

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

DECREASE ADMISSION & RELIEVE PRESSURE ON PHYSICIANS & REDUCE SYSTEM WAITS AND SPENDING

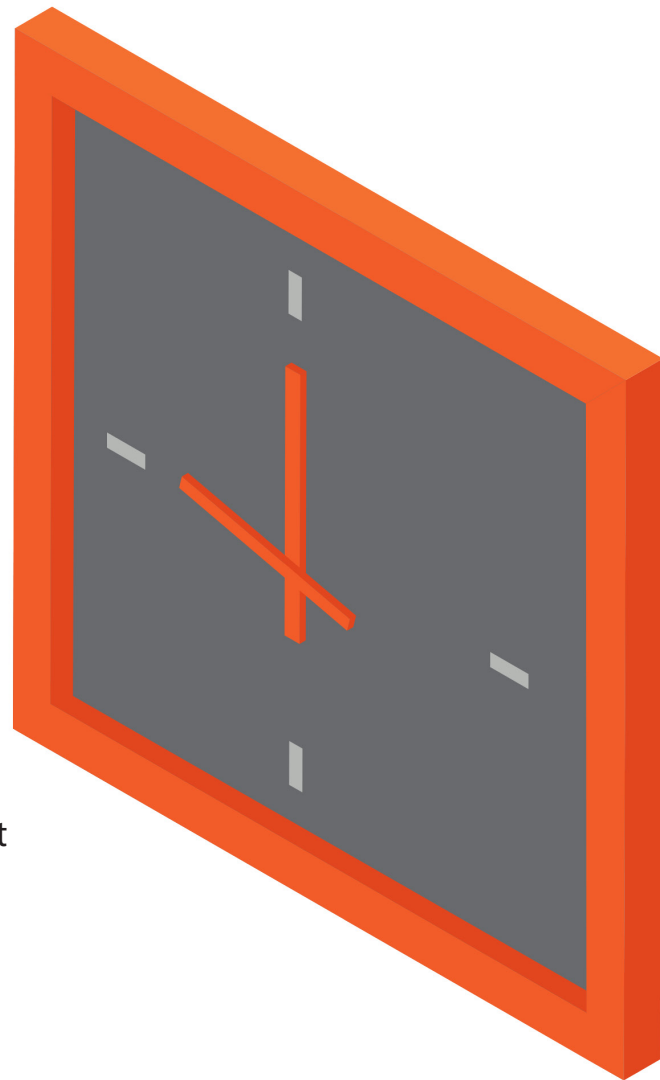
WHAT IS THE CHALLENGE?

Emergency room wait times have increased in recent years, putting strain on emergency departments' resources and capacities.

Falls are common reasons for hospital admission and approximately **1 in 3** seniors experienced a fall last year. Hip fractures resulting from falls are expensive for the healthcare system, with estimated annual costs ranging from **\$26,000 - \$47,000**.

More than **50%** of hospital admissions are readmissions that have been discharged from hospital.

Many hospital admissions and readmissions are preventable and are often the result of insufficient support and care at home and in the community, underestimation of patients' care needs post-discharge, lack of timely access to community services, and communication and knowledge gaps between hospital and community healthcare workers.



HOW WILL OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS HELP?

Home visits and environmental modifications:

Hip fractures resulting from falls are expensive for the healthcare system, with estimated annual costs ranging from \$26,000 - \$47,000. Occupational therapists assess and identify risk factors that lead to accidents and falls. OTs design interventions that improve patients' health and safety and result in a **25-41% reduction** in risk of falls and accidents.

This reduces rates of hospital admissions, saves time and money and enables patients to remain independent in their communities for longer.

Education and health promotion:

Occupational therapists help patients better self-manage their health to promote patient independence. Strategies taught by OTs are aimed at improving functional impairment regardless of the underlying conditions affecting the individual's health. By equipping patients with the right tools, strategies and adaptations, they are better able to manage and monitor their own health, which decreases their reliance on the health care system and associated hospital visits.

Decreasing the cost of acute care admissions:

More than 50% of hospital admissions are readmissions that have been discharged from hospital. OTs working on primary care teams ensure that patients' functional, physical, and mental health needs are comprehensively addressed, and that patients are equipped with the supports, tools, and skills necessary to reduce risk of illness and injury and remain safe, healthy, and independent in their homes. As a result, having OT services within primary care reduces unnecessary hospital admissions, readmissions, and length of hospital stays, saving the healthcare system an average of **\$15 million annually**.

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

