

Foreword

A Message from the Canadian Armed Forces



The Canadian Forces Health Services, which includes occupational therapy, is happy to partner with the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT) and Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) on this valuable document.

It is fitting that this relationship between the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), CAOT and VAC continue, since many of the early advances of occupational therapy as a profession originated as a result of the World Wars when returning wounded soldiers required occupation and activity to assist with their recoveries back to daily living roles. Even today, it is evident that the rehabilitation professions, including occupational therapy continue to evolve in response to the health care needs of today's injured soldiers.

The everyday activities of CAF members can be demanding. Whether deployed on domestic or overseas operations, training exercises or even routine office work, injuries requiring occupational therapy can, and often do, occur. Whether it is an assessment and treatment provided by a DND Occupational Therapist or a Medavie Blue Cross

Occupational Therapist, their primary objective is clear: to collaborate with the Canadian Forces Health Services Medical and Rehabilitations team to assist the CAF member to return to full duty.

Occupational therapists are uniquely suited to meet this objective as they support, assess and treat the CAF member in their home, community, military garrison or place of work. They do this by identifying the CAF member's strengths and current deficits in everyday activities and assist them to re-organize and re-integrate into wanted and expected roles and routines. The diversity in assessment and treatment arenas provide a breeding ground for innovative evidence informed practice.

It is encouraging to see CAOT develop this Guidance Document on working with members of the CAF and VAC. Articulating occupational therapy roles, goals, standards and procedures for delivery of services across the expanse of Canada in a document such as this is essential. This Guidance Document is yet another way to ensure optimal standardization and CAF member access to occupational therapy services.

Jim G. Kile, OMM, CD, MSc, MD.

Colonel

Director of Medical Policy

Canadian Armed Forces Health Services