

Renal department

Occupational therapy and frailty



Introduction

Occupational therapy aims to promote a person's health and wellbeing through their everyday activities. It is a way of helping a person to achieve as much as they can for themselves and get the most out of life.

What does an occupational therapist do?

An occupational therapist can identify problem areas that a person may have in their everyday lives and will help them to work out practical solutions.

Daily tasks can include:

- Getting on/off the bed, chair or toilet
- Walking indoors and outdoors
- Managing steps and stairs
- Getting in and out of the home
- Washing, dressing and bathing
- Domestic tasks
- Leisure and work activities

How can an occupational therapist help me?

- An occupational therapist will look at the activity you are finding difficult and see if there is another way it can be completed safely. This will be done by breaking it down into small individual steps and then practising them with you.
- Occupational therapy may involve altering an environment to make it suitable for your needs.

- Occupational therapists can also advise about special tools or pieces of equipment you may find helpful
- Your occupational therapist can give you advice regarding referrals onto other services.

What will the occupational therapy team consider before I get discharged from hospital?

Before you leave hospital, the occupational therapy team will carry out an assessment to make sure you have support when you get home. To assess you properly, they will look at:

- Your overall wellbeing – including how you're feeling and your social needs
- Your health and what you can and can't do, or may struggle to do by yourself
- Your current living arrangements
- What you would like to be able to do
- How you would like to be supported.

They will consider what support you need and whether you are eligible for help from social services, or if you'll need other sources of support. They should consider what help you need now but also what support you will need in the future.

Will I be involved in planning the support I need?

You should be involved in the assessment process. Ask a friend, relative or carer to be there for your assessment, if you can. If you have difficulty understanding others or

expressing yourself and there is no one who can help, you must be provided with an advocate to help you understand the process and communicate your views. If you are not comfortable with the discharge process, or feel some issues have not been considered, raise this immediately with hospital staff.

What help or support is available?

- If you need help with personal care tasks such as dressing or cleaning yourself, you may consider having a carer come into your home for a few hours a week.
- You may need special equipment at home to keep you safe and to make it easier to manage independently, such as a walking aid or shower stool, bed and toilet rail.
- You could consider getting a personal alarm so that you can easily alert your loved ones or the emergency services if you have a fall or are not feeling well.

Who can I ask to help me?

- **Family and friends**
Family and friends can be invaluable in helping to motivate you to stay active and maintain your social activities. They can help with tasks that you may no longer be able to do by yourself, such as driving you to appointments or helping with the shopping.
- **Your GP and Therapists**
Your GP can help you with social support, such as having carers at home. Your GP can refer you to community physiotherapy (PT) and occupational

therapy (OT). OT and PT will do an assessment for any equipment that you may need such as walking aids or bath-rails, to help you manage better at home. Community therapists can also work with you to achieve goals such as improving your mobility and ability to complete personal care tasks.

If you are currently an inpatient – the ward can refer you to hospital OT and PT to conduct an assessment of how you mobilise and do your self-care tasks. They will advise you on what equipment you may need at home and what level of care you may require to ensure that you are safe and supported at home.

- **Your kidney team**

The doctors and nurses on your kidney team can link you in with specialised services for people with kidney disease, such as a kidney dietician or counsellor. Alternatively, you can contact your GP by yourself.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

If you have any suggestions or comments about your care, please either speak to your GP, a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (PALS) on 020 3312 7777 (10.00 -16.00, Monday to Friday).

You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street London W2 1NY.

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: 020 3312 1337 / 1349

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

Department name
Published: July 2022
Review date: July 2023
Reference no: 5097
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