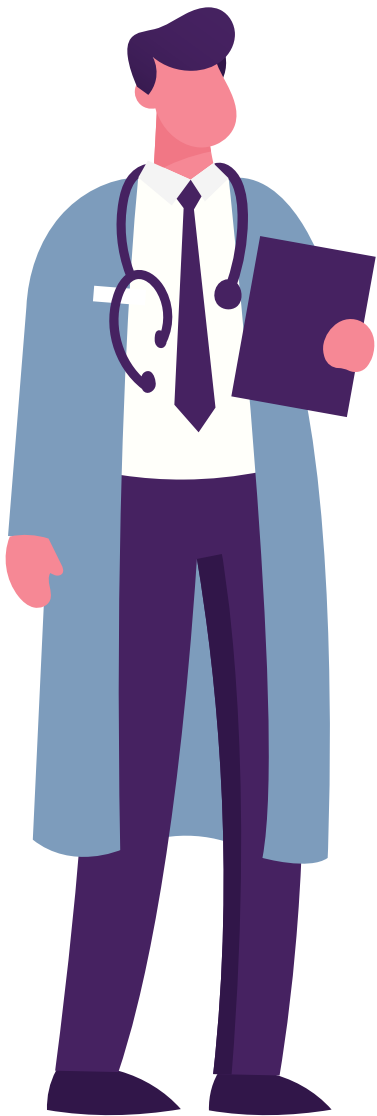


# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

RELIEVE PRESSURE ON PHYSICIANS  
& REDUCE PATIENT WAIT TIMES



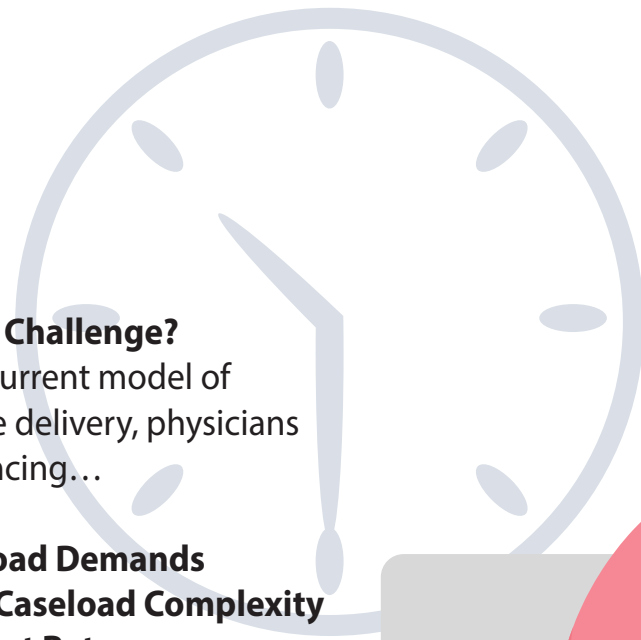
## **What is the Challenge?**

Within the current model of primary care delivery, physicians are experiencing...

**High Caseload Demands**  
**Increasing Caseload Complexity**  
**High Burnout Rates**

Meanwhile,  
patients are experiencing...

**Long Wait Times**  
**Low Attachment Rates**



## Having an OT on the Primary Care Team will help...

### Assessments:

Assessments conducted by occupational therapists are used to **triage patients and streamline referrals**, ensuring that patients receive the care they need from the clinician best suited to provide it without necessarily having to see a physician first. Involving occupational therapists in assessments and referrals can **reduce the number of patients that a physician needs to see** in a day and can result in **patients receiving the care that best meets their needs faster**.

### Intervention:

Occupational therapists work with patients with a range of diagnoses and provide holistic interventions to **address function and safety, as well as physical and mental health**. An on-site OT also **streamlines care and supports the work of the other team members**. When OTs and physicians work within the same primary care facility, physicians are more **easily able to make referrals**, and patients can receive more specialized care faster.

### Health Promotion and Managing Complex Conditions:

Occupational therapists are skilled in supporting self-management of illness, promoting health, and preventing disease and injury. As a result, **the number of people who need to access primary care on a regular basis is reduced**. Patients with chronic conditions make up approximately **6%** of a primary care caseload but can account for up to **33%** of a primary care practice's resource use. Having OTs support patients to self-manage chronic conditions and develop healthy habits and behaviours can **prevent further health deterioration or development of additional chronic conditions and can free up time and resources for primary care physicians**.

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Occupational therapy (OT) practitioners are a natural fit for primary care teams because they offer a valuable, multi-scope skill set that is unique and cost-effective. As rehabilitation and health promotion experts, OTs can help improve client participation in daily activities, encourage healthy lifestyle choices, support mental health, foster self-management of chronic conditions, and identify those who need care prior to crisis or hospitalization.

To learn more, contact Tanya Fawkes, Regional Director CAOT-BC, at [tfawkes@caot.ca](mailto:tfawkes@caot.ca)



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