

Occupational Therapy Assistant



What do they do?

Occupational Therapy Assistants work with Occupational Therapists to treat patients who may be disabled, injured or elderly. They work directly with the patient while helping to carry out a treatment plan. OT Assistants monitor activities, encourage patients and record patient progress so an Occupational Therapist can make changes to the plan if needed.

Where do they work?

Most Occupational Therapy Assistants work in offices that provide physical, occupational or speech therapy services. Others may work in hospitals, nursing care facilities or schools.

Pay:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average yearly income for Occupational Therapy Assistants is \$48,940.



Education:

A two-year associates degree is required to become an Occupational Therapy Assistant.

OTA training in Madison:

Madison Area Technical College:
www.madisoncollege.edu

High School students interested in occupational therapy should take classes in chemistry, biology, health and social sciences.

Accreditation:

Education programs for Occupational Therapy Assistants are accredited by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA):



www.aota.org

Professional Associations:

Occupational Therapy Assistants can join the following national and state professional associations:

The American Occupational Therapy Foundation (AOTF):

www.aotf.org



Wisconsin Occupational Therapy Association (WOTA):

www.wota.net



Certification & Licensure:

After completing their education Occupational Therapy Assistants must pass an exam to become certified. Passing this exam is also a requirement for gaining a state-level license to practice.

The OTA certification exam is administered by the National Board for Certification of Occupational Therapists (NBCOT):



www.nbcot.org

At the state level, Occupational Therapy Assistants must also become licensed through the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS):



www.dsps.wi.gov

Potential for Advancement:

Occupational Therapists may choose to continue their education to become an Occupational Therapist. This would require both a bachelor's and master's degree.

There are a small number of "bridge" programs designed for an OTA to transfer credits and complete their Master's of Occupational Therapy (MOT).

OTA to MOT programs in Wisconsin:

Concordia University (Mequon): Transitional Program for Occupational Therapy Assistants (3.5 years): www.cuw.edu

Mount Mary College (Milwaukee): B.S./M.S. in Occupational Therapy (5 years, before transfer credits): www.mtmary.edu



Job Outlook:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for Occupational Therapy Assistants is expected to grow 41 percent between 2012-2020, much faster than average across all occupations.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition*, Occupational Therapy Assistants and Aides:
www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapy-assistants-and-aides.htm

