



Considerations When Hiring an Occupational Therapist

We understand that finding the right occupational therapist (OT) can be challenging. When having choice about which occupational therapist to hire, this resource presents considerations and questions to help guide you in your decision-making based on your needs and goals.

Before hiring an occupational therapist, consider...

1. Can they help you with your needs?

Since occupational therapists work in a variety of settings, they will have different skills and experiences. Therefore, it is important to discuss your situation with your occupational therapist so they can tell you if they can help. Ask the occupational therapist about any knowledge and experience they have working with similar clients and how their training can help you meet your treatment goals.

- Can you tell me about a time you worked with others in similar situations?
- What kinds of treatment did you offer for past clients with similar challenges?
- How often will we need to meet to achieve my treatment goals?

2. Are they taking new clients?

If the occupational therapist has the knowledge, skills and experience you need, ask if they are taking on new clients. If not, ask if they can refer you to a colleague, or if they have a waitlist.

- Are you taking on new clients?
- When is the earliest date that I can begin working with you?
- If you are not available, can you refer me to another therapist that can help me?
- Can I be added to your waitlist if you have one?

3. How do I pay for the services?

Ask the occupational therapist if they know of any funding for the services (including insurance). If you will need to pay directly (up front or reimbursement through insurance), ask about payment schedules and acceptable forms of payment.

- Will I need to pay at every session, or do you send an invoice?
- What are acceptable methods of payment?
- Do you provide direct billing to any insurance coverage I might have?



4. How much do the services cost?

Have the occupational therapist provide you a breakdown of their fees, including the cost of an initial assessment, follow-up visits, and charges for additional services such as phone calls, emails, reports, and any supplies or equipment.

- Would you be able to provide a list of your services and fees?
- Are there additional costs associated with any supplies/equipment used for services?

5. When and where will treatment take place?

Depending on your situation, treatment may be virtual (via phone or computer) or at your home or other location (work, school, etc.). For virtual therapy, your occupational therapist can help you set up any technology you may need. If you need community or home services, ask the occupational therapist if there are any additional costs associated with travel time or mileage.

- Do you offer virtual or home-based services?
- Are there any additional costs for you to travel to see me?
- For virtual service, what technology and equipment will I need?

6. Is there any paperwork involved?

To properly support you, the occupational therapist may need a referral from your doctor or information from other health professionals involved in your care. The occupational therapist may benefit from speaking with them, with your consent. The occupational therapist may want you to sign a consent form as part of their informed consent process. If it will be easier for you, have the occupational therapist provide you with paperwork before the first session so you can review it and ask any questions. You may want to keep a copy of each form for your own records.

- Can you send me any forms that I need to read and sign prior to treatment?
- Are there any forms for me to sign to grant you permission to speak to other healthcare professionals on my healthcare team?

7. What if I want to change occupational therapists?

At any time, you can tell an occupational therapist to stop services. The consequences of this decision will vary based on many factors, including the system in which the occupational therapist is working. However, when you have chosen your occupational therapist and hired them on your own, changing providers is your choice. Before replacing any occupational therapist, you are encouraged to talk to them to see if any challenges can be resolved.