

Occupational therapy support worker

Occupational therapy support workers help people who struggle with day-to-day activities to live a full and independent life.?

Working life

Illness, injury, disability or ageing can make ordinary tasks harder for some people. Occupational therapy (OT) support workers work with occupational therapists to help these carry out these tasks.



This includes daily care (washing, dressing, eating), work or education and leisure. They help people find ways to continue with activities which are important to them. This might involve learning new ways to do things. Or it might mean changes to the environment to make things easier.

OT support workers work with people of all ages and situations with a range of conditions. For example, helping

OT support workers offer practical support to help people overcome problems in carrying out day-to-day activities.

- someone adapt to life after major surgery such as a hip replacement
- children with disabilities take part in school and play activities
- dementia sufferers develop strategies
- stroke [1] patients
- people suffering from mental illness get back into everyday activities such as work or volunteering
- elderly people stay in their own homes by providing adaptation such as level access showers or stairlifts

OT support workers may help people to use aids and equipment, including assistive technology. Assistive technology helps profoundly disabled people communicate, use IT, get about and control household services and equipment (lights, TV, etc).

OT support workers may also be known as

- OT assistants
- rehabilitation assistants
- technical instructors/OT technicians

OT support workers can be based in hospitals, clinics and GP practices. They may also visit patients in their homes or in residential or care homes.

Entry requirements

There are no set entry requirements for OT support workers. Employers expect good numeracy and literacy and some experience or qualifications in health or social care. Employers may ask for GCSEs in English and maths. They may ask for a BTEC or equivalent vocational qualifications in health and social care.

Employers often ask for relevant work experience. Even where this is not specified, it would be an advantage if you have worked in health or social care, either in paid employment or voluntary work. If you secure an apprenticeship [2] in healthcare/clinical support, this could enable you to apply for OT support worker vacancies in the future.

Skills and personal characteristics needed?

As an OT support worker, you need to be

- able to motivate people
- accepting of other people's lifestyles
- willing to work with people from all walks of life
- happy to talk to and work with groups
- flexible
- willing to travel
- able to work in a team but use their own initiative
- able to follow procedures
- able to deal with people with challenging behaviour

You also need?

- very good communication skills
- customer care skills
- organisational skills

Training and development?

You will receive appropriate training in order to do the job, including an introduction to the department and its procedures and how to set up and use the equipment.

You may be offered the chance to study for qualifications such as

- the NCFE CACHE level 2 Certificate in Healthcare Support Services
- the NCFE CACHE level 3 Diploma in Healthcare Support

Some OT support workers join the British Association and College of Occupational Therapists [3] (BAOT/COT) as associate members. The BAOT/COT runs courses, conferences and seminars where OT support workers can update their skills and network with others doing similar work.

- Pay and conditions

Expand / collapse

OT support workers working in the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change (AfC) [4] pay system. You will typically start on AfC [5] band 2 or 3. After further training and experience, you can apply for more senior posts at band 4. Most OT support workers in the NHS work standard hours which are likely to be around 37.5 a week. They may work some evenings or weekends.

Terms and conditions will usually be different for clinical support staff working outside of the NHS.

- Where the role can lead

Expand / collapse

With experience, you could become a team leader supervising the work of other OT support workers.

You could apply to train as an assistant practitioner [6] or as an occupational therapist [7]. [8]

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- Job market and vacancies

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If you're applying for a role either directly in the NHS or in an organisation that provides NHS services, you'll be asked to show how you think the NHS values apply in your everyday work. Find out more about NHS values [9].

Opportunities also exist with local authorities, community interest companies and charities. Local authorities advertise their vacancies on the Local Government Jobs website [10].

Most NHS trusts advertise their vacancies on NHS Jobs [11]. Some advertise on their own websites. Just some of the current vacancies are below.

- View Vacancy [12]

Occupational Therapy Support Worker

Maindiff court hospital, Abergavenny, NP7 8NF

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Salary:

£19,737 - £21,142 per annum pro rata

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Type:

Permanent

-

Employer:

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

- View Vacancy

- View Vacancy [13]

Occupational Therapy Senior Support Worker

Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XX

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Salary:

£20,771 - £22,199 pa pro rata incl. HCAS

-

Type:

Permanent

-

Employer:

Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust

- View Vacancy

- View Vacancy [14]

Occupational Therapy Clinical Support

Aldington House, Various, BN3 4AG

- **Salary:**

Bank Band 5 ?13.41

- **Type:**

Bank

- **Employer:**

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

- [View Vacancy](#)
- [View Vacancy \[15\]](#)

Occupational Therapy Assistant

Goole, DN14 6RX

- **Salary:**

?21,892 - ?24,157 per annum

- **Type:**

Permanent

- **Employer:**

Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust

- [View Vacancy](#)
- [View Vacancy \[16\]](#)

Occupational Therapy Assistant

Oakley Court Angel Close, Bedfordshire Luton LU4 9WT, LUTON, LU4 9WT

-

Salary:

£19,737 - £21,142 pa



Type:

Permanent



Employer:

East London NHS Foundation Trust

- [View Vacancy](#)
- [View Vacancy \[17\]](#)

Occupational Therapy Assistant

Grimsby, DN31 2BH



Salary:

£17,443-£20,657 pro rata per annum-see main advert



Type:

Permanent



Employer:

Care Plus Group

- [View Vacancy](#)
- [Further information](#)

[Expand / collapse](#)

- [Royal College of Occupational Therapists \[18\]](#)

Other roles that may interest you

- [Healthcare assistant \[19\]](#)
- [Occupational therapist \[20\]](#)
- [Physiotherapy assistants/support workers \[21\]](#)
- [Dentist \[22\]](#)

team/clinical-support-staff/occupational-therapy-support-worker

Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Stroke>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/i-am/secondary-school-or-fe-college/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-cadet-schemes>
- [3] <http://www.cot.co.uk/>
- [4] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-nhs/nhs-pay-and-benefits/agenda-change-pay-rates>
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#AfC>
- [6] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/clinical-support-staff/assistant-practitioner>
- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/occupational-therapist>
- [8] <https://www.healthcareers.lampuat64-3.rroom.net/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/occupational-therapist>
- [9] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/working-health/nhs-constitution>
- [10] <http://www.lgjobs.com/>
- [11] <http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/>
- [12] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916147293>
- [13] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916135207>
- [14] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916143409>
- [15] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916141024>
- [16] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916129686>
- [17] <https://www.jobs.nhs.uk/xi/vacancy/916136508>
- [18] <https://www.rcot.co.uk/>
- [19] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/healthcare-assistant>
- [20] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/allied-health-professionals/roles-allied-health-professions/occupational-therapist>
- [21] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team/roles-wider-healthcare-team/clinical-support-staff/physiotherapy-assistantssupport-workers>
- [22] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dentist>