

Key Facts:

Occupational therapists are the only profession where activity (task, performance and/or process focused) is the main method of intervention. Occupational therapists work holistically and are outcome focused. They have multi-dimensional training that addresses the physical, psychosocial, sensory processing, developmental levels and needs of Children & Young People. Occupational therapists have specific skills in activity analysis, problem-solving, orthotics, group dynamics, sensory integration, visual perception, and the impact of disability and mental illness upon occupational functioning. (COT 2007)

Occupational therapists provide a range of interventions for different conditions to help improve childrens:

- Functional ability which may be cognitive, physical or emotional (or a combination).
- Co-ordination
- Physical, sensory, intellectual and or psychosocial difficulties.

Interventions are focused on occupational performance areas of age appropriate personal activities of daily living (washing, dressing, feeding, toileting, personal grooming, and mobility, seating), school access and engagement (e.g. handwriting, attention, copying from the blackboard, participation in PE); and developmental play,

- Social relationships and community living skills (e.g. road awareness, shopping, meal preparation, use of public transport).
- Environment through the provision of equipment and /or adaptations

Assessments take into account: gross motor, fine motor, visual perceptual, cognitive, psychosocial skills, and the environment. The needs of the carer are also considered with respect to manual moving & handling, transportation, and safe management of the child in all their environments, including their carers emotional well being.

In the area of mental health, occupational interventions are focused on the emotional and mental health needs of the child or young person using activity based interventions as the main mode of intervention. Interventions are individual and/or group based in nature using a range of treatment approaches, including, developmental, educational, neurodevelopment (Bobath & sensory integration) and compensatory. Intervention will also include the use of home programmes and advice to all those within the child's network. (COT 2007)

Cost Benefit

Similar as for long term conditions

- One study has shown that through occupational therapy intervention for adolescents with emotional and behavioural disorders a positive financial cost benefit realised per teenager was £100 (Ikiugu MN, 2007)

Reference

College of Occupational Therapists (2007) Information produced by the COT Specialists Section Children Young People and Families for the Workforce Review Team. [Unpublished]

Ikiugu MN, Anderson L (2007) Cost Effectiveness of the Instrumentalism in Occupational Therapy (LOT) Conceptual Model as a Guide for Intervention with Adolescents with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD). International Journal of Behavioral and Consultation Therapy, 2007, 3 (1), p53 –

