

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANTS

AN OVERVIEW

Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTA's) promote and help individuals or groups to maintain physical, cognitive, emotional and spiritual health. These professionals provide rehabilitative services designed to increase a client's independence and quality of life. Occupational therapy assistants work in collaboration with occupational therapists to evaluate a patient's daily living skills and to help determine an individualized treatment plan designed to improve functioning & overall well-being. Treatment plans may involve activities or the use of assistive technology to enhance self-care or work-related abilities. These professionals work primarily day shifts, however depending on the setting weekend hours may also be required. OTA's work in a variety of settings including educational, community, and healthcare workplaces.

NECESSARY SKILLS

- Ability to teach/instruct
- Sensitivity
- Creative & critical thinking skills
- Knowledge of human development & conditions
- Ability to work with assistive technology

REQUIRED COURSEWORK & DEGREE

Must obtain an associate degree as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. National certification and state licensure are required.

Coursework includes:

- Mental Health & Clinical Conditions
- Therapeutic applications with different populations
- Assistive Technology

TYPICAL CHARACTERISTICS & INTERESTS

Social, like to teach, help or otherwise be of service to people

Realistic, like work activities that include practical, hands on problems & solutions

PATIENT CONTACT

75-90% of total time
(depending on setting)

JOB OUTLOOK & WAGES

According to MN Department of Employment, expected to grow faster than average through 2012

Entry-level Salary: Approximately \$30-32,000 annually

Want to know more? Go to:

www.aota.org, <http://science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks>, www.bls.gov/oco/, www.stkate.edu