

Occupational Therapy Assistant Essential Functions

Essential function describe the tasks, skills, abilities, work activities, work context and work styles that are required for the completion of the OTA Program and to work as general OTA practitioner. Students are required to meet all objectives related to coursework and Fieldwork. Physical, emotional, cognitive and environmental demands will vary throughout the curriculum and Fieldwork experience. This list is a summary of OTA essential functions, but is not meant to be all-inclusive. More specific information can be found in the Dictionary of Occupational Title published by the United States Government or the O*Net website at <http://www.onetcenter.org/online.html>.

Throughout the educational Program and later throughout their careers, OTAs must be able to perform these essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations.

Tasks

1. Observe and record clients' progress, attitudes and behavior, and maintain this information in client records.
2. Maintain and promote a positive attitude toward clients and their treatment Program.
3. Monitor patient's performance in therapy activities, providing encouragement utilizing therapeutic use of self.
4. Select therapy activities which match the clients' needs, capabilities, interests, and occupational profile.
5. Instruct and/or assist in instructing clients and families in the creation/promotion of health/habits, establishment/restoration/remediation of health, maintenance of health/wellness, modification/facilitation/compensation or adaption of occupation and/or the prevention of disability.
6. Instruct clients in the care and use of adaptive equipment/technology.
7. Assist OTRs with implementing treatment plans designed to help clients function independently.
8. Provide verbal or written updates on clients' progress, attitudes and behavior to supervising Occupational Therapist and/or health care professionals.
9. Alter treatment Programs to obtain results if treatment is not having the intended effect.
10. Supervision of therapy aides, students and/or volunteers.
11. Research literature to obtain evidence for clinical practice.

Skills

1. Active listening - giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate and not interrupting.
2. Time management - managing one's own time and the time of others. Must be able to perform two or more tasks simultaneously.
3. Instructing - teaching others how to do something based on the learner's preferred style of learning.
4. Speaking - talking to others to convey information in a non-judgmental, encouraging manner, taking into account language and cultural factors.
5. Social perceptiveness - being aware of other's reactions and understanding why they react as they do. Initiates assisting clients and co-workers without prompting.
6. Critical thinking - using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses or alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
7. Learning strategies - selecting and using training methods and procedures appropriate for the situation when learning or teaching new things.
8. Reading comprehension - understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
9. Writing- communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience including the use of technology for completing client documentation and billing.
10. Monitoring - monitoring/assessing performance of yourself, other individuals or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.

Abilities

1. Oral comprehension - the ability to listen and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
2. Problem sensitivity - the ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognition that there is a problem.
3. Oral expression - the ability to communicate information and ideas by speaking so others will understand.
4. Written comprehension - the ability to read and comprehend information and ideas presented in writing.
5. Deductive reasoning - the ability to identify solutions to problems, implement solutions, evaluate the effectiveness of solutions and implement alternative solutions if needed.
6. Work Activities
7. Assisting and caring for others - providing personal assistance, medical attention, emotional support or other personal care to others such as coworkers, customers, clients, and/or significant others.
8. Communicating with supervisors, peers or subordinates - providing information to supervisors, coworkers and subordinates by telephone, in written form, e-mail and/or in person.
9. Making decisions and problem solving - analyzing information and evaluating results to choose the best solutions and solve problems.
10. Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships - developing constructive and cooperative working relationships with others and maintaining them over time.
11. Evaluating information to determine compliance with standards - using relevant information and individual judgment to determine whether events or processes comply with laws, regulations or standards.
12. Organizing, planning and prioritizing work - developing specific goals and plans to prioritize, organize and accomplish your work.

Work Styles

1. Cooperation – demonstrate a pleasant nature with others and a good-natured, cooperative attitude.
2. Dependability – demonstrates reliability, responsibility, and completion of required job tasks.
3. Flexibility – demonstrates a receptivity to change (positive or negative). Able to deal constructively with considerable variety in the workplace.
4. Concern for others - demonstrates sensitivity to other's needs and feelings and ability to assist others on a regular basis.
5. Stress tolerance – demonstrates ability to accept constructive criticism and to respond to high stress situations calmly and professionally.
6. Attention to detail – demonstrates attention to detail and thoroughness in completing work tasks.
7. Self-control – demonstrates ability to maintain composure, keep emotions in check, control anger and avoiding aggressive behavior, even in very difficult situations.
8. Independence – demonstrates ability to develop systems for completion of work tasks with minimal supervision and ability to complete work tasks without assistance.

Psychomotor Capabilities

1. General physical activities - ability to perform activities such as climbing, lifting, balancing, walking, bending, and stooping frequently throughout the workday.
2. Strength - ability to lift up to 25 pounds frequently and up to 50 pounds occasionally throughout the workday; working at the medium physical demand level according to the U.S. Department of Labor (37.02).
3. Manual dexterity - ability to safely grasp and manipulate objects.
4. Speed -ability to respond without hesitation to compromised patients.
5. Endurance – ability to tolerate a 40-hour work week.

Information taken from O*Net website at <http://www.onetcenter.org/online.html>.