

Occupational Therapy Consultation: What to Expect

If a child has been deemed eligible by the SWCCAC Care Coordinator to receive an Occupational Therapy consultation regarding significant difficulties with motor based school activities and/or processing sensory information, you can expect the following:

1. **The OT will complete an individualized assessment of the child for the issue(s) identified on the original referral from the SWCCAC Care Coordinator. An OT assessment may include:**
 - Gathering information about the child's strengths and needs from the child and the child's family, teacher and other people who know the child well.
 - A review of other professional assessments/reports.
 - Clinical observations of the child at school as the child performs various tasks.
 - Administration of standardized assessments that will compare the child's performance of activities to the performance of his age group.

2. **If indicated by the results of the assessment, the OT will proceed with consultation. The OT will complete a written consultation report for the child, family and school that may include:**
 - Identification of the child's specific strengths and needs with regard to his motor and/ or sensory concerns.
 - Specific activities/exercises that the family and school can encourage the child to carry out that may improve performance in school activities.
 - Suggestions regarding special items/supplies for use by the child that may improve task performance.
 - Strategies and techniques that may be used by the child, his family and the school to accommodate/compensate for specific difficulties.

3. **The OT will be available to review the consultation report with the child, family and school to make sure that the strategies and recommendations in the report are clearly understood. The review should take place in a meeting if at all possible but may occur over the phone; there is an expectation that family and school will arrange to be available to receive the consultation information and will provide ongoing follow through with the therapist's recommendations. Maximum benefit for the student will be achieved only if the student, teaching staff and family follow through with consistent, day to day, implementation of the strategies and recommendations.**

A copy of the consultation report will be provided to the parent and the school. It is expected that the school place the report in the child's Ontario School Record (**OSR**) for reference for ongoing implementation of strategies in subsequent grades. It is also recommended that families keep their copy in a safe place so it can be discussed with the child's teacher at the outset of each school year for as long as the recommendations and strategies are relevant. Any additional strategy information or handouts provided to the school by the therapist should be retained by the resource/special education teacher for ongoing use with the child.

The number of visits required to complete the consultation process will vary with each child but consultation can normally be completed within **three to eight visits** after which the child will be discharged. The visit schedule will be coordinated by the OT in consultation with the child, family and school and should be completed within 4 to 6 school months. Up to four additional visits may be authorized based on the child's multiple needs and completed by 12 school months. If new functional difficulties are identified at a later time, the child may be eligible for another assessment and the school may request further services.

Please note that students with more involved physical conditions or diagnosis may require additional short term intervention by the therapist.