

Occupational Therapy Assistant



Nature of the Profession

Occupational Therapy Assistants (OTAs) work in collaboration with Occupational Therapists to provide health, wellness and rehabilitative services in a multitude of areas and across the lifespan. Areas of employment may include schools, hospitals, nursing homes, home health, outpatient clinics and community centers. The age range of patients being treated by an OTA is birth to end of life. OTAs assess individual and community needs, plan and implement treatment activities, and document progress toward the achievement of established goals. OTAs use purposeful activity, creative arts, environmental modifications, adaptive equipment and technology, specific intervention techniques and therapeutic use of self to prevent, remediate or compensate for impairments that may otherwise limit a person from fully engaging in daily activities such as work, play or leisure.

Aptitudes

- Compassion for people of all abilities
- Willingness to utilize research to guide practice
- Welcoming of diversity
- Able to work in multidisciplinary team settings, and independently with limited supervision
- Adaptive, creative and resourceful

Education

Occupational therapy assistants must complete an educational program taking an average of 2 1/2 years of fulltime study to complete. Typical programs of study include classroom, lab and community practice opportunities, including 16 weeks of hands-on practical experience under the supervision of an OT or OTA. Coursework is focused on the physical, social and behavioral sciences and on occupational therapy specific knowledge in the domains of art, theory and technique.

Certification

Occupational therapy assistants are licensed by NYS. To receive a license the applicant must have completed an OTA program from an accredited institution and passed the national certification exam. Continuing education is mandatory for ongoing active licensure.

Annual Mean Wage

\$60,631

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