

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS' OF HEALTH DEPARTMENT OF RIO DE JANEIRO CITY PROFILE

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**Introduction** Occupational therapy care is a part of the Brazilian National Health System since 1988. There are 142 units available in The Health Municipal Secretary of Rio de Janeiro City with several levels of complexity for a population of approximately 6 millions of inhabitants in 2001. The occupational therapists assist the population with occupational disorders at the ambulatories and wards, prioritizing prevention and treatment of the incapacities in Hansen's disease and diabetes, newborns at risk, infants with development problems, individuals with disabilities and mental disorders.

**Objectives** To know the occupational therapists profile, work conditions and performance developed at the varied levels of ambulatory and hospital care in the coverage of the municipal health net, in the period from October/2004 to August/2005.

**Methods** Survey among the management bodies which provide attention to the disabled ones and human resources to identify occupational therapists from the local health system. A form containing closed and open questions has been sent; the data obtained have been analyzed based on the softwares Access and Excel, 5.0 version. The open questions were submitted to a categorical thematic analysis, Bardin 1977.

**Results** A total of 131 occupational therapists have been identified acting in 33 units among which 60% answered the form. These professionals' profiles were female gender, mean age of 41 years old, acting at that institution for seven years. Their intervention was mostly in ambulatory. The amount of occupational therapists facing the demands was too low. Elder patients were predominant, carriers of neurological and physical disorders. Among the facilitating aspects, a partnership with other health providers and the directors of the unit has been reported. Among the difficulties faced, the lack of availability of material and the inadequacy of appropriate location.

**Conclusion** The actions developed covered several areas, although the limited knowledge from the local managers was evident about the possibilities of the Occupational Therapy, as well as the characteristics of the populations assisted.

**Contribution to the practice of occupational therapy** To understand the covering of action of the occupational therapists in public health, the advances and necessities to qualify the population care.