

JOB PROFILE

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST (OT)

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT YOUR JOB?

Occupational Therapy is a brilliant career path. It is a general degree that is recognised around the world and this means you can work overseas as well as in Australia. It is a degree that covers a diverse range of skills and so you will never be bored.

I chose to specialise in Hand Therapy and I love working with my patients to help them recover. It is a real privilege to see them through their recovery, and experience all their highs and lows along the way. Hand injuries are complex and require careful treatment, which allows us the opportunity to treat many high profile sports people which is always a lot of fun.

It is an extremely satisfying career because you can continually learn new skills and build your reputation with colleagues and surgeons. In fact, I have recently been on an Interplast Volunteer trip to treat patients in Vietnam (see pictures).

If any parents would like to volunteer to be part of the 'Job Profile' section, please contact emily.vanderwalt@newhavencol.vic.edu.au

WHAT IS THE WORST PART OF YOUR JOB?

For me the most tiresome aspect is the paperwork. It is extremely important to keep accurate case notes and communicate with referring doctors by sending letters.



ANY ADVICE FOR STUDENTS THINKING OF BECOMING AN OT?

Don't be put off from working in a medical field just because you think you have a queasy stomach for blood and hospitals. I fainted the first time I saw an operation (Year 10 worksite placement) and now I love being in the operating theatre - I can't get enough of it!

JOB PROFILE

OT CONTINUED

HOW DO YOU BECOME AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST?

To become an OT you need to complete a Bachelor Degree in Occupational Therapy. This then gives you the qualification to work in many different fields such as:

Hospitals - treating patients on any ward including burns, making splints, scar management, helping patients manage home activities safely such as cooking and bathing. This can include doing visits to a patients home and setting them up with equipment like rails or shower stools etc...

Psychiatry - Hospital and/or Forensics - working with patients and/or prisoners to teach them anger management, social skills and life skills for release. Helping patients to manage their Mental health is a large component of this area of work.

Schools - assisting children with special needs to adapt to the school environment

Corporate - OT's are employed by many large corporations to assess workplace safety and advise on computer station set ups and other ergonomic issues

Hand Therapy - Making splints for injured hands, wound care, exercises and advice regarding returning to work and sporting activities. Hand therapists can work in public hospitals, have their own private practice, and are now also being employed by AFL clubs and other sporting bodies as part of their medical teams.



Thanks to: Melanie McCulloch BaOT,
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Director Re-wired Hand Therapy &
Nerve Recovery Specialists

 re-wired hand therapy
& nerve recovery specialists