

At-a-glance: our vision and priorities

Occupational therapy
workforce strategy
2024–2035



Our vision is for an expanded occupational therapy workforce – positioned to have maximum impact in improving people’s health and quality of life.

By 2035 we will have an occupational therapy workforce that is:

- **confident and skilled in championing inclusion** and advocating for occupational justice, focusing on the right of every person to have the choice and opportunity to engage in a diverse range of activities and roles
- **based primarily within communities** working closely with local populations to meet their health and care needs and making services accessible to everyone
- **positioned to focus on prevention and early interventions**, minimising the need for crisis interventions and dependency on care services
- **putting occupations at the forefront of their practice**, empowering people to do the occupations that they value, manage their health and care needs and contribute to society.



We will achieve this through our four workforce priorities:

Optimising occupational therapy



We will:

- **support** occupational therapy practitioners to be changemakers, using their skills and knowledge to lead and co-design innovative products, interventions and services that improve people's lives and wellbeing
- **champion** innovative service delivery models that improve access to occupational therapy and achieve health equity for all.

Retention and career development



We will:

- **support and promote** the development of all occupational therapy practitioners, especially those from historically marginalised and under-represented communities, to be where they want to be, at each stage in their career
- **build** our profession's capacity, confidence, and capability to incorporate leadership, learning, research, and innovation into practice.

Demonstrating value and impact



We will:

- **build** our real-world and research evidence for occupational therapy and justify investment in the occupational therapy workforce by quantifying the impact
- **work with our leaders** to put the case for how and where to deploy our expertise to add the most value for people and their families, the wider health and care system and to avoid critical shortages within the occupational therapy workforce.

Effective workforce planning



We will empower the occupational therapy workforce to:

- **contribute to**, access, and use the workforce planning data and intelligence available to them
- **use the data** and intelligence to make informed decisions about their positioning within the health and care system.

How we'll deliver the Workforce Strategy

We've designed this strategy to prepare the occupational therapy workforce to meet future demographic and service need by 2035. We have an overall action plan and will publish nation-specific action plans for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. These include plans to improve access to occupational therapy across three priority areas – primary care, community rehabilitation after a stay in hospital, and in schools.

We will collaborate with our members, partners and external stakeholders to deliver our strategic priorities. And we'll review the strategy and its delivery after three years, updating the action plans to reflect current political, social, economic, and global health environment.



Read the full strategy and action plan at rcot.co.uk/workforce-strategy

