

CODE OF ETHICS

Ethical Core of Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy is a person-centred profession concerned with promoting health and well-being through occupation. The core purpose of occupational therapy, to enable people to participate in meaningful and culturally relevant occupations with choices, makes considerable demands on the ethical awareness of the occupational therapists.

Occupational therapists demonstrate, in addition to general standards of ethical conduct, a unique form of ethics arising from the profession's philosophical base. Accordingly, the work of occupational therapists enacts a unique form of justice centered on capabilities and opportunities for individuals and groups to participate in occupations.

The WFOT as the global body of the profession has produced this code as the over-achieving guide to ethical practice. However it is understood that each WFOT Member Organisation will have a detailed Code of Ethics particular to the professional context in their country.

Keeping ethics at the heart of our practice is imperative for the welfare of those we serve and the reputation of the profession at large. The WFOT Code of Ethics supports occupational therapists in the performance of their professional role. It is based on tasks of the profession and the responsibilities towards the recipient of occupational therapy, towards other professions and employees, and towards society on a local and global level.

Tasks of the profession

The tasks of the profession can be directed towards persons, groups or at the community/societal level. Occupational therapists will perform interventions in cooperation with the person, or in consultation with parties concerned. These interventions are to be related to the environment in which meaningful and culturally relevant activities of daily living are to be performed.

Occupational therapists will demonstrate personal integrity, reliability, open-mindedness and loyalty in all aspects of their professional role.

Occupational therapists will participate in professional development through life-long learning and apply their acquired knowledge and skills in their professional work, based on the best available evidence.

Occupational therapists will supervise students in occupational therapy training and serve as consultants for other occupational therapists.

Occupational therapists are committed to the improvement and development of the profession in general. They also ethically promote occupational therapy to the public, other professional organisations and government bodies at local, regional, national and international levels.

Occupational therapists participating in research will respect and meet the ethical requirements. When research takes place as part of occupational therapy services, the welfare and rights of clients/recipients are always given priority over research requirements.

Responsibility towards the Recipient of Occupational Therapy

The WFOT fully endorses the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Occupational therapists acknowledge that every person is unique in the way they combine the dynamic interplay between cultural, social, psychological, biological, financial, political and spiritual elements in their personal occupational performance and participation in society.

Occupational therapists approach all persons receiving their services with respect and have regard for their unique situations. They will not discriminate against people on the basis of race, colour, impairment, disability, national origin, age, gender, sexual preference, religion, political beliefs or status in society.

The values, preferences and ability to participate of persons receiving occupational therapy will be taken into account in providing services.

Confidentiality of the person's personal information is guaranteed and any personal details are passed on only with that person's consent. Occupational therapists recognise that relatives/significant others are important and involve them in service, commencing with the consent of the person receiving occupational therapy.

Responsibility towards other professions and employees

Occupational therapists recognise the need for inter-professional collaboration and respect the unique contributions of other professions in a local, regional and global perspective. Their contribution to inter-professional collaboration is based on occupational performance as it affects the health and well-being of people.

Occupational therapists demonstrate loyalty to the employer and comply with the guidelines established by the employer in so far as these are compatible with professional ethics. They demonstrate sound judgement in the use of the property of the employer

Responsibility towards local and global society

Occupational therapists promote health in local, regional and global perspectives.

Occupational therapists provide relevant and understandable information concerning occupational therapy.

Occupational therapists comply with laws and regulations within the professional circumstance in which therapy services are provided.

Occupational therapists comply with society's aspirations towards economic, social and environmental sustainable development, and adapt services as changes in society occur.

Reference

United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

Retrieved from: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>