



**Due to the ongoing coronavirus situation not all services and activities listed on this website will be operating as normal. Click here for more information.**

## Children's Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy within County Durham and Darlington helps children and young people to participate as fully as possible in daily activities.

We work with children and young people from birth up to 19 years of age who have difficulties or a disability which affects their ability to carry out everyday tasks.

Occupational Therapists (OTs) help children and young people to carry out the things they need or want to do in areas of self-care, school work and play.

If a child or young person has learning, sensory or physical difficulties, their ability to grow, learn, socialise and play can be affected.

We see children and young people within a variety of settings, including nurseries, schools, special schools and their home.

Occupational Therapists within the North Clinical Commissioning Group and Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgfield Clinical Commissioning Group work on behalf of Durham County Council and housing providers, to assess, advise and recommend adaptations within the child's home environment. Within Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group our Occupational Therapists can provide advice to assist Local Authority Occupational Therapists with their Social Care assessments.

### When is it on?

**Session information** Helpdesk: Monday to Friday  
8.30am - 5.00pm

### Who to contact

**Contact name** Children's Occupational Therapy  
**Contact position** Helpdesk  
**Telephone** 0191 387 6359  
**E-mail** [cdda-tr.childrensoccupationaltherapy@nhs.net](mailto:cdda-tr.childrensoccupationaltherapy@nhs.net)  
**Website** [Children's Community Occupational Therapy](#)

### Other details

**Cost description** NHS provision for those triaged as needing intervention.  
**Referral** Yes

## required?

### Referral and availability notes

A referral can be made by phoning our helpdesk in or a referral form can be completed (available on our website's [Referring to Occupational Therapy](#) page) and emailed to service email address or posted.

Referrals can be made by anyone involved in the child/young person providing they have consent from the parent /carer stating what functional difficulties the child has. They will be triaged by a qualified occupational Therapist who will determine what intervention is required at that time.

## Local Offer

### Local Offer description

An Occupational Therapist will talk to the family/carers to discuss areas of concern and difficulties for the child. The school/referrer may be also be contacted at this time. The need and type of intervention required will then be identified. This will be as follows:

Universal Intervention - advice will be provided, with signposting to relevant information/services.

Targeted Intervention - initial strategies and advice will be given during the telephone conversation, with printed resources to home or school as necessary.

Where appropriate, either an OT or OT Assistant will be allocated to the child. Contact with the family or school will be made to review and where necessary support the delivery of school or home based intervention.

Specialist Intervention - If the child is identified as requiring a detailed assessment, the local therapist will arrange an appointment followed by specialist therapeutic intervention as appropriate.

We are able to deliver training packages relating to the functional skills of a child to meet identified areas of need. Training packages available to school staff and parents include: fine motor skills, gross motor skills, handwriting and sensory issues.

Training may take place within schools or community settings.

**Contact name** Helpdesk  
**Contact telephone** 0191 387 6359  
**Contact email** [cdda-tr.childrensoccupationaltherapy@nhs.net](mailto:cdda-tr.childrensoccupationaltherapy@nhs.net)

What does your service do?

### **What does your service do?**

Early specialist intervention and management of conditions or physical/learning difficulties is known to improve outcomes for children/young people, increasing independence and reducing dependency wherever possible.

We will provide Occupational Therapy advice and intervention at universal, targeted level and where indicated, provide specialist level of intervention. Such activities will take place in the most appropriate location.

Specialist interventions include assessment, reporting, direct therapeutic intervention, delegated structured programs of therapy, advice, and training.

The service will also provide advice, recommendation for the provision and review of specialist equipment to facilitate care and maintain postural management, orthosis, minor and major adaptation to the home to facilitate care and promote independence

Therapy provision can be from birth to 16 year/19 years if in full time education, or 18 years if housing adaptations or equipment for care/independence is required.

The level of service provided will depend on the triaged need at the point of referral, advice and intervention will be given at universal, targeted or specialist level based on assessed/triaged need and available resources.

Within the age parameters support will be provided at the levels indicated for time required to meet triaged need. Access to universal level of service will be available for advice and information via web site and leaflets. Referrals will be made onward if required for transition to post 16,18,19 years services.

Where is it located and what areas does it cover?

### **Where is it located and what areas does it cover?**

The main base is Chester le Street Community Hospital (CLSCH) with staff bases in Darlington Memorial Hospital (DMH), Bishop Auckland Hospital (BAH), and clinic bases at CLSCH, DMH, BAH, Lowhills Centre, Peterlee and Stanley Primary Care Centre and deliver services across areas in homes, schools and any other appropriate location.

Who does your organisation provide a service for?

## **Who does your organisation provide a service for?**

Therapy provision can be from birth to 16 year/19 years if in full time education, or 18 years if housing adaptations or equipment for care/independence is required.

We will provide occupational therapy advice and intervention at universal, targeted and specialist level for children and young people referred with physical and learning difficulties/disabilities affecting their functional skills. The service will also provide advice, recommendation for the provision and review of specialist equipment, minor and major adaptation to the home to facilitate care and maintain postural management.

Within the North East there are several centres of excellence for various conditions. Such as muscular dystrophies, rheumatology and acute inpatient care. In these instances we will collaborate with the specialist services to provide the best possible input to support at home.

Likewise if therapy is already provided, such as by an out of area school therapist, private practice, voluntary/charitable therapist the team will collaborate with those services to provide the best possible input to support at home.

## **How can I start using the service?**

### **How can I start using the service?**

Anyone can refer to be triaged for suitability providing their GP is in area, or for social care area of residence is within County Durham.

The triaged service is provided as part of the National Health Service.

Enhanced services may be available on request, each case will be considered on an individual basis.

As part of the National Health Service we currently work to an 18 week wait limit.

## **How are decisions made about who can use your service?**

### **How are decisions made about who can use your service?**

The criteria as to who can use the service are established via contracted agreement between the people buying the service (the commissioners) and the people providing the service (the Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust). Triage/assessment by a senior occupational therapist will decide the level of service offered. Each individual therapist is a clinician who can make the decision whether the child/young person should be seen by the service within the parameters agreed between the commissioners and service providers.

Any decisions will be explained to the person involved.

Every reasonable effort will be made to make sure that the explanation is clearly understood, backed up in writing where required.

How do I know what is going on and can I be involved in making plans for the future?

**How do you communicate with service users and how are they involved in decision making / planning?**

Anonymous feedback questionnaires are routinely used to seek our service user's opinions.

Discussions with family and carers keep them informed.

A wide range of information is available in leaflet form or on the website.

As part of the NHS, a translation service is available for both written and spoken information.

You will be involved in all aspects of your child's therapy, unless the child is deemed Gillick competent and expressly doesn't want you to be involved in their care.

If appropriate, parents, carers and school staff can be trained in the delivery of therapy intervention. This is done as part of therapy and is encouraged to ensure a consistent approach to recovery/ development.

Is your service fully accessible?

**Is your service fully accessible?**

Yes.

There are disabled toilets within the children's centre.

All the general areas within the hospital setting were designed to accommodate people with additional needs.

What training have your staff had regarding SEND?

**What training are the staff supporting children and young people with SEND had or are having?**

All current community occupational therapists are trained to degree level then go onto develop specialist skills within the field of paediatric occupational therapy. They continue to develop those knowledge and skills throughout their career and are regularly encouraged to attend post graduate courses. The therapy assistants are skilled practitioners in their own right who work under the supervision of the therapist in the delivery of therapy programmes. They work closely with school, home and other professionals to ensure the child/young person gets the most from the therapy intervention.

Within the department there are staff who specialise in various aspects of therapy.

We work closely with other health professionals such as paediatricians, orthopaedic surgeons, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, local authority/housing staff. We also have close working links with education/SENCOs/school staff and families.

Who can I contact for further information?

**Who can I contact for further information?**

The department can be contacted on 0191 387 6359. Our clinical support staff will be happy to help.

It is important to understand that everybody involved with a child/young person with a range of difficulties and disabilities has something to offer and be responsible for their care. Although the occupational therapist may be involved with a child or young person, the day to day delivery of the therapy programmes and advice, (supported by training) is usually the responsibility of parents/carers and teaching staff. With appropriate support and encouragement to family, school staff and all those who interact with the child/young person the best possible outcome for each individual can be achieved.

If you are worried you can talk to any member of our team and we will be happy to address your concerns. Alternately there is a patient experience team which can assist if you would rather not talk to a member of our team.

You can talk to the team on the above number or you can talk to your current health care provider, GP or paediatrician.

**Disclaimer**

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Call the Families Information Service: **03000 269 995** or email: **[fis@durham.gov.uk](mailto:fis@durham.gov.uk)**



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