

Occupational Therapists (OTs) address the physical, cognitive and psychological challenges brought on by a stroke.³ By working together with an Occupational Therapist, Mr Johnson can be supported to actively participate in the everyday activities that he wants to do. He does not need to be so dependent on his wife and others. This will have clear health, social and financial benefits.²

An OT is a key member of the rehabilitation team responsible for enabling Mr and Mrs Johnson to cope with the everyday difficulties encountered following Mr Johnson's stroke.

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WHAT IS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (OT)?

OTs are health and social care professionals who work with individuals with restricted opportunities as a result of disability, ageing or mental health issues in order to find alternative ways to do activities that they want to do and which are important to them. Participating in occupations that are meaningful to a person promotes the individual's identity, health and well-being. Hence, the primary goal of OT is to enable people to participate in the occupations of everyday life, activities that range from managing daily living skills to remaining in or returning to work.

OTs work with persons of all ages who are experiencing restricted opportunities for participation in occupation. They may also work with governmental and non-governmental groups and organisations, providing expertise on issues related to participation in occupation.

WHERE DO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS WORK?

OTs work in health, educational or social settings, such as hospitals and health centres, schools, prisons and in the community.

ABOUT COTEC

COTEC is the European organisation for all Occupational Therapists via their national associations, with the aim of increasing the visibility of the profession and promoting and supporting mobility of OTs within Europe. COTEC enables national associations of OTs in Europe to work together, to develop, harmonise and improve standards of professional practice and education, as well as to advance the theory of Occupational Therapy throughout Europe.

COTEC represents 27 National Associations for Occupational Therapy and more than 121,000 OTs in Europe.

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The National OT Associations of Bulgaria and Estonia have applied to join COTEC in 2012.

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Occupational Therapy



Enables participation
Reduces the long-term costs of stroke rehabilitation

AROUND 2 MILLION EUROPEANS SUFFER A STROKE EVERY YEAR.

This is predicted to increase with an ageing population. Half of those who survive a stroke are left with cognitive or physical impairment often leading to severe disability which devastates not only their lives, but also the lives of their families and carers.¹ Evidence based rehabilitation services which include Occupational Therapy (OT) can maximise the recovery of stroke survivors and reduce the demands on care.^{3,4}

THE STORY OF MR JOHNSON

Mr Johnson is a 63 year old factory worker who until his recent stroke lived with his wife in a two storey house in the suburbs. As a result of the stroke, one side of his body has become paralysed. That side of his body now feels different; he can no longer walk independently with safety and relies on a wheelchair to get about.

Both Mr and Mrs Johnson are worried that they will not be able to live as before. Managing their daily lives has become a challenge and they are afraid that they will have to live separately and that Mr Johnson may go into a nursing home in order to be cared for.

Mr Johnson can no longer do the things he needs to do in order to fulfil the various life roles that he values...



| <i>Being an Independent person</i> | <i>Difficulties....</i> | <i>Occupational Therapy can</i> | <i>Benefits....</i> |
|---|---|---|---|
| IN TERMS OF SELF CARE AND MOBILITY | Mr Johnson cannot use his right arm so he has difficulty with bathing, dressing, and doing simple household tasks. He has difficulties going up and down stairs and transferring from his bed to his wheelchair. | Increase movement through doing everyday activities especially ones he enjoys such as gardening Provide him with a splint to prevent his fingers curling or a special glove to stop swelling in his joints Teach him to use special techniques and adaptive equipment | General fitness and mobility will be enhanced. A nursing home would be far more expensive than adapting the Johnson home. |
| IN TERMS OF SAFETY | Mrs Johnson who has herself some chronic health issues, will not be able to support her husband physically. | Carry out an assessment in the home and recommend adaptations and modifications to enable Mr Johnson to get up and down stairs and transfer safely | Mrs Johnson's physical health will not deteriorate. Mr Johnson's safety will be less at risk. |
| IN TERMS OF WORK AND LEISURE | Mr Johnson cannot work as he did before. He cannot look after his garden as he used to. | Support Mr Johnson in his workplace by adapting the nature of his work and work environment if possible Teach him to use special techniques, adaptive equipment and coping strategies | With his work role adapted, Mr Johnson could remain part of the workforce and less dependent on state support. Overall fitness, motivation and self esteem are enhanced. |
| SOCIALLY | Mr Johnson cannot visit his granddaughter independently, play cards with his friends, or go out to buy his newspaper. | Teach him to use a motorised scooter safely around his neighbourhood | He would then have independent mobility within his community and not be dependent on costly bus and taxi services. |
| ORGANISATIONALLY | Mr Johnson's memory has been affected by the stroke. He has trouble remembering how and when to do certain things. | Help devise a trigger system to act as prompts Develop new strategies with him that take account of the organisational difficulties he is experiencing | Mrs Johnson will be free to do her own tasks as her husband needs less help. |
| EMOTIONALLY | Mr and Mrs Johnson's relationship is being affected as they are having difficulty coming to terms with Mr Johnson's new role as a stroke survivor. | Offer support and information to both Mr and Mrs Johnson Provide information on other appropriate support networks | Mr and Mrs Johnson can remain as a couple, supporting one another into old age. |