



## The Occupational Therapy Advantage for extended health care insurance plans

# Occupational Therapy Facts

*If suddenly you couldn't work, dress yourself, or participate in your favourite leisure activity, you might wonder whether life was worth living. Disease, accidents, stress, and even the normal aging process can all lead to difficulty or inability in performing activities that are important to quality of life.*

*A company with occupational therapy as part of its extended health insurance plan offers its employees a means of maintaining a productive and fulfilling lifestyle. Early occupational therapy intervention can also prevent injuries and reduce sick time.*

### **How does occupational therapy work?**

Occupational therapists address not only the medical aspects of disability or injury, but also emotional, social and environmental factors that can limit a person's ability to function. Occupational therapists work with both employees and their employers to assess how people perform tasks within their surroundings, and may suggest changes—at individual or organizational levels—to achieve optimum function in and out of the workplace.

Occupational therapy can enable faster return to work, as well as reduce disability claims, debilitating stress and costly injuries.

### **Why is occupational therapy necessary?**

Despite the best medical treatment, many people don't regain full function after illness or injury and are left with problems and limitations. Some people have progressive diseases such as multiple sclerosis or chronic depression and are eager to maintain their quality of life. For employees whose children have learning disabilities or whose aging parents may have difficulties living independently, extended coverage gives their loved ones quicker access to occupational therapy by avoiding long waiting lists for publicly funded services.

### **How is occupational therapy recognized?**

Occupational therapists are regulated health professionals who are accountable to the public for their services. Their research supports the positive connection between participation in daily activities and health and well being. Occupational therapists are university trained and have successfully passed a national certification examination and/or have met provincial registration qualifications.

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Visit [www.otworks.ca](http://www.otworks.ca) for further information about occupational therapy.



## Occupational Therapy – Skills for the Job of Living

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Governments support occupational therapy's role in evaluating and promoting performance in daily occupations (activities).

For example...

- The Canada Revenue Agency recognizes occupational therapy as a tax-deductible expense, and occupational therapists can authorize disability tax credits.
- Occupational therapists are authorized to prescribe assistive devices (such as wheelchairs, mobility devices, and communication aids) in provinces with provincial assistive device programs.
- Many provinces recognize occupational therapy credentials for assessing mental health competency.

### *How can we learn more about occupational therapy?*

Visit Canada's occupational therapy resource web site at [www.otworks.ca](http://www.otworks.ca), call the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists at (800) 434-2268, ext. 225 or e-mail [communication@caot.ca](mailto:communication@caot.ca).