

How to make a great occupational therapy referral

Get the right information from the right person at the right time.



Demand for occupational therapy (OT) continues to grow, so we need to use our resources wisely and put them where they will have the most impact.

Good quality referrals help by enabling us to identify the right setting, level and type of occupational therapy required to meet people's needs.

Whilst we don't have information about individual services, the following tips will help you get the right occupational therapy – first time – whether you're referring yourself or someone else.

Making a great OT referral

Tell us about the activities or routines that are causing a problem.

- Chloe is arriving at school in a high state of anxiety – unable to settle and learn.
- I'm struggling to write notes quickly and clearly in meetings.
- Mr Davies is having difficulty preparing himself a meal.



Tell us what the person would like to be able to do.

- We would like Chloe to be able to take part in learning and social activities alongside her friends.
- I would like to produce written work that reflects my ability that I can refer to afterwards.
- Mr Davies would like to prepare a snack and drink he's chosen at a time that suits him.



Describe the strategies or approaches that have been tried already and the difference they made. This may include:

- support provided by a GP or another service
- taking part in a self-management group or a motor skills programme

- changing the environment by reducing sensory distractions
- adapting the activity – for example, sitting down to prepare vegetables.



Send the request by following these steps:

1. Identify the service that can help with the problems that have been prioritized.
2. Check the person meets their referral criteria.
3. Make sure the referrer and person being referred understand and agree upon the aim and expectations of the referral.
4. Include all relevant information.



Good quality OT referrals will help us provide the right OT service from the start – enabling people to live their best lives at home, school, work and elsewhere.



Learn more about occupational therapy here:

rcot.co.uk/aboutot

