

Occupational Therapy Assistant

What does an Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) do?

OTAs support and aide the OT, often preparing equipment, providing therapy and conducting intake evaluations

What is the difference between an Occupational Therapy Assistant and an Occupational Therapy Aide?

An occupational therapy assistant is a graduate of an accredited occupational therapy assistant educational program and is eligible to sit for the national certification examination. Most states regulate occupational therapy assistants. Occupational therapy aides provide supportive services to the occupational therapist or occupational therapy assistant.

Occupational therapy aides usually receive their training on the job and are not eligible for certification or licensure. Occupational therapy aide programs are not accredited by AOTA's Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE), and certification of aides is not required. You may want to contact your state regulatory board to determine what services and regulations apply to occupational therapy aides in your state.

How do I become an OT Assistant?

A two-year associate's degree from an accredited ACOTE program is required, and candidates must pass a national licensure exam. OTA students will complete at least 16 weeks of field experience in addition to course work

Where do OTAs find jobs?

In a variety of health care settings, including health clinics, hospitals, nursing care facilities, schools and home health programs.

What is the job outlook for OTAs?

As with OTs, it is predicted that OTA employment will increase upwards of 30%. Part of this growth will be due to the aging Baby Boomer population, as well as the need to continue to reduce health care costs.

What is the average salary of an OTA?

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median wage for OTAs in 2014 was \$56,950. OTAs in schools earn significantly less than OTAs in home health care services.