

Professional Advocacy: If Not You Then Who?

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Objectives

- ✓ Describe the critically important role of the clinician in advocacy for the profession
- ✓ Describe one framework of professional advocacy
- ✓ Describe at least 1 strategy for professional advocacy action to implement in everyday practice



Primary care

Value-based care

Better health outcomes

Team-based approach

Effective & efficient care

Person-centred

Focus on health & well-being



Physical therapy

?

Recreation therapy

?

Social work

?

Health care assistants

?

Speech therapy

?

Nursing

Dietician



- ✓ Influence decisions/decision makers
 - ✓ Achieve change

***“Advocates for the occupational potential, occupational performance, and occupational engagement of clients”
(ACOTRO, 2011)***



Advocacy Framework/Model



A guide for engagement

(Adapted from Patton, 2011 & 2012; VCH)

At the Frontline...

Step 1: Identify the issue

Raise awareness & knowledge of OT in my setting

Step 2: Gather the facts/evidence/research

What do existing team members know about OT?

Step 3: What's the message

Clear, concise role of OT in the setting

Step 4: Build support

Engage other team members

Step 5: Communicate your message

Team meetings, in-service, documentation

Step 6: Monitor, assess, adjust

Offer support, address questions,

Strategies: Documentation

✓ Ensure OT is identified clearly in medical record

✓ Include OT specific information

“therapy necessary for therapeutic exercise, activities, self care training and community integration” instead:

“OT needed to develop compensatory methods for ADLs, teach energy conservation techniques to ensure safety during IADLs”

✓ Concise, specific with details related to OT

✓ Client-focused

Strategies: Documentation

Highlight **occupation-based** interventions...

Example:

e.g. *“pt. is able to safely complete all dressing tasks with moderate assistance”* to

“pt is able to utilize environmental adaptations to safely complete all dressing asks with moderate assistance in familiar environment”

e.g. *“continue treatment as outlined”* to

“focus on energy conservation during bathing; include use of environmental modification to promote safety during transfers”

Strategies: Meetings & Rounds

- ✓ Ensure role of OT is explained each and every time
 - Use consistent language
- ✓ Share occupation-based interventions and functional outcomes (because of OT.....)
- ✓ Share evidence for OT (e.g. latest literature, programs)
- ✓ Take as many “natural” opportunities that are already part of your role

What else can you do?

Advocacy Works!

If you are not talking about occupational therapy, who is?

More occupational therapists needed

The Daily Courier 26 Nov 2014 Giovanna Boniface, managing director Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists

Comment to the article West Kelowna senior goes to top to get visit from occupational therapist, Nov. 14, The Daily Courier.

Mr. Coates' experience of a long wait time to receive a visit from a community-based occupational therapist is not unique.

We are aware long wait lists to access community health occupational thera-

pists exist in other health regions across B.C. as well.

In addition, our association regularly hears from British Columbians trying to locate an occupational therapist in their community to assist them at home, with services requested including home safety assessments, wheelchair and scooter assessments, brain injury support as well as pediatric services, to

name a few.

Unfortunately, although there is a strong demand for occupational therapists in B.C., we are experiencing a shortage of therapists in the province. One step to rectify this shortage is to educate more occupational therapists in B.C. With only 48 new B.C. graduates therapists per year, we are unable to meet the current demand.



Occupational therapists promote independence by enabling clients to achieve better functional outcomes in their daily activities.

As the B.C. population ages, we expect the demand for occupational therapists will only increase, in particular, to provide more support to help seniors age, assist with home modifications and falls prevention, and facilitate the overall goal of helping people remain independent in their homes.

With this increased demand, access to timely care will become more and more challenging and as such, our association recommends increasing the supply of occupational therapists in B.C.

Strength in Numbers



17,034

85%

Imageontheworldmap.com

(CIHI, 2016)

Opportunity Awaits...your voice

- ✓ Raise awareness
- ✓ Increase knowledge
- ✓ Attitudinal shifts
- ✓ Influencing behavior
- ✓ Build capacity in OT community
- ✓ Gain recognition as an essential health care provider

Shift from *nice to have to need to have*

QUESTIONS

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