



Questions to ask when you contact an independent practitioner

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The College of Occupational Therapists cannot recommend any particular therapist or company. We would suggest that you make contact with more than one occupational therapist, if available. This will give you information to compare.

Below are questions you could ask if you are seeking an occupational therapist. If you are a parent and wish to find an occupational therapist for your child, please see the second section.

Can you confirm that you are registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC)?

The occupational therapist should be able to provide you with their HCPC registration number. This is usually in the form of OT followed by 5 numbers.

You can check this on the HCPC register if you wish. <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/check/>

What is your experience in this area of work?

If the occupational therapist is saying that they have experience in a field of practice, ask them to describe the nature of the work that they have done and how long they have been doing it.

How much do you charge?

There is no set fee for an independent occupational therapist. Ask what they charge. Clarify if it includes/excludes travel or any other charges. Also ask if there will be additional charges for intervention, reports or other written information.

Will there be a contract for the services?

What is included in the contract? If you are asked to sign a contract, make sure you understand it.

What services will I receive?

Find out before you start what will be involved. Ask if you will be assessed and if so, how will this be done. Ask how any intervention will be agreed and how much you will be involved in this process. Find out what goals or targets will be set prior to starting intervention. Ask if the goals or targets will relate to functioning (for example getting washed and dressed, making a meal, writing a document for work, doing your gardening etc.). Also ask how long might the intervention last and how will you know you have reached your goals.



Are you happy to have an initial meeting?

Some therapists may meet with you to discuss your needs more fully before you agree any work. It is an opportunity for you to see if you think you will get on with the occupational therapist and for them to confirm that they are able to help you. Ask if there would be a cost to an initial meeting.

Will you travel to my home or workplace or community setting?

The most appropriate place to see the occupational therapist will depend upon your needs and the intervention being offered. You may have an initial consultation (either in person or over the phone) to establish your priorities and from this arrange the most suitable place for further assessment or intervention. For example, if you:

- Would like support to carry out tasks in the home, then the occupational therapist should see you in your home so they can suggest strategies or equipment which are suitable.
- Need advice relating to your work then the occupational therapist should arrange the assessment with you in your workplace or other suitable environment depending on your needs.
- Would like support to carry out activities within the community such as going shopping, socialising with friends in a local café or taking public transport, then the occupational therapist should see you in the community where the main issues are arising.

Check what the arrangements would be for seeing you in these settings and what additional costs there may be.

Will I get a report?

It is useful to confirm at the outset what written information you will receive, what is included in the price and what may cost extra. Ask if there will be a report outlining the results of the assessment and if it will outline goals which relate to what you will be able to do following occupational therapy involvement. Also ask if the report will outline the intervention recommendations such as alternative ways of doing a task, using equipment to enable you to carry out a task, developing specific skills or maintaining/improving your current level of functioning.

If you are seeking advice relating to your participation in work or volunteering, also ask if recommendations will be appropriate and suitable for the workplace.

Can you provide or give advice on any equipment that I might need?

They should also be able to advise you on any equipment that might be useful for you to have in your home or workplace and where this can be obtained or purchased.

Will you work with other occupational therapists if they are also involved?

Sometimes there will be an occupational therapist involved with you from health or social services. If this is the case, you may like to ask the independent practitioner if and how they will work together.



If you are a parent looking for an occupational therapist for your child, here are some questions you may wish to ask:

Can you confirm that you are registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC)?

The occupational therapist should be able to provide you with their HCPC registration number. This is usually in the form of OT followed by 5 numbers.

You can check this on the HCPC register if you wish. <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/check/>

What is your experience in this area of work?

If the occupational therapist is saying that they have experience in a field of practice, ask them to describe the nature of the work that they have done and how long they have been doing it.

How much do you charge?

There is no set fee for an independent occupational therapist. Ask what they charge. Clarify if it includes/excludes travel or any other charges. Also ask if there will be additional charges for intervention, reports or other written information.

Will there be a contract for the services?

What is included in the contract? If you are asked to sign a contract, make sure that you understand it.

What services will I receive?

Find out before you start what will be involved. Ask if your child will be assessed and if so, how will this be done. Ask how any intervention will be agreed and how much you will be involved in this process. Find out what goals or targets will be set prior to starting intervention. Ask if the goals or targets will relate to functioning (for example getting dressed, managing a school day, playing with friends etc.). Also ask how long might the intervention last and how will you know when your child has reached their goals.

Are you happy to have an initial meeting?

Some therapists may meet with you to discuss your child's needs more fully before you agree any work. It is an opportunity for you to see if you think you and your child will get on with the occupational therapist and for them to confirm that they are able to help you. Ask if there would be a cost to an initial meeting.



Will you travel to my home, my child's school or a community setting?

The most appropriate place to see the occupational therapist will depend upon your child's needs and the intervention being offered. You may have an initial consultation (either in person or over the phone) to establish your priorities and from this arrange the most suitable place for further assessment or intervention. For example, if you:

- Would like support for your child to carry out tasks in the home (such as getting ready for school, doing homework, getting washed and dressed etc.), then the occupational therapist should see you in your home so they can suggest strategies or equipment which are suitable.
- Need advice relating to your child's school participation then the occupational therapist should arrange the assessment in consultation with your child's school or other suitable environment depending on your child's needs.
- Would like support to carry out activities within the community such as going to sports clubs, playing with friends or taking public transport, then the occupational therapist should see your child in the community where the main issues are arising.

Check what the arrangements would be for seeing you in these settings and what additional costs there may be.

Will I get a report?

It is useful to confirm at the outset what written information you will receive, what is included in the price and what may cost extra. Ask if there will be a report outlining the results of the assessment and if it will outline goals which relate to your child's functioning. Also ask if the report will outline the intervention recommendations and if appropriate if they would be suitable for your child's nursery, school or college/university.

Can you provide or give advice on any equipment that I might need?

The occupational therapist should be able to advise you on any equipment that might be useful for your child to have in your home and where this can be obtained or purchased. If the occupational therapist is working with your child's school then they should be able to advise on appropriate school equipment.

Will you work with other occupational therapists if they are also involved?

Sometimes there will be an occupational therapist involved with your child from a health service, social services or educational authority. If this is the case, you may like to ask the independent practitioner if and how they will work together.