

Getting Your Congressional Meeting Started

Introductions:

- Start by thanking the staff for their time and for meeting with your group.
- If you're in a large group, we suggest having one person introduce the group as a whole.
- For individual introductions, share your name and the OT setting you work in—or mention that you're a student.
- In smaller groups (3–4 people), feel free to add more detail. Practitioners might briefly share how their work supports independence, health management, or daily participation. Students can share what drew them to OT and what excites them about its impact.

Introducing Occupational Therapy:

- A great way to find out how much the staffer or Member of Congress knows about occupational therapy is to ask: “**Are you familiar with occupational therapy?**”
- This is a good way to learn if they have a connection to the profession and usually leads to a discussion about what they do or don't know.
- If they are not familiar with OT, you can give a quick broad overview of the profession. You may give more details during the issues. Here is an example or you can use your own explanation.

Occupational therapy helps people do the things they need and want to do. OT practitioners support individuals across the lifespan in areas like self-care, mobility, mental health, and managing chronic conditions. They work in diverse settings including hospitals, schools, homes, and community-based programs.

Legislative Issues:

- You can move into legislative issues once the natural conversation has come to an end—there may be a lot of discussion or there may be none—either is fine.
- Before you begin discussing the priority issues, we recommend briefly mentioning that Medicare's telehealth flexibilities for OT are set to expire on **September 30, 2025**
- These waivers, enacted in 2020, have made it possible for OT services to be delivered via telehealth—especially benefiting Medicare beneficiaries in rural areas or those with limited ability to travel. Continued access remains a priority, and it's important to flag the need for Congress to extend these flexibilities without interruption.
- Next discuss the legislative issues. It is okay if you only get to 2 of them. If there is time you can cover 3.
- Always remember to make your ask and to thank them at the end of the meeting