

Royal College of Occupational Therapists Scottish Election Manifesto 2021

3,500+



occupational therapists in
Scotland

1/3



of the profession work in
mental health

100



Number of hospital
admissions saved monthly in
NHS Lothian

Scotland's recovery from COVID-19 needs to be a joint approach from government, the health and care sectors, third sector and local communities. Occupational therapists will play a key role in rebuilding the nation's health, working across the NHS, social services, the third sector, care homes, and in the wider community.

We call on the new Scottish Government to provide citizens with direct access to occupational therapy services that will enable people to live fulfilled lives, facilitating greater levels of independence and thus relieving pressure on health and care services.

RCOT asks the new Scottish Government to:

1

Build a multi-disciplinary workforce within GP practices to support people within their communities

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2

Increase occupational therapy services for children and young people to address physical and mental health needs early

We invite the new Scottish Government to work with us to provide a central source of information for parents and teachers that covers top tips from occupational therapists. Occupational therapists in schools identify and support those in need earlier, decreasing the demand on NHS services. Occupational therapists at the University of Aberdeen are working with undergraduate primary school teachers to provide them with essential skills to support children in need, helping them access occupational therapy services as required. We call on the new Scottish Government to provide funding to expand this project, which will save money as well as ensuring young people's physical and mental health needs are addressed promptly.

3

Ensure the right to community rehabilitation

We welcome the 'Framework for Supporting People through Recovery and Rehabilitation during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic' published by the Scottish Government on 13 August 2020. We call on the new Scottish Government to immediately action the recommended objectives and commit to further investment in rehabilitation services. Recovery from COVID-19 will require extensive support of the health and care and third sectors to ensure that everyone has access to timely, high-quality, personalised rehabilitation.

4

Deliver parity between health and social care

Social care is essential for recovery, rehabilitation and for many is essential to community living. It is crucial, therefore, that it is funded and valued as equal to healthcare in Scotland. High-quality social care can significantly improve people's lives, enabling them to fully participate in society, while adequately funded social care is crucial to ensure a good working relationship between the health and social care sectors. We look forward to working with the new Scottish Government to help rebuild the social care sector and enable patients to receive the benefits of occupational therapy.

[Read the full manifesto with RCOT's Scottish Government Election 2021 Key Asks explained](#)

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