THE ASSOCIATION OF OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

IN

IRELAND.

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE STATEMENT FOR PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS

2011.

Approved by AOTI Council
AOTI PRIVATE PRACTICE ADVISORY GROUP

September 2011.
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**INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE.**

The Association of Occupational Therapists (AOTI) is the recognised professional body for Occupational Therapists in Ireland.

- An Occupational Therapist in Private Practice is a self employed professional, a partner in a company or principal in his/her own company.
- An Occupational Therapist in Private Practice is self governing and accepts clients according to his/her professional knowledge and experience.
- Fees for Occupational Therapy Services are set by individual therapists with regard to "The Competitions Act 2002".
- Therapists employed by a principal therapist in providing Private Occupational Therapy services are not considered to be an “Occupational Therapist in Private Practice”.

The purpose of this Standard in Practice document is to provide a set of principles that apply to all members of the Association working in “Private Practice”.

- It is a statement of the values used in promoting and maintaining professional behaviour among Occupational Therapists in Private Practice in Ireland.
- It is also to promote consistency in the delivery of Occupational Therapy provided by Occupational Therapists working in Private Practice nationally.
THE PRACTITIONER.

1. The Occupational Therapy Practitioner in this context will be a member of the Association of Occupational Therapists Ireland and other related Clinical Specialist groups as appropriate.

2. A minimum of 5 years clinical experience post graduation in a particular area of practice is advised and strongly recommended before commencing employment in private practice.

3. A Practitioner should adopt and follow the "Code of Ethics" of the AOTI and the requirements of state registration when it becomes law.

4. The Practitioner should be aware that in law holding oneself as a Specialist in any area of work requires a higher degree of skill than one who does not profess to be so qualified by special training and ability.

5. Each Practitioner has a duty to be aware of the limits of his/her expertise or competence.

6. Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance Scheme is essential before starting work in Private Practice.

BUSINESS IDENTITY.

1. The Practitioner clearly defines for self and others the trading status of their work whether as a sole practitioner, partnership or limited company.

2. The Practitioner carries Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance relevant to his/her business and work.

   In some areas of speciality this insurance must be continued for the necessary period of years following the cessation of the practice to cover the lapse of time allowed in law for possible claims to be made.
3. The Practitioner should comply with Irish Inland Revenue Tax Laws.

4. The Practitioner has a system of financial record keeping and accounting in accordance with relevant legal, tax and account practice.

5. The Practitioner is recommended to have a planned procedure to deal with bad debt.

6. The Practitioner setting up in Private Practice should not canvas customers from a previous employer.

PROVIDING A QUALITY SERVICE.

1. The Practitioner has a “Duty of Care” in law to the client who enters into a two way contract.

2. The Practitioner should provide services that are safe, cost effective and of the highest quality based on available resources.

3. The Practitioner should deliver services which reflect the principles, theory and client centred approach of the Occupational Therapy Profession.

4. The Practitioner should have a clear and transparent complaints procedure for service users.

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6. The Practitioner must take responsibility for his/her continuing professional development.

REFERRAL OF CLIENTS.

1. The Practitioner should have a clearly documented system for referral to Occupational Therapy Services.
2. The Practitioner should refer or recommend referral to other appropriate services that may be of benefit to the Client.

CONSENT FROM CLIENTS.
1. The Practitioner must obtain consent from the client, written or verbal before initiating the Occupational Therapy process and respect and accept the client’s decision to refuse or withdraw consent at anytime.
2. Terms of business and payment should be laid out and agreed prior to commencement of treatment.

ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTION AND DISCHARGE.
1. The Practitioner should assess as appropriate the needs of the client.
2. The Practitioner should provide suitable interventions as required.
3. The Practitioner should cease intervention when the client has achieved optimal benefit or when the client wishes to do so.

DOCUMENTATION.
1. The Practitioner should maintain comprehensive and accurate records of all professional activities in relation to the Practice. Clinical files should be stored for a minimum of eight years from the end of treatment. Files on children and young adults must be kept until each child has reached their 18th birthday.
2. The Practitioner must follow the legal requirements in relation to confidentiality, storage and disposal of records.
RESEARCH AND PRACTICE EDUCATION.

1. Where possible the Practitioner should promote an understanding of and participate in professional research in Occupational Therapy.

2. Where possible the Practitioner should collaborate with Occupational Therapy Educational Colleges to evaluate and promote quality practice education for students of the profession.

3. Occupational Therapists in Private Practice must separate research and teaching from practice and obtain separate consents from clients for these domains.

REVIEW.

1. It is recommended that this document be reviewed and updated as necessary every five years.

REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY.

- AOTI code of Ethics and Professional conduct for Occupational Therapist.
- COTEC Standard of Practice Policy Statements.
- Health Professions Council - Standards of Conduct, performance and ethics.
- American Association of Occupational Therapists - "Standards of Practice".
- Legal aspect of malpractice for Occupational Therapists. Tom Cooney, Solicitor, Lecturer in Medical Law.