

Occupational Therapy Addressing Mental & Behavioral Health in Non-Psychiatric Settings

Our Values

Occupational therapy values meeting our clients' needs by supporting participation in occupations that matter to them on a daily basis.

Our Approach

Through an inclusive approach that promotes overall physical and mental health well-being, occupational therapy's presence in mental and behavioral health conversations, preventions, and standards of care can benefit all practice settings.

Our Services

This infographic provides some examples of the ways occupational therapy can address mental and behavioral health in non-psychiatric settings. While this is not an exhaustive list of occupational therapy's role in traditional mental and behavioral health settings, we recognize that there are other spokes in the wheel that should be considered for the health and well-being of our clients.



**Be a part of the solution and
answer the question:
What can Occupational Therapy do?**

01 Population Health & Wellness

- Promote positive mental health by identifying early symptoms.
- Prevent crises by decreasing unhealthy routines, chronic stress, and negative thinking and hopelessness.
- Intervene with solutions and support that offer coping strategies to improve mental health.
- Incorporate productive occupations that positively benefit health, home, purpose, and community to support both physical and emotional well-being (SAMHSA, 2022).

02 Home & Community

- Manage anxiety to adapt and adjust to life roles.
- Establish healthy routines and review occupational outlets to support meaningful interests (AOTA, 2017).
- Recognize child abuse paradigm for subtle needs leading to intervention, prevention, and referrals.
- Use community and social supports to aid in navigating and accessing the health care system.
- Teach coping strategies for trauma history, societal stigmas, and managing emotions.

03 Schools, Early Intervention, & Community Education

- Facilitate adaptation by promoting transition services for youth with intellectual disabilities and for children moving from early intervention to school-based services.
- Consider environment and trauma history for early identification and management.
- Promote emotional well-being and mental health management by collaborating with educators, parents, and caregivers to support positive mental health moments (Every Moment Counts, 2022).

04 Acute Hospital

- Address clients' social and emotional needs experienced during hospitalization.
- Establish plan to assist with caregiver support, everyday living, and coping with anxiety and depression.
- Promote participation to avoid delirium, mitigate trauma and stress, and enhance health and wellbeing related to the impact of injury and recovery.

05 Outpatient Clinic

- Enhance skills that identify environmental triggers and build resilience.
- Advocate participation in healthy occupations to promote mental health literacy, and to foster self-regulation, and coping strategies.
- Encourage engaging in occupation that fosters recovery and reclaims mental and behavioral health for improved levels of community participation.
- Provide integrated care to address a person's functioning in a variety of occupations. (AOTA, 2016).

06 Long-Term Care & Skilled Nursing Facilities

- Enhance participation in occupation to avoid occupational deprivation.
- Establish social and physical environments that boost social connections.
- Address behavioral challenges and agitation through occupation-based and sensory-based interventions.

07 Unhoused

- Engage in community-based experiences that provide free and local resources.
- Partner with places of worship and local shelters to access resources and integrate occupational engagement through group interventions to provide life skills, ADLs, and IADLs (Schultz-Krohn & Tyminski (2018).

08 Academia & Research

- Teach and support participatory research (PR) methods to engage peers.
- Continue interprofessional collaboration in research, program development, and clinical experience.
- Commit to ongoing continuing education on mental and behavioral health to support practice.
- Provide opportunities to develop core strategies to promote personal and professional well-being.

References

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