Therapy
<http://www.rehab.queensu.ca/>

University of Ottawa
School of Rehabilitation Sciences
<http://www.health.uottawa.ca/sr/programs.htm>

Quebec

McGill University
School of Physical and Occupational Therapy
<http://www.medicine.mcgill.ca/spot/>

Université de Montréal
l'École De Réadaptation
<http://www.readap.umontreal.ca/>

Université Laval
Département de réadaptation
<http://www.ulaval.ca/sg/PR/C1/1.456.11.html>

Nova Scotia

Dalhousie University
School of Occupational Therapy
<http://www.occtherapy.dal.ca/>

What do you need to get into the University of Alberta Occupational Therapist training program?

Those who wish to enroll in the BSc in Occupational Therapy program at the University of Alberta must complete a minimum of 2 years of university-level coursework before applying for admission to the Faculty. Preference will be given to those who have completed classes in:

- 3 Psychology;
- 3 Sociology;
- 3 Statistics;
- 3 Interpersonal Communication;
- 3 Introductory Gross Human Anatomy; and
- 6 Human Physiology.

Applicants who have completed more than two years of university-level coursework may use senior courses to meet psychology, sociology, laboratory science requirements.

What does an Occupational Therapist study?

Generally a course in Occupational Therapy includes the following:

- Biological/Basic Sciences
- Behavioural/Social Sciences
- Clinical Sciences
- OT Management/Professional Knowledge

Fieldwork Courses: All students are required to complete 1000 hours of fieldwork at approved facilities. Students may be required to complete some of these courses outside of their city or province of residence.

Where does an Occupational Therapist work?

- Regional Health Authorities (hospitals, long-term care, rehabilitation centers, home care)
- Schools
- Private Clinics
- Government

What is the salary of an Occupational Therapist?

Occupational Therapists' pay rates are according to the SAHO/Health Sciences Association of Saskatchewan Collective Agreement: <http://www.hsa-sk.com/>

Related Links

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT)
<http://www.caot.ca>

Canada's Occupational Therapy Resource Site
www.otworks.ca

Please check the Saskatchewan Health Bursary webpage for information about bursaries for health science students: http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/hhrp_bursaries.html