

# Occupational Therapy

## Guidelines for providing occupational therapy to injured workers

February 2017

Occupational therapists can make an important contribution to improving the health and return to work outcomes of workers.

Occupational therapists can provide treatment to workers and conduct assessments of them to assist the WorkSafe Agent (the Agent) to make decisions about the type of help and support they may need as a result of their work-related injury or illness.

This information provides a summary of occupational therapy services and lists relevant resources and publications available.

### Occupational therapy treatment

Occupational therapists provide treatment to workers with the aim of maximising a worker's participation and independence in everyday activities at home and in the community. Occupational therapists may use a variety of strategies to achieve this, including:

- assessing the level of help or care that the worker may require as a result of a work-related injury or illness
- recommending exercises to maximise worker function and promote recovery (where possible)
- advising of adaptive and/or alternative techniques to make it easier for the worker to perform activities. For example, breaking strenuous tasks into smaller more manageable tasks
- prescribing equipment that will help maximise the worker's independence, and
- recommending home or car modifications for workers with complex injuries to maximise the worker's independence and participation. For example, installing a rail in a bathroom or a spinner knob in a car to help turn the steering wheel.

Occupational therapy services can be provided by a network occupational therapist or by a registered and WorkSafe approved community occupational therapist.

### Framework Occupational Therapy

Framework Occupational Therapy is a service model that recognises the importance of a injured worker's participation and independence in the everyday activities at home, at work, at school or within the community.

Note: This policy is a guideline issued by WorkSafe Victoria under Victorian workers compensation legislation in respect of the reasonable costs of services, and services for which approval should be sought from the WorkSafe Agent or self-insurer (as the case may be) before the services are provided.

Framework Occupational Therapy providers have specific experience in treating injured workers who have received an acquired brain injury or spinal cord injury as a result of a work-related injury or illness.

View WorkSafe's *Framework Occupational Therapy Policy* for providers.

### Locate a Framework Occupational Therapist

Framework occupational therapists are available in Melbourne and in several regional areas. Please refer to the following lists for further details:

- *Framework occupational therapists - Melbourne metropolitan area* (PDF)
- *Framework occupational therapists - Regional Victoria* (PDF)

### Occupational therapy assessments

Occupational therapists can provide two types of assessments to assist the Agent to make decisions about the help the worker may need. These are:

1. Activities of Daily Living (ADL) Assessments, and
2. Benefit and Support Services Assessments (BASSA)

The Agent can request either assessment to review a worker's needs for the following services:

- household help (ADL assessors only)
- aids and appliances, and equipment
- attendant care support
- home modifications
- car modifications.

### What is an ADL assessment?

These assessments are conducted by Framework Occupational Therapists who make recommendations to the Agent about the type of services that may be required to maximise a worker's independence and participation in everyday activities and in returning to work.

ADL occupational therapists are registered and approved by WorkSafe and have completed the WorkSafe assessment training.

# Policy for Occupational Therapy

## **Forms and publications**

- *Occupational therapy assessments - Information for injured workers*
- *Occupational Therapy - Information and Fee Schedule for Occupational Therapists*
- *Introducing WorkSafe - A Guide for Allied Healthcare Professionals*
- *Application for Registration to Provide Services to Workers*
- *Household Help Assessment Report (dot)*

## WorkSafe Victoria

### WorkSafe Agents

Agent contact details are all available at [worksafe.vic.gov.au/agents](http://worksafe.vic.gov.au/agents)

### Advisory Service

Phone.....(03) 9641 1444  
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