

section 2.1.1: the role of the multidisciplinary team

2. Occupational therapy

The occupational therapist aims to assist patients to maintain independence and control as well as promote normality and familiarity in daily life. This is guided by the patient's identified goals and interests in order to maximise quality of life and is particularly relevant to patients who may have changes to their functional status or have had long periods of hospitalisation.

Their skills relate to the following areas:

- **goal setting**
 - facilitating clients to engage in old and new activities
 - activity analysis in view of stated goals
 - teaching new techniques to facilitate functional abilities
 - problem solving to explore alternate ways to engage in chosen activities
- **purpose in life**
 - restoring and maintaining meaningful occupational roles
 - examining strategies for achieving self-care, work & leisure
 - compensating or exploring options for loss of roles
- **preparing for home**
 - conducting home visits to assess safety and the need for supports at home
 - facilitating home modifications and equipment provision
 - referral to and liaison with community supports
 - monitoring function within the home environment and facilitating independence as patients' needs change
- **work simplification and energy conservation**
 - education on finding the easiest and most efficient way to carry out activities to maximise participation
 - demonstration and reinforcement of techniques within daily activities
- **upper limb intervention**
 - maintenance of function and adaptation to decreased abilities including
 - splinting
 - oedema management
 - adapted equipment
 - one-handed techniques
- **complex equipment prescription and training**
 - for those clients with progressive neurological conditions that are treated palliatively, more complex equipment is required. This includes seating, switching and environmental control units