When Speaking With OTHER Professionals

Be sure to remind fellow professionals that occupational therapy:

- Is a science-driven, evidence-based profession.
- Has as its mission to increase a person’s ability to function at the highest possible level.
- Is provided in a multitude of settings and is customized to people of all ages.
- Is expected to grow significantly over the coming years to meet consumer desire to be empowered to live life to its fullest.

The aspirational goal behind Living Life To Its Fullest™ speaks to who people are and what they want to do. It also sets the path for where our profession stands as we continue to grow and fulfill our potential. When occupational therapy says the impossible is possible, we are helping people live life to its fullest. When occupational therapy sets goals for people who felt those goals were beyond their reach, we are helping them live life to its fullest.

The American Occupational Therapy Association™ represents the interests and concerns of more than 140,000 occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, and students nationwide. As we move toward our centennial celebration in 2017, AOTA remains focused on promoting the professional development of members and assuring that consumers have access to quality services so they can maximize their individual potential and live life to its fullest.

www.aota.org
You are the most important ambassador for explaining how occupational therapy helps people engage in *Living Life To Its Fullest*. This wallet guide has been prepared to help you spread the meaning of that phrase and an understanding of our profession as you interact with your clients and their families.

It is critical to keep in mind that within our profession there are variations in how “what we do” is defined. Hence, this guide offers you a clear and precise way to communicate clearly to the public just “what occupational therapy is all about.”

**Defining Occupational Therapy**

In defining occupational therapy, let your clients and their families know that most of us will need occupational therapy at some point in our lives. This means our friends, neighbors, parents, spouses or children.

- Occupational therapy is a science-driven, evidence-based profession that enables people of all ages to live life to its fullest by helping them promote health and prevent – or live better with – illness, injury or disability.

Tell them that working together you will:

- Design strategies for everyday living and customize environments to develop and maximize their potential.

**Focusing on Goals**

When you are making sure your client understands what your role is as their occupational therapy provider, offer the following examples of what “Living Life To Its Fullest” may mean to them. This can include:

- Achieving their goals.
- Functioning at the highest possible level.
- Maintaining or rebuilding their independence.
- Participating in the everyday activities that they need to do or that simply make life worth living.

Most of all, assure them that together you will concentrate on what matters most to them.

**“Living Life To Its Fullest” Is Also About Letting People Know You Will Help Them Thrive**

It may be helpful to tell clients and families that OT:

- Takes into account the complete person, including his or her psychological, physical, emotional and social makeup.
- Uses everyday activities as the means to develop the skills that will enable a person to get beyond his or her disability or limitations.
- Helps a person build healthy habits and routines.