Supervision of Occupational Therapy Assistants in Schools

Valerie S. Adams, MA, OTR/L
OTAC
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Quiz Question #1

The two largest employers of occupational therapy assistants are:
A. Nursing homes and school systems
B. General hospitals and rehabilitation hospitals
C. School systems and rehabilitation hospitals
D. General hospitals and psychiatric hospitals

Terms

- OT and OTR = occupational therapist
- COTA and OTA = occupational therapy assistant
- Practitioner = OTR or COTA
- Aide = paraprofessional, instructional assistant, teacher’s assistant, teacher’s aide, paraeducator, etc.
According to AOTA guidelines, the OTA’s primary role is:
A. Screening of need for evaluation/intervention
B. Documenting intervention
C. Implementing intervention
D. Planning intervention

Under AOTA’s Standards of Practice, OTAs may perform the following functions under the supervision of an occupational therapist:
A. Referrals, screening, intervention
B. Screening, evaluation, intervention
C. Referrals, intervention planning, intervention
D. Intervention planning, intervention, discontinuation

The occupational therapist is responsible for the overall delivery of occupational therapy services and is accountable for the safety and effectiveness of the occupational therapy services delivery process.
According to CA Code

The occupational therapist is responsible for the occupational therapy assessment of a client, and the development of an occupational therapy plan of treatment.

Role of OT

- Interpretation of referrals

OT's Responsibilities - Referral

- Makes the initial contact
- Determines next steps
- Defines areas of disability to be evaluated
- Determines specific assessment tasks that can be delegated to the OTA
Role of OT

- Interpretation of referrals
- Interpretation and analysis of evaluation
- Develop, interpret, implement, and modify the treatment plan and discharge plan

OT’s Responsibilities - Intervention Planning

- Determines need for service
  - Makes recommendation to IEP team
- Determines priorities of goals
  - Helps develop IEP goals
  - Develops treatment goals based on IEP goals
- Establishes priorities of intervention
  - Types of interventions
  - Develops treatment plan
**OT’s Responsibilities - Intervention Review**

- Provide input to report cards
- Determine if treatment plan needs modification
- Provide input to present levels of performance for annual IEP
- Provide input to review of IEP goals and objectives
- Determines point of termination

**Role of OT**

- Interpretation of referrals
- Interpretation and analysis of evaluation
- Develop, interpret, implement, and modify the treatment plan and discharge plan
- Delegate appropriate interventions

**License**

- OT must confirm that the OTA possesses a current license
Role of OTA

- Contribute to the evaluation process
  - gather data
  - administer standardized tests
  - report observations

OTAs do not accept and enter into cases at their own professional discretion

OTA Responsibilities Assessment

- observe using a structured guide to obtain information
- organize data to give to OT
- interview using a structured format
- administer structured tests
- summarize record and report data to OT
- make recommendations to the OT
Role of OTA

- Contribute to Evaluation process
  - gather data
  - administer standardized tests
  - reporting observations
- Contribute to preparation, implementation and documentation of treatment and discharge summary

Quiz Question #2

According to AOTA guidelines, the OTA’s primary role is:
A. Screening of need for evaluation/intervention
B. Documenting intervention
C. Implementing intervention
D. Planning intervention

Quiz Question #3

Under AOTA’s Standards of Practice, OTAs may perform the following functions under the supervision of an occupational therapist:
A. Referrals, screening, intervention
B. Screening, evaluation, intervention
C. Referrals, intervention planning, intervention
D. Intervention planning, intervention, discontinuation
Quiz Question # 4
Supervision
Which of the following scenarios fulfills the requirements for routine supervision in CA?
A. OTA and OT meet daily to discuss client needs
B. OT visits site after working hours to review written documentation
C. OT reviews and inspects services at least weekly
D. OTA and OT consult by telephone only when problems arise

Quiz Question # 5
OTAs service competency is defined as:
A. The demonstrated ability to use an identified intervention task in a safe and effective manner with the same outcome as OT
B. The view of the OTAs performance by the supervising OT
C. The skills developed over several years of practice
D. The need for routine and general supervision for unfamiliar tasks

Supervision
• Supervision involves a mutual understanding between the OT and the OTA that:
  • provides guidance, education, support, encouragement and respect
  • assures appropriate utilization of training and potential
  • encourages creativity and innovation
  • fosters growth and development
**Role of OT in Supervision**

- Responsible for all aspects of OT service delivery process
- Accountable for the safety and effectiveness of OT service delivery process
- Determines when to delegate
- Clearly communicate roles, responsibilities, and expectations to OTA

**Role of OTA in Supervision**

- Delivers OT services under the supervision of an OT
- Demonstrate service competency
- Communicate supervision needs to the OT

**Supervision Parameters**

- Conduct at least weekly review of the therapy plan and implementation
  - Encompass all aspects of services
  - Can be done on site or by telecommunication
- Conduct periodic onsite review (30 days)
- Be readily available at all times
- Provide direct care
- Follow the progress of each client
- Ensures that the OTA does not function autonomously
Documentation of Supervision

- One of the following:
  - Documentation of direct service by the OT
  - Documentation of review of the records and/or treatment notes
  - Co-signature of OTA’s treatment notes

Level of Supervision

- Determined by the supervising OT
  - consider multiple factors
  - determine competency
  - re-evaluate regularly
  - OT’s ethical responsibility to ensure that the amount, degree, and pattern of supervision are consistent with the knowledge, skill, and ability demonstrated

Levels of Supervision (AOTA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Supervision</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>Daily, Direct, Onsite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Routine</td>
<td>Direct every 2 weeks on site Plus indirect (phone/written, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Direct monthly Plus as needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Competency**

- Two people performing the same procedure will obtain the same results.
- Must be a high degree of confidence that the OTA will obtain the same information or results as the OT.
- The acceptable standard percentage of agreement set by the OT met on 3 consecutive occasions.

**Reassessment of Needs**

- Amount of supervision may change.
  - Type of student
  - Age of student
  - Type of treatment
  - Setting

**Delegation Based On:**

- Complexity of child’s condition
- Knowledge, skill, competence of OTA strengths and limitations
- Nature and complexity of the intervention
- Needs and requirements of the setting
  - Don’t limit opportunities due to preconceived ideas about the OTA’s capabilities
- Reassessment of needs
Quiz Question # 5
Supervision
Which of the following scenarios would not fulfill The requirement for routine supervision in CA?
A. OTA and OT meet daily to discuss client needs
B. OT visits site after working hours to review written documentation
C. OT reviews and inspects services at least weekly
D. OTA and OT consult by telephone only when problems arise

Quiz Question # 6
OTAs service competency is defined as:
A. The demonstrated ability to use an identified intervention task in a safe and effective manner with the same outcome as OT
B. The view of the OTA’s performance by the supervising OT
C. The skills developed over several years of practice
D. The need for routine and general supervision for unfamiliar tasks

Methods
- Meet weekly to review cases
- Joint therapy sessions
- Co-leading classroom therapy groups
- Share treatment sessions
The OTR and COTA perform roles within the school setting that complement each other and contribute to a more comprehensive program of OT services.

- SSSIS Quarterly March 2003

Myths Or Truth

There is no value in demonstrating to OT students how to provide supervision to OTAs.
The OT needs to know how to do everything an OTA does in order to supervise.
The best partnerships will be built on the ability to see the OT and the OTA as professionals with different roles and duties.
It is hard to maximize service delivery if you do not know the role differences/similarities.

All notes written by an OTA must be co-signed.
The OT has full responsibility for supervising all of the interventions that an OTA administers.
It is good practice to have OT students shadow an OTA during each fieldwork.
It is ethical to assign all evaluations to an OTA
If you do not create an effective team immediately, it is too late to begin.
Thank you for coming.

Vadams@autsimtherapies.com

Please get involved with the Practice and Ethics Committee:
School Based Sub Committee
Autism Sub Committee