

## Children's Therapies

### Occupational Therapy Community Team – Guidelines and Referral Criteria

The Children's Occupational Therapy team at Queen Mary's Hospital works with children and young people from 0-18yrs with a GP within the Wandsworth Borough and who are not in a Specialist Resource Base or a Special School.

#### **Aim of occupational therapy general service**

*Occupational therapy is a client-centred health profession concerned with promoting health and well-being through occupation. The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in the activities of everyday life. Occupational therapists achieve this outcome by working with people and communities to enhance their ability to engage in the occupations they want to, need to, or are expected to do, or by modifying the occupation or the environment to better support their occupational engagement (WFOT 2012).*

#### **Who can refer**

- Health care professionals (GPs, Paediatricians, Speech and Language Therapists, Physiotherapists, Health Visitors, Nurses)
- Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCo) / Teachers
- Portage and Early Support Workers
- Parents / Carers are able to self-refer to our Parent Advice Clinic

#### **Inclusion Criteria**

1. In the reason for referral, please identify and provide detail of **functional concerns** e.g. getting dressed, using cutlery and preparing simple meals, grooming tasks, playing, using scissors, etc.
2. When completing the referral you will need to be **specific as to how these functional difficulties are impacting on the child's ability to participate in their daily living activities** (e.g. child needs assistance to feed himself during lunch, child is unable to get dressed for PE, child is unable to engage in play due to distress to the textures, difficulties manipulating toys, etc.).
3. We offer a one-off consultation in the Parent Advice Clinic. This is generally for children with minor difficulties affecting **functional skills and participation** (e.g. handwriting difficulties). If there is further clinical need the therapist can refer on from this consultation to a full assessment.
4. We are able to accept re-referrals for children previously known. If they are being **re-referred evidence of a new functional concern or a change in the previous identified functional difficulties are required**. This is clearly outlined in the referral form and must be completed.
5. Prior to completing the referral, please consider if these functional difficulties are within what is **age appropriate** for the child.
6. Behaviour difficulties in isolation related to a child's diagnosis (e.g. repetitive & stereotypical behaviours, flapping, biting, lack of danger awareness, etc.), will not meet the threshold for OT assessment or input.

7. Please note that Occupational Therapy team does not 'teach handwriting' but rather provides strategies and advice for developing some of the key skills required for handwriting. *Refer to the National Handwriting Association's website for further advice.*
8. For children with attention and concentration difficulties which may be linked with sensory processing difficulties, they would benefit from trialing a range of generic strategies. You are welcome to contact the OT service if you wish to have a copy of these strategies. This may include implementing movement breaks throughout their daily routine or use of basic equipment (e.g. Movin' Sit cushion). Once these strategies have been implemented and you feel the child's sensory seeking behaviours are still impacting on their attention and concentration, please refer the child with evidence of the implementation of these strategies in the referral and how this concern impacts on their daily tasks.
9. Occupational Therapists do not diagnose conditions (e.g. DCD/Dyspraxia, Dyslexia). As Occupational Therapists we are able to assess and give strategies & advice for coordination difficulties causing functional problems and if required refer to a Developmental Paediatrician. For a Dyslexia assessment please discuss with your SENCo and/or Educational Psychologist
10. Please attach relevant documentation with the referral (school reports, NHS or private therapists' reports, paediatrician reports) with parents' consent.
11. Please note that parental consent for referral is vital and referrals will not be processed without this.

### **Exclusion criteria**

1. Fine motor difficulties that are not impacting the child's ability to carry out daily tasks.
2. Walking, mobility and gross motor skills in isolation – please refer to St. George's Hospital Paediatric Physiotherapy Team.
3. Sensory processing difficulties that are not impacting the child's ability to carry out daily tasks e.g. does not like loud noises, but is able to cope within the environment with minimal help.
4. Motor coordination difficulties that are not impacting the child's ability to carry out daily tasks.
5. A child that is managing activities of daily living regardless of their diagnosis.
6. Emotional & behavioral management linked with mental health concerns – please refer to CAMHS or a Behavioral Support Specialist
7. Repetitive and stereotypical behaviours e.g. hand flapping, tics, scratching, etc.
8. Social Communication and Interaction difficulties – please refer to St. George's Hospital Speech and Language Therapy team
9. Feeding restrictions in isolation – please refer to St. George's Hospital MDT Feeding Clinic
10. Adaptations in the home environment – please refer to the Social Services Occupational Therapy team
11. Advice and recommendations to Housing Associations, DLA applications around safety and behavioral issues.
12. Wheelchair & buggy provision – please refer to Wheelchair Services at Queen Mary's Hospital

The Occupational Therapy service is only commissioned to see children of primary school age unless the child has a physical disability.

Where appropriate we may be able to see a secondary school age child in our Parent Advice Clinic for advice on **one particular functional concern**.

For further information in completing the referral form please contact our Occupational Therapy department on 0208 725 5748.