

# MACHP Career Profile

## Occupational Therapy

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Occupational therapists (commonly referred to as OT's) are university-trained professionals that help people participate in activities that are important to them, be it self-care, leisure, work or school-related. For occupational therapists, occupation means more than "work" – it refers to all the activities a person may do during the course of his/her day:

- self-care: e.g. washing, dressing, eating
- mobility: e.g. getting in/out of bed, walking, using a wheelchair
- home management: e.g. making meals, managing money
- leisure: e.g. gardening, playing cards
- school
- work

Occupational therapists use a holistic approach, i.e. looking at the physical factors (e.g. person's physical abilities), the psycho-social factors (e.g. cognitive-perceptual skills, coping skills, life skills, social support systems) and the environment (e.g. home, work or community) that may impact the ability to do the desired activity.

Occupational therapists provide services to people of all ages in a variety of settings: health centres, mental health centres, rehabilitation centres, personal care homes, schools, day cares, businesses, industry, private practice clinics,

clients' homes, adult day programs, vocational rehab programs and community mental health programs.

The services that can be provided by occupational therapy are quite varied. Assessments may include, but are not limited to:

- developmental paediatrics
- physical, cognitive and perceptual abilities
- self care and home management abilities
- manual and power wheelchair mobility
- ergonomics
- readiness to return to work

Interventions may include, but are not limited to:

- treatment: splints, exercise programs, developmental programs, graduated return-to-work programs, cognitive rehab
- teaching new skills: energy conservation, transfers, one-handed dressing or meal prep, coping skills, life skills such as banking
- prescribing equipment: wheelchairs and seating, bath tub equipment, ramps, adaptive aids

To practice in Canada, occupational therapists must:

- have graduated from an accredited university program
- have completed 1000 hours of

fieldwork training

- be registered with, and licensed to practice by, the provincial regulatory body for the province in which they are practicing.

For more information, on occupational therapy, you can visit the following websites:

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists  
- [www.caot.ca](http://www.caot.ca)

World Federation of Occupational Therapists  
- [www.wfot.org](http://www.wfot.org)

Manitoba Society of Occupational Therapists  
- [www.msot.mb.ca](http://www.msot.mb.ca)

Association of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba  
- [www.cotm.ca](http://www.cotm.ca)