

## CELEBRATE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS!

Every April, **Occupational Therapy Month** is celebrated to raise awareness about the benefits of Occupational Therapy (OT) as well as honor the vital profession and the meaningful differences OT makes in the lives of each patient.

At Advanced Therapy Solutions, we are grateful for the dedication and passion that every therapy member brings to our organization. Your support helps ensure the best care for our patients.

[Click here](#) to access resources, stories and videos to share with your clinical team.



### Listen In: Occupational Therapy Podcast

Did you know? Outside of an extensive list of resources and information regarding Occupational Therapy and its impact on individuals, AOTA also has a podcast dedicated to this topic and OT Month.

Listen in for a conversation with Occupational Therapists Shannen Marie Coley and Dr. Heather Jackson-Pena, who are using their platforms to educate thousands in celebration of OT Month. [Listen here >>](#)



## TELEHEALTH: INCREASING ACCESS TO CARE

### Occupational Therapy & Telehealth: Increasing Access to Patient Care

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, care providers have faced the challenge of reaching their patients in a timely and efficient manner, and Telehealth stepped in to help alleviate delays in care.

As a fast-growing sector in healthcare, Telehealth helps improve access and quality of care and outcomes across the continuum of care. Benefits also include:

- Comfort and convenience for both patients and providers
- Control of infectious illness through prescreening visits
- Family connections, as other members can attend the appointment at home
- Better assessments, as patients are in their home environment and OTs can observe and assess an individual's ability to navigate the space
- Primary care and chronic condition management

*(Source)*

When it came to OT services during the pandemic, Congress, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), State governments, and private insurers quickly moved to allow OT services to be provided via Telehealth.



This swift transition in care environments showed OT providers and patients the value of Occupational Therapy services via Telehealth.

Temporary waivers enacted by CMS enabled OT practitioners to continue to provide essential therapy sessions despite closures and other service disruptions during the Public Health Emergency (PHE) (Source).

The Consolidated Appropriations Act for fiscal year 2022 includes an extension of current Medicare Telehealth waivers for 151 days beyond the expiration of the PHE and a specific extension for OTs and OTAs to provide services via Telehealth to Medicare beneficiaries. Once the timeframe ends, OT services may no longer be covered through Telehealth.

The reality is that OT professionals providing support to patients through Telehealth can better assess the plan of care based on the patient’s surroundings and their everyday activities, making the permanent coverage of OT Telehealth services a clear need for better patient care.

### Resources

[An Emergent Research and Policy Framework for Telehealth – NIH](#)

[Telehealth Resources – AOTA](#)

[Write A Letter: Ask Congress to Support the Expanded Telehealth Access Act – AOTA](#)

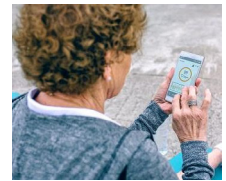
[Benefits of Telemedicine – Johns Hopkins Medicine](#)

[Congress Extends Occupational Therapy Telehealth Waivers for 151 Days Beyond Expiration of PHE – AOTA](#)

### Support the Permanent Expansion of Telehealth for OT Services

Make your voice heard and help make Telehealth a permanent part of OT services under Medicare.

Contact your Members of Congress today and ask them to support the Expanded Telehealth Access Act. [Contact Congress>>](#)



## Leadership Recommendations

- Encourage collaboration within the entire care team to ensure the delivery of PT and OT is matched to patient needs, especially when addressing the needs of patients recently admitted from an acute care stay.
- For the enhanced use of therapy, evaluate clinical conditions, particularly joint replacement therapy.
- For inpatient rehab facilities, evaluate for more intensive therapy stays to support significant rehabilitation outcomes and functional independence.
- Ensure skilled PT/OT interventions are part of the plan of care to support positive outcomes.
- Provide the patient and family tools and resources to be active participants in achieving functional status goals.

## SERVICES SPOTLIGHT: OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

### Supporting Patients’ Quality of Life Every Day

As a profession based on science and evidence, OT enables people of all ages to participate in daily living or live better with injury, illness, or disability. Through personalized strategies for everyday living and customized environments to develop and maximize potential, OT professionals greatly impact patients’ lives.

ATS OT professionals impact one’s ability to perform everyday physical and mental activities of living, including:



- Training for improved independence in dressing, bathing, eating and grooming
- Activities for memory, orientation and cognitive integration
- Strengthening and coordination exercises
- Exercises to maintain normal joint movement in order to reduce the effects of arthritis or other conditions

[Contact us to learn more](#) or to [submit a referral](#).

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## Occupational Therapy in Action

### Supporting Patients and Their Quality of Life

*An Interview with Beth Hoff, OTR/L - East Bank Center*

For 30 years, Beth Hoff, OTR/L, has worked in the therapy space in all capacities of the profession. From administrative duties to providing therapy, discussing care plans with patients and more, she has witnessed the impact of OT on the patients' evolution of function in the performance of everyday activities. Recently, we sat down with Beth to learn more about her role. Continue reading for her insights.

#### **Q: Please share about your work with East Bank Center.**

**A:** I have been at East Bank Center for approximately ten years. My responsibilities include overseeing two full-time COTAs, performing most evaluations, maintaining progress notes, processing discharges, and managing cases.

I carry other job responsibilities in the therapy department, including administrative duties, assisting DOR as needed, attending care plans with families and participating in departmental meetings.

I love what I do to improve a person's life in whatever capacity that may be.

#### **Q: What should clinicians consider when addressing the needs of patients recovering from injury or experiencing physical and cognitive changes? How does OT help support these efforts?**

**A:** Patients who have been in the hospital or another care facility usually have deficits in strength, out-of-bed activity tolerance, and balance in sitting and/or standing. Some patients can have impairments in sensation, coordination, visual/perception, cognition, and safety awareness and may have a poor or limited support system.

Occupational Therapists help patients reach a level of function in the performance of basic activities of daily living, which include toileting, bathing, dressing, grooming, self-feeding, toilet transfers, tub/shower transfers, functional mobility and simple IADLs (i.e., simple meal prep, medication management, cleaning, laundry).

#### **Q: What advice do you have for other clinicians as they care for patients with Occupational Therapy needs?**

**A:** My advice to clinicians would be to never lose hope, to listen to your patient, to remember they are the customer, and it is our responsibility to provide the best patient care at all times.

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**East Bank Center** is a distinctively unique rehabilitation facility that combines all the services and expertise of the finest medical model with the comfort and services of a five-star hotel. They recognize that the ideal setting for a patient's recovery is in their home and strive to return each patient home in the shortest time possible. Their cohesive course of care combines multiple disciplines with the latest technologies in the industry. This approach allows them to return their patients to their homes with the confidence and education necessary for a successful transition.

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**Advanced Therapy Solutions exists to inspire, encourage, and motivate patients to excellence in therapy. Every patient is unique to us. Therefore, each one is treated with care, support, and dignity as they strive to achieve their daily therapy goals. We pride ourselves on treating others as they want to be treated, for this is our ultimate measure of the quality of care in every respect.**

[Learn more about our services](#) | [info@ats-therapy.com](mailto:info@ats-therapy.com)

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