

Occupational therapy

Helping people to live life their way

Occupational therapists are health and social care professionals who help people of all ages – babies, children, adults and older people – to carry out activities (or occupations) they need, want, or are expected to do, but are prevented from doing so as a result of physical or mental illness, disability, or as a result of changes in their lives as they get older.

Occupational therapists can suggest alternative ways of doing activities, providing advice on learning new approaches, helping people to get the most from life. For example, an occupational therapist can help people with the following activities:

Self-care	Getting dressed, preparing and eating meals.
Productivity	Going to or remaining in work, volunteering, studying, or caring for others.
Leisure	Playing sports, shopping, or doing hobbies.



How to find an occupational therapist

Ask your GP, nurse, social worker or other health or social care professional to refer you to an occupational therapist.

You can self-refer to a social services occupational therapist by contacting your local council* to arrange an appointment.

To arrange a private consultation with an independent occupational therapist, who will charge you a fee, please visit www.cotss-ip.org.uk to find a local independent occupational therapist.

*Social Care and Health Department of your local council in Scotland
*Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety in Northern Ireland

College of Occupational Therapists Limited
The UK professional body for occupational therapy staff

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The College of Occupational Therapists Limited is a registered charity in England and Wales (No. 275119) and in Scotland (No. SC039573)



Occupational therapy

Helping people to maximise their recovery after having a stroke



Occupational therapy **SUPPORTING STROKE SURVIVORS**

For leisure, learning, living or working
Occupational therapy
Helping people to live life their way

Stroke
association

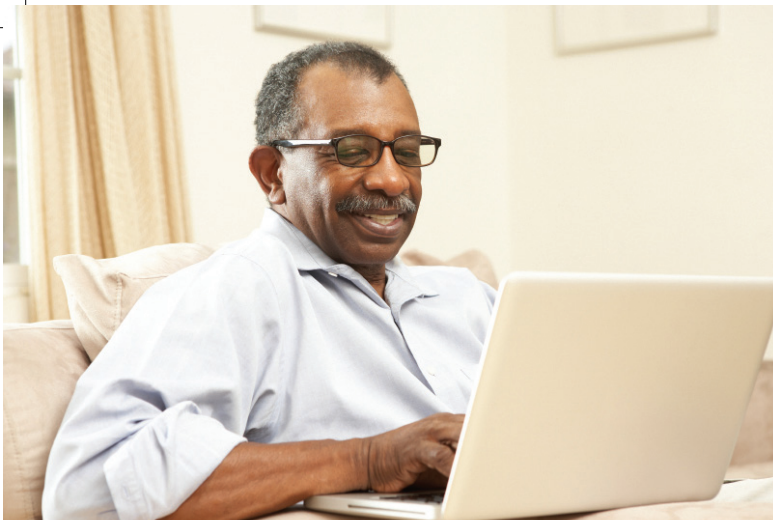
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Occupational therapy

Helping you to maximise your recovery after having a stroke

Occupational therapy and stroke

Rehabilitation, including occupational therapy, has been shown to help people make a better recovery after a stroke. Occupational therapists will assess how a stroke has affected your ability to carry out activities, find out what you want and need to achieve, and help you to overcome any barriers when you are ready to lead an active life again.

What is occupational therapy?

Occupational therapy enables people to participate in daily life to improve their health and wellbeing. Daily life is made up of many activities (or occupations). Occupations may include self-care (getting ready to go out or eating a meal), being productive (going to work or volunteering), and leisure (socialising with friends or taking part in favourite pastimes).

An occupational therapist can help people to live independently after having a stroke

Dressing myself again

An occupational therapist will break down your dressing routine into manageable tasks, focusing on how to dress your affected side. The occupational therapist may also suggest using dressing aids such as button hooks to enable you to fasten your clothes with one hand only.

Adjusting to life after a stroke

An occupational therapist will support you to manage your emotional adjustment following your stroke. An occupational therapist will teach you simple coping strategies to overcome your feeling of helplessness and regain your motivation to do what is important to you.

Pursuing hobbies and interests

An occupational therapist will suggest alternative ways for you to carry on with your chosen activities. You may wish to return to the pastimes you pursued before having a stroke, or an occupational therapist may help you to consider starting new ones that you find easier to do but are just as rewarding.



Feeling confident to be alone

An occupational therapist will assess your home for safety hazards and may suggest adaptations or equipment to increase your independence. Telecare devices such as pendant alarms and falls detectors can be used to get help if needed, when you are home alone.



Returning to work

An occupational therapist will assess how well your current abilities match the demands of your job and, if necessary, suggest different ways to carry out activities that you are likely to find difficult. The occupational therapist can liaise with your employer to make any reasonable adjustments and to facilitate a gradual return to work.

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