

POLICY E.3

Subject: **Occupation as the Common Core of Occupational Therapy**

Code: **RA Resolution 532-79, RA Motion 2003M54, 2006C378, 2011AprC1, RA Motion 2021M3**

PURPOSE: To establish and define occupation as the core concept of the profession.

IT SHALL BE THE POLICY OF THE ASSOCIATION THAT:

1. Occupation serves as the common core of occupational therapy and as such encompasses the following:
 - a. Occupations are activities that bring meaning to the daily lives of individuals, families, and communities and enable them to participate in society.
 - b. All individuals have an innate need and right to engage in meaningful occupations throughout their lives.
 - c. Participation in these occupations influences development, health and well-being across the lifespan. As such, participation in meaningful occupation is a determinant of health.
 - d. Occupations occur within diverse contexts, inclusive of environmental and personal factors.
 - e. The quality of occupational performance and the experience of each occupation are unique in each situation due to the dynamic relationship between factors intrinsic to the individual, the contexts in which the occupation occurs, and the characteristics of the activity.
 - f. The focus and outcome of occupational therapy are individuals' engagement in meaningful occupations that support their participation in life situations.
 - g. Occupational therapy practitioners conceptualize occupations as both a means and an end to therapy. That is, there is therapeutic value in occupational engagement as a change agent, and engagement in occupations is also the ultimate goal of therapy.
 - h. Occupational therapy is based on the belief that occupations may be used for health promotion and wellness, remediation or restoration, health maintenance, disease and injury prevention, and compensation/adaptation.
 - i. The use of occupation to promote individual, community, and population health is the core of occupational therapy practice, education, research, and advocacy.

Effective: 4/79

Revised: 6/03, 4/06, 4/11, 7/15, 03/22

BPPC Reviewed: 10/01, 1/02, 1/03, 1/06, 1/11, 7/15

2. Educational curricula and continuing education programs shall emphasize occupation as the common core of occupational therapy.
3. Research efforts shall be supported that investigate the effects of the client's participation in occupation to promote evidence-based practice. Occupational therapy practitioners shall be committed to occupation-based practice in their individual practice settings in evaluation, intervention, and identification of outcomes.
4. Occupational therapy practitioners shall use and apply the language outlined in AOTA's official documents when conducting occupational therapy evaluations, developing plans of care, and providing interventions with an emphasis on occupation.
5. Occupational therapy practitioners shall document and communicate professional activities and services to payers, supervisors, and interprofessional teams using the language outlined in AOTA's official documents demonstrating clear links between occupation and improved outcomes.

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