



# Kathryn Turtle

Occupational  
Therapy  
Assistant

Care of the Elderly  
Inpatient Rehabilitation

Can you give us a brief work history?

I have been working as an OT Assistant for just over one year.

What made you decide to be an OT/OT Support Staff?

I qualified as an OT and began working as a Band 5 OT in community then hospital-based rehabilitation. However, the timing was not right for me to work as an OT and I was able to transfer to an OT Assistant (OTA) post.

How did you train for this role/educational route?

Following A-levels I studied OT at University of Ulster, Jordanstown. The timing was not right for me and I was supported by my manager to become an OTA. I do plan to return to OT in the future.

What does a typical day involve?

My day would involve assisting OTs in:

- Assessment of patients
- Completing and assisting with daily rehabilitation
- Completing initial interviews with patients and their families
- Organising provision of specialised equipment recommended by OTs
- Working as part of a multidisciplinary team
- Admin duties
- Completing mandatory training
- Helping with audits or project work – every day is different

What do you like best about your job?

As an OTA, I feel I often get to spend more face-to-face time with patients. I get to know the patients and their families on a professional level when completing initial interviews and rehab.

What advice would you give anyone thinking of doing your job?

I would recommend working as an OTA to newly/recently qualified OTs who feel they are not ready to be an OT just yet. You get wonderful experience working with patients, the multidisciplinary team and see a lot of what the OTs do, which helps to improve confidence and make starting work a bit less daunting. Also, working as an OTA would be good for anyone who is unsure if OT is for them before or after going to university.

Anything else?

Don't be afraid not to go the traditional route of school, university and straight into OT. Do whatever is best for you!