

WHAT CAN AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST DO WITHIN THEIR ROLE?

FOR YOUR CLIENTS AND FOR YOUR ORGANISATION

Grampians Region HACC Guiding Principle:

The Grampians Region HACC Program promotes effective working relationships between HACC funded Occupational Therapists and Living at Home Assessment and Care Planning Officers.

Occupational Therapy is a registered profession which uses a client-centred approach to enable people to participate in the activities of everyday life. Occupational therapists work with people to enhance their ability to engage in the occupations they want to, need to or are expected to by modifying the occupation or the environment.

The Grampians Region HACC program funds a number of occupational therapists who will work with you and your clients to assist them in their daily living activities and social engagement.

This may include:

Home Assessment

- Home modifications to improve safety and independence in daily tasks e.g. bathroom modifications to improve safety and independence in hygiene for client and/or carer; modifications to assist visually impaired clients; modifications to enhance functional wheelchair mobility and support participation in daily living activities.
- Access e.g. recommendations for ramps, rail installation that maximise the clients' safety and independence.
- Equipment e.g. functional assessments are carried out to identify aids/equipment which support client participation in activities. This may include equipment that supports bathing and toileting, eating or cooking (adapted cutlery and kitchen utensils), gardening (gardening tools), visual aids or prompts to assist clients with cognitive changes.
- Falls e.g. falls risk assessment and recommendations to minimise risk factors. The recommendations may include home modifications, education, falls prevention strategies or referral to other allied health disciplines.

Personal Activities of Daily Living

- Functional assessment to determine clients' capacity to safely and independently manage their personal care. This may include equipment (shower chairs, toilet frames, and hoists), home modifications (rails, shower recess access modifications, wheel chair access and modifications), education for clients and carers in strategies to build on clients' capacities which promote independence and quality of life. For clients' with cognitive changes such as dementia the strategies may include simplifying the task, providing visual cues, verbal prompts or supporting routines.

Domestic Activities of Daily Living

- Assessment of tasks that are meaningful to the client in their home environment: can include such things as meal preparation, laundry, gardening e.g. for a clients with chronic illness this may involve fatigue management strategies and equipment recommendations to enable the person to be independent or increase their ability to participate in domestic tasks.
- For clients with memory difficulties strategies might involve simplifying the methods of meal preparation, using diaries and shopping lists to assist memory and or working with carers to assist in engaging clients in tasks.

Community Activities of Daily Living

- Wheelchair and scooter assessment to support community access, social engagement, independence and safety.
- Recommendations to increase confidence and participation in community based activities such as shopping or using public transport to attend appointments or social activities.
- Development of strategies to support the client to return to recreational activities following a change in their functional capacity.
- Referral to appropriate social resources within the community which will contribute to supporting and maintaining the clients' capacity to participate.

Occupational Therapists are there to assist Living at Home Assessment and Care Planning Officers and their clients through secondary consultation (advice and suggestions) or by providing the types of assessment listed above to assist in the enhancement of client independence and quality of life.

Engaging Occupational Therapists in your practice can build on the client centred approach used by your agency. They can provide training for family members/friends and Community Care Workers in how best to work with and support the client. They can assist you to help put the ASM principles into practice and build them into your care planning and service delivery models.