

HEALTH EDUCATION ENGLAND

CLINICAL PLACEMENT EXPANSION PROGRAMME

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PLACEMENTS IN RESIDENTIAL AND CARE HOMES

The placement expansion programme enables students to work in a diverse range of settings, thus providing a unique opportunity to gain valuable experiences and insights into life of those who live and work within these settings.

In residential and care homes, there are many opportunities to contribute to life within the home, enhancing the occupational life of residents. The skills gained can be rewarding and enriching and are highly transferable to other settings.

THIS DOCUMENT EXPLORES HOW OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS MIGHT VIEW LIFE THROUGH AN OCCUPATIONAL LENS IN THESE SETTINGS



Ref: <https://www.bristolcarehomes.co.uk/> accessed Mar 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Alzheimers Society (2013) estimates that 80% of people living in care homes have dementia. It is important for every care home to create the right environment to enhance the life of residents. This might include:

- Small-scale living units, familiar features, homely style
- Age-appropriate furniture and fittings
- Good signage and 'cueing' features
- Opportunities to be involved in ordinary day-to-day activities
- Space for daytime activities, choice of areas and varying levels of stimuli
- Bedrooms +photographs /personal items, helping them to recognise this as their home

Ref: Alzheimer's Society (2013) *Low expectations: attitudes on choice, care and community for people with dementia in care homes*. London: Alzheimer's Society.

**The Royal College of Occupational Therapists has produced broad guidelines on how occupational therapists might support people with dementia.
These are also relevant to others who reside in care homes**

An occupational therapist can help people to overcome barriers that prevent them from doing what matters to them.

Occupational therapy can enable people to:

- Use their strengths and abilities to stay active
- Adopt strategies and techniques to continue with daily occupations (activities)
- Make changes to make life easier and to live safely within their home setting
- Access the community, get to the shops and local facilities, socialise
- Continue with valued roles, such as caring for something or someone, routines
- Support people to live well with dementia, offering advice to family and friends

Adapted from RCOT 2023

Ref: rcot.co.uk/sites/default/files/Guide%20%20%93%20Living%20with%20Dementia.pdf 2023

THE RCOT OFFERS THE FOLLOWING ADVICE:

Staying active in everyday life

You have a future – hopes and dreams can still be realised.

Keep doing what you enjoy and what's important to you.

Keep your routine going. Routines provide structure and familiarity.

Decide what you need help with and what you don't.

Try something new.

Use technology, like mobile phone apps, to stay independent.

Taking care of yourself

Exercise, get out and about.

Eat regularly and have a balanced diet.

Stay connected to family and friends.

Keep talking. Let people know what helps you with communication.

Take time to relax. Be aware of how you feel, it's OK to have time to yourself.

Try to do one thing at a time. Don't put yourself under pressure.

What you can do at home

Use reminders for information, dates and appointments. Everyday technology can help.

Declutter so the objects you use every day are easier to find.

Use colour contrast to make objects stand out.

Remove trip hazards, like rugs.

Make sure rooms are clearly lit. Consider night lights.

Ref: rcot.co.uk/sites/default/files/Guide%20%20%93%20Living%20with%20Dementia.pdf 2023

HOW YOUR PLACEMENT MIGHT WORK IN PRACTICE 3 AREAS

SUPERVISION

ACHIEVING COMPETENCIES

WAYS YOU MIGHT DO THIS

1. SUPERVISION

- How you will be supervised
- Expectations of supervision

You will have 3 clear points of contact throughout your placement

PLACEMENT
OFFICER

- A senior member of staff at the placement setting - day to day supervision
- Will offer opportunities for getting involved in all aspects of the setting

LONG-ARM
SUPERVISOR

- An experienced occupational therapist - weekly supervision
- Will help you to develop your professional skills and competencies

LINK TUTOR

- A member of occupational therapy staff at the University of Plymouth
- Will meet at halfway with you, LAS, and the Placement Officer

2. ACHIEVING COMPETENCIES

- How you might achieve all placement competencies
- Opportunities you might be offered

**SOME COMPETENCIES, IN THE FOLLOWING 3 AREAS, ARE EASIER THAN OTHERS TO
DEMONSTRATE IN THESE SETTINGS.**

HOWEVER, THERE ARE ALWAYS ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO PROVE YOUR COMPETENCE.

- **A. PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND AUTONOMY**
- **B. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS & COMMUNICATION**
- **C. PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS, OT PROCESS IN PRACTICE**

3. WAYS YOU MIGHT DO THIS

- The sort of things you might be doing
- People you might be working with

LET'S LOOK AT EACH ONE IN TURN.

A. PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND AUTONOMY

Preparation for supervision
Active Learning Contract
Use of reflective practice

Self-Management
Time and Resource management
Accountability

Compliance with Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct
Promotion of public confidence in the profession

Best interest
Informed Consent
Equality and Diversity
Non-discriminatory practice

Adherence to policy, legislation
Health , Safety and Risk Management

THESE COMPETENCIES ARE ALL IMPORTANT IN CARE HOME SETTINGS THEY ARE DEMONSTRATABLE IN VARIOUS WAYS

- You will present yourself, and behave in a professional manner at all times. This includes being reliable, honest, turning up on time, being appropriately dressed.
- You may be asked to wear uniform as it helps to define your role in the setting – particularly for those with dementia.
- You will need to be vigilant about gaining informed consent for anything you do – with the best interest of the client at the centre of your decision-making.
- You will need to demonstrate your awareness of the professional code of conduct.
- You will need to be aware of, and adhere to, any policy or legislation that is particularly relevant to the setting.
- You may get involved with risk assessments or regular Health and Safety reviews within the care home.
- You are likely to take part in an induction programme similar to that provided for new staff members including manual handling and health and safety.
- You may be offered opportunities to complete e-learning modules – some of which will be certificated and really useful for your professional portfolio.
- Typical day is 8 – 4 or 9 – 5 with 30 minutes for lunch.
- You will be doing about 37.5 hours per week.

B. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Effective professional relationships with residents, family members and carers

Use of verbal and non-verbal communication

Use of alternative interaction approaches

Work within context of different sectors

Make referrals if appropriate

Evaluate information recording systems

Produce accurate written and verbal reports

Think about own interaction strategies and communication mechanisms

Work as a team member

Establish occupational needs of residents

Advocate for residents

THESE COMPETENCIES ARE ALL IMPORTANT IN CARE HOME SETTINGS

THEY ARE DEMONSTRATABLE IN VARIOUS WAYS

- You will be working with residents, care staff, activity-co-ordinators, managers, housekeepers as well as families and other organisations
- You also may be working with therapists and other staff from the community
- You will need to interact in the appropriate style depending on each situation.
- You may have to think of alternative ways of giving instructions, reporting on status, gaining consent etc. For example, you might use pictorial, kinaesthetic, demonstration, visual, verbal, written instructions or a combination of several types
- You may contribute to resident's written records – detailing your assessment/intervention/outcomes. These need to be professionally recorded.
- You might report verbally or make phone calls to other members of the wider team – including staff from the community teams – particularly if there is a likely discharge or admission from or to the care home.
- You may carry through therapy programmes already in place
- Team working is crucial. You will be working co-operatively with others
- Working in a person-centred manner is paramount.
- The needs of the resident will be at the centre of everything that you do.

C. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE APPLICATION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE

Underpinning theory
Synthesis of theory as part of clinical reasoning
Contextual issues
Identify underlying causes of occupational disruption

Engage people in planning and evaluating intervention to meet occupational needs
Facilitate informed decisions

Gather information using a range of tools as part of assessment process
Use this to inform intervention

Place intervention into context of overall team
Understand role of other team members

Critically evaluate outcomes
Modify own practice
Evaluate audit in relation to quality of practice

You will present a case study which demonstrates synthesis of all you have learned through this placement

THESE COMPETENCIES ARE ALSO IMPORTANT IN CARE HOME SETTINGS THEY ARE DEMONSTRATABLE IN VARIOUS WAYS

- This is where you make sense of everything you experience during your placement.
- Methods of assessment and outcome measures may not always be standardised but there will be many opportunities to hone your interviewing and observation skills
- Assessments are likely to include functional tasks, environment, occupational status
- You can propose the use of a particular assessment/outcome measure if you see fit.
- Intervention needs to demonstrate sound clinical reasoning, using evidence-based practice, supported by theory, evidence-based practice, policy and legislation.
- Activities might include enabling someone to pick up their own newspaper, maintain self-care or social ability, go out for coffee, improve some aspect of mobility, recover from a medical issue, take part in activities e.g. music, dance, creative arts, gardening.
- You may carry out a 'This is Me' type of activity, working with family members.
- There will be a mixture of individual, group work, working with activity co-ordinators
- Intervention plans will be set within the context of the home. You will have many opportunities to try out your ideas – and modify them if they don't work
- Care homes are unique settings offering you the chance to get an insight into an individual's daily life throughout the whole day
- You may be asked to work on a project to enhance some aspect of the care home
- Your case study will offer you an opportunity to sell yourself and your profession.
- Your placement officer and some other senior staff may attend your presentation.
- Your long-arm supervisor will support you professionally throughout