

# Occupational Therapy Service Development: Service Design Questions

The questions below are intended to consider a broad range of issues when designing an occupational therapy service; not all issues may be relevant to each service.

## Human Resources

- How many service providers will be required (e.g. occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, clerical support workers)?
- What are the competency standards and qualification/registration requirements for service providers?
- What professional standards of practice/ethical codes will guide service delivery?
- What access will be available to professional development opportunities for continued competency?
- Who has responsibility for leading and making decisions regarding the occupational therapy service?
- What is the organisational hierarchy?
- What is the scope of responsibilities of decision-makers (for example, with respect to strategic and operational issues)?
- Who influences decision making (for example, a steering committee/board of directors/consumer panel)?
- Is there a succession plan to cover management, leadership and clinical roles?
- What access is available to supports such as human resource or finance professionals to assist with operations of the occupational therapy service?
- What policies will guide human resources management, e.g. performance reviews?

## Occupational Therapy Space

- Where will the service be delivered (e.g. hospital, clinic, home, telehealth)?
- What space is required for the occupational therapy service (e.g. for group/individual interventions, report documentation, meeting, storage)?
- Does the available space meet universal design principles?
- Are sustainable transportation systems available for service users to access the space?

## Equipment and Supplies

- What fixed equipment or supplies and consumables are required?
- Are reliable sources available? Are the sources local to promote sustainability?
- What equipment maintenance, modification and cleaning are needed?

## Budget

- What are the expected costs for human resources (for example, salary and benefit costs)?
- What are the costs of required space, equipment and services?

- What funding is available for the occupational therapy service?
- What are the accountability and eligibility criteria for this funding? How do the criteria affect the design of the service?

### **Resource Sustainability**

- What are the environmental and social considerations for providing the occupational therapy service?
- How can the service be delivered in a way to promote environmental sustainability?
- How can the service mitigate consequences of environmental damage due to unsustainable lifestyles and practices (for example, how can the service encourage users to choose healthy, sustainable occupational lifestyles)?

### **Referral and Service Progression**

- How will referrals to the service be made?
- What will be the service eligibility criteria?
- Who will make referrals to the service?
- How will potential service users/referral sources become aware of the occupational therapy service?
- What are the expected timelines for accessing the service?
- What criteria will influence movement through the service delivery process and trigger discharge?

### **Social/Financial Considerations**

- What are the financial costs for accessing the occupational therapy service and/or service equipment and supplies?
- Who is responsible to pay the costs?

### **Evidence**

- What evidence supports the provision of the occupational therapy service?
- How will this evidence be used in the delivery of the occupational therapy service?

### **Service Operation**

How will processes operate for:

- Staffing and staff caseload management
- Documentation and record keeping
- Service statistics/workload measurement
- Equipment loan systems
- Accounting and budgeting procedures, billing
- Inventory and asset registers
- Shared resources (e.g. equipment)
- Research participation

### **Service Implementation**

- How will the new service be implemented?
- What tasks, responsibilities and timelines are involved?
- Will implementation involve pilot testing and evaluation of the proposed service?

### **Service Users**

- What methods will be used to engage service users in service planning? How will this input be used?
- What is expected to occur as a result of receiving the occupational therapy service?

- How will the short-term and long-term service outcomes be measured?
- How will service outcome reports be used?

### **Community**

- What methods will be used to engage community members in service planning? How will this input be used?
- How will the expected outcomes impact the local community?
- What are the potential benefits? Are there any negative consequences?

### **Service Providers/Agency/Funders**

- How will the service demonstrate cost effectiveness (e.g. by lowering complication rates or hospital admissions)?
- What other benefits are expected?
- How will the results satisfy funding criteria and be used to seek opportunities for new funds?

### **Risk Management**

- What negative outcomes need to be avoided?
- What occupational health and safety considerations require consideration for delivery of the occupational therapy service? (e.g. storage and use of hazardous substances, light, dust, water, manual handling hazards regarding people or objects)
- Are there any security considerations or other significant risks to safety for staff, service users?
- What measures are necessary to ensure compliance with information privacy regulations?
- What insurance is necessary for professional practice or employment? (e.g. business risk, professional indemnity, public liability, health coverage)
- What cultural safety issues need to be addressed? (e.g. consideration of language, traditional practices)

### **Beneficence**

How will the occupational therapy service promote beneficence to improve health and well-being? (for example, by promoting positive risk-taking behaviours among service users)