

# North Coast Region

## **Guidelines for the Management of Regional Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists**

- Information for Principals,  
Line Managers  
and  
Administration**

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## Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services

The **Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services in State Schools- Revised edition** provides information about the Role and Scope of OT PT services provided by DET. Please refer to this document by following the link below:

<http://education.qld.gov.au/studentsservices/learning/disability/specialists/ot/>  
<http://education.qld.gov.au/studentsservices/learning/disability/specialists/pt/index.html>

**Key points from this document are included below:**

### **Purpose**

*The Department of Education and Training (DET) employs physiotherapists and occupational therapists to support the educational achievement of students enrolled or registered in state education facilities. The focus of the department's occupational therapy and physiotherapy services is to enhance education programs and learning outcomes for students with physical, vision, hearing, or speech-language impairment, intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder.*

### **Components of the occupational therapy and/or physiotherapy services provided**

*Occupational therapists and physiotherapists undertake a wide range of activities to ensure a quality service to students identified as requiring occupational therapy and/or physiotherapy services, including:*

- (a) *assessment of student needs*
- (b) *support in the provision of adjustments including:*
  - i. *program planning, development, implementation and review,*
  - ii. *curriculum planning with teachers*
  - iii. *recommendations for instructional adjustments*
- (c) *assessment, prescription and review of aids and equipment at schools and other locations to support students' access to the education program*
- (d) *consultation, collaboration and meetings with other members of the team*
- (e) *writing reports, letters and other administrative activities*
- (f) *involvement in the student's individualised planning process, including support at key transitions in the student's education*
- (g) *in-service training for others*
- (h) *liaison with, and education for parents/carers*
- (i) *professional training and development*

Itinerant staff include time in their schedule to provide follow-up to direct services, consultative and virtual services.

Therapists may not attend their base school every day if it is more effective to travel directly from/to their home address. However, time allocated to preparation of reports, programs etc, attend staff meetings and work in a collegial environment, is usually completed at the base location where access to resources is essential.

### **School Purchased services**

Therapists employed through School Purchased arrangements may perform any of the above activities as required by the school and will be able to provide services to any identified student. Individual students who are referred for direct therapy services must have written Parent/Carer Permission. OT and PT staff are responsible for ensuring that services are provided according to professional standards and within the relevant Code of Ethics.

## Support required from Base Location – Line management

Guidelines for the management of school based OT PT staff can be found by following this link:

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/corp/hr/hr/Pages/Management-and-Supervision-of-School-Based-Itinerant-Staff.aspx>

Some specific support needs for Line Managers to consider are as follows:

### Induction

- School based OT PT are required to complete all mandatory Induction modules (except Curriculum Risk Assessment) on an annual basis. If possible, therapists may be included in school based induction programs. Alternatively, they will complete the eLearn Induction programs and certificates are signed off by the Principal.
- The school is responsible for providing all relevant induction information including:
  - Evacuation Procedures and Lock down,
  - School wide policies and process,
  - Access to school resources eg photocopying, and
  - Other operational processes eg. reporting sick leave, reporting on daily itinerary through shared calendars or other processes according to school practices.
- New staff will be inducted to DET and the role of therapists in school by the relevant Senior Advisor.
- A state-wide Induction Program is offered for newly appointed OT PTs at the end of Term 1 each year. Professional Supervisors will liaise with school-based OT PT staff and line managers to ensure staff are able to attend this essential induction program. Line managers are asked to support their attendance by approving leave and any associated accommodation/travel costs if requested.

### Meetings between Line Manager and Therapy Teams

In order to ensure the day to day operations of the Therapy service are running smoothly, it is recommended that Line Manager meetings are arranged at least once each term. This meeting may include the BSM if budget or other operational issues need to be discussed. Issues to be considered for these meetings include:

- Current workload and service delivery
- Operational processes related to service delivery eg. purchase of equipment
- Regional and School based information sharing where this relates to understanding of DET policy and strategic direction, school improvement and needs of students with a disability.
- Opportunities to participate in school wide professional development or teamwork
- Monitoring of leave and plans for holiday
- Staff health and well-being

### Administration Resources

Therapists will require access to the following items in order to perform their duties effectively:

- Access to phone and data points/ Wi-Fi internet connection
- Access to photocopying and scanning of documents, colour required in some instances.
- Secure storage of Laptops, mobile devices when not in use.
- Secure storage area for base owned and region-owned equipment which is available for loan to NCR students.
- Keys to Office area and shared school facilities.

- Access to office areas in school vacation periods, as negotiated with Line Manager.
- Access to staffroom facilities including refrigerator, sink and food preparation area.

## Hours of Duty

The Line Manager and BSM are responsible for managing work hours and related leave arrangements for School based OTs and PT's. Therapists are employed under public service conditions with standard hours of 7.25. Therapists may be required to work during school holiday periods. Access to the therapy office should be negotiated with the Line Manager prior to commencement of the vacation period. School processes should be formalised to ensure work duties are undertaken in a safe environment.

Schools are encouraged to ensure there is a process for monitoring staff whereabouts eg. sign-in/out records, shared calendars in Outlook.

## Leave Entitlements

Leave arrangements that are ideally discussed with staff at the commencement of the new school year as follows:

- **ADO Agreement.** An Accumulated Day Off (ADO) arrangement will operate on the basis of a 12 month cycle, beginning on the first day of the pupil-free days in January and extending through to the day before the corresponding pupil-free day in the next year. The arrangement will be negotiated with all employees so that ADO is available to be used in the school vacations and summer vacation by negotiation. A minimum of 12 days is required to cover Easter, June and September holidays which assumes the staff member will work one of the two weeks in the holiday period.
  - Negative ADO balances may occur in exceptional circumstances as agreed between the Line Manager and the staff member.
  - A staff member may accrue a maximum of 12 days at any one time. Please refer to the Certified Agreement 4.1.2 for more detail.
  - An ADO calculator can be found here <https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/HumanResources/Forms/Documents/ado-calculator-2015.xls>
  - Staff should be provided with a copy of their signed agreement.
- **TOIL.** If the therapist is required to work in excess of 10 hours per day or outside the ordinary spread of hours, overtime can be accrued in the form of equivalent time off in lieu (TOIL). (4.3.2 Certified Agreement 2015)
  - In most circumstances employees should have a zero balance of ADO and TOIL hours at the beginning of each twelve month cycle. Where employees have or will have hours in surplus of those required for the twelve month cycle, then the following procedure will apply:
    - (i) By the end of term 3, the employee and the Principal shall meet to review the ADO agreement and discuss access to the surplus hours to develop a plan to manage the surplus hours prior to term 4 summer vacation.
    - (ii) Where such hours have been applied for and refused prior to the December vacation period, then such surplus hours shall be either paid out to the employee at ordinary time rates of pay (on a time for time basis) or carried over to the next twelve-month period. The decision to have a payout is solely at the discretion of the employee. Where surplus hours are carried over, such hours must be taken off within that period of twelve months.
  - TOIL may also be accrued if a staff member is approved to work on a day not on their current roster eg. to attend or travel to PD activities.
- **Annual leave** – Line managers and BSM will manage the Annual Leave entitlements for staff over the Summer Vacation. If leave is requested during school terms including LSL, Special Leave or Annual

Leave, the Senior Advisor should be consulted so that any interruption to school services can be minimised.

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/corp/hr/hr/Pages/Leave-Entitlements-for-Employees.aspx>

- **Roster Changes.**

- If a change of work days is required, the Line Manager/BSM is responsible for approving and submitting relevant Roster Forms.
- If there is a change to a permanent appointment, the Senior Advisor will liaise with the Line Manager and BSM to advise on the change and submit relevant Roster variation. Non-teaching HR team will usually confirm any changes with the Supervisor prior to forwarding to Payroll.
- Where the employee is on a temporary contract, the Senior Advisor will liaise with the Line Manager and BSM if the contract is to be extended.

**Timesheets** – All OT and PTs must complete a timesheet for each pay period. Therapists are responsible for following the preferred processes at each school location.

Please refer to the Certified Agreement for specific details:

[http://www.qirc.qld.gov.au/qirc/resources/pdf/certified\\_agreements/cert\\_agreements/2016/ca22\\_2016.pdf](http://www.qirc.qld.gov.au/qirc/resources/pdf/certified_agreements/cert_agreements/2016/ca22_2016.pdf)

## Recruitment

### DET- School Based OT PT

- **General HR Advice.** Line Managers and the Senior Advisors for OT and PT work in collaboration with the North Coast, North Lakes, School Support - Non-teaching team at North Lakes RO.
- **Recruitment and Selection.** The Senior Advisors assume responsibility for co-ordinating and managing the recruitment of new staff. The Line Manager is invited to be a Panel member and provides a highly valued contribution to the process. If the Line Manager or nominee is not available, the relevant Senior Advisor will arrange a suitable Selection Panel. The Senior Advisor is usually, but not necessarily, the Panel Chair and will manage the process through to completion. Once a decision is finalised, the required processes for the new appointee will be completed by the Senior Advisor including the submission of the Selection Report, DAF-Roster Form and new appointment documentation.
  - The Line manager/BSM will be provided with a copy of the Appointment documentation so that the staff member can sign the DAF once they commence and a record kept at the school.
  - The school will be responsible for completing all other commencement paperwork eg. personal details, Tax Declaration,
  - The school will be responsible for obtaining the new staff member's logon and email account.

## School purchased Therapy services

Some schools may elect to purchase additional therapy services to meet their particular needs through school based funding.

DET Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists employed directly by a school can provide services to students not covered by the DET Eligibility Criteria (refer to the Role and Scope).

Providing school purchased time by maximising an existing DET employee is a beneficial option for the region as staff are experienced in the provision of educationally relevant OT services. Where a DET employed therapist is also employed through a school purchase arrangement, the following considerations apply:

- The Senior Advisor will support the school purchasing the additional time by preparing and submitting:
  - Initial paperwork
  - Advising on Rosters / changes /extensions etc
- The base location of the therapist, in consultation with purchasing school, will manage any HR processes to ensure continuity of services and to ensure all information provided to HR and Payroll are inclusive of all incumbencies. This will include:
  - Timesheets – a copy is provided to both base school and purchasing school by the therapist.
  - Leave requests – a copy of any leave requests will be provided to both schools. If a therapist takes sick leave on a day allocated to school purchase time, they will advise the School Purchase school so sick leave can be recorded.
  - Where the base school does not agree to manage these responsibilities, the purchasing school will ensure the therapist submits a timesheet and prepares an ADO agreement for their purchased time where required.
- The Senior Advisor will provide professional support and supervision and the therapist will have full access to on-line resources, mentoring and other regional resources.
- The base location may provide access to any reasonable resources to the School Purchase school to support their service delivery. If this is considered excessive, then a cost recovery process may be initiated by the base school eg. if a large number of test forms were used in one year, a charge may be entailed. Consumables will otherwise be the responsibility of the school purchase school.

Where a therapist is only employed through a school purchase arrangement, the following considerations apply:

- The Senior Advisor will support the school purchasing the additional time by preparing and submitting:
  - Initial paperwork
  - Advising on Rosters / changes /extensions etc
- The purchasing school will manage any HR processes to ensure continuity of services and to ensure all information provided to HR and Payroll are correct. This will include:
  - Timesheets – a copy is retained by the school
  - Leave requests – the school will enter any leave requests eg. sick leave, recreation leave onto the Leave Schedule.
  - ADO agreements
- The Senior Advisor will provide professional support and supervision and the therapist will have full access to on-line resources, mentoring and other regional resources.
- The school must provide access to any reasonable resources to support the therapist's service delivery. A cost recovery process may be available to the school eg. if a number of test forms were required and could be provided by another DET OT base location, the school could be billed for the used items. Consumables will otherwise be the responsibility of the school purchase school.

## Records Management

### a) ICT.

School based OT and PT staff require access to the following:

- Access to computer (desk top, laptop) in a confidential work space eg. staff office.

- Therapist's records are considered "In confidence" documents and therefore must be stored safely and securely. Electronic Student Files and records must be stored on the school G:drive, in a folder with restricted access only for OT and PT staff. An example of this path is G:drive/Coedata/Common/Therapist/OTPT. Examples of content will include: Emails relating to student services, electronic referrals and consent forms, copies of reports from external providers, photos and videos, etc.
  - OneSchool - Therapists are entering information into OneSchool Sensitive Case Records and therefore require a OneSchool login. Please see link to the departmental One School guidelines on the NCR team site.  
<https://team.oneportal.det.qld.gov.au/sites/scrleaders/sserv/OT%20and%20PT%20Services/default.aspx>
- b) **Student Files.** OT and PT's must maintain their Student Records in compliance with DET policy and procedures. This will include:
- i. A hard copy file containing legal documents eg. Signed consent forms, copies of referrals, correspondence and progress notes. Files are usually created using:
    1. Manilla Folder
    2. Section Dividers
    3. Tubeclip file fasteners or similar
  - ii. All records are registered on TRIM and a Note entered into OneSchool that the file exists. Therapists must provide relevant details of all students seen to the regional records manager in their closest Regional Office so files can be registered and the TRIM number recorded on the front cover.
  - iii. Student files must be stored securely in locked cabinets/compactus.
  - iv. Specialist Files are stored at the base location until the student has completed their schooling or at the closest Regional Office if possible.
  - v. All files will be sent to Regional Office for archiving if the School Purchased OT service is ceased.
- b. Specific information about Information Management can be found on the Policy and Procedure Register <http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/corp/ict/management/Pages/Information-Management.aspx>

## Resourcing.

- a. Grants
  - i. School Based Itinerant Staff Operation Grant  
<http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/grants/state/core/itinerant-staff.html>  
Schools that provide a base location for itinerant staff receive a School Based Itinerant Staff Operational Grant to assist the school to meet operational costs of specialist staff including telephone, photocopying, postage, access to technology, administrative assistance, utilities and professional development and training. Items recommended to be purchase/costed under this grant include:
    - Utilities including electricity, internet and telecommunication.
    - Postage
    - Equipment: desk, chair, photocopiers, computers, printers, scanners and telephones.
 The semester entitlement is **\$432 per itinerant staff FTE of eligible staff**. Itinerant staff of 0.4FTE or less do not qualify for the operational grant. School purchased services are not eligible.
  - ii. Regional Allocated Specialist Support Services Grant  
<http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/grants/state/core/support-staff.html>  
This grant assists schools to provide for annual stock and requisites, equipment and materials for Specialist Support Staff. These funds are to support the provision of the service. Recommended items to be purchase/costed under this grant include:
    - Therapy Resources
    - Assessments



- Assistive devices and sensory tools
- IPADs/ iTunes cards
- Professional development: registration & travel costs
- Therapeutic therapy programs and software.

The grant is calculated **\$1430 X FTE per semester**. School purchased services are not eligible.

- b. Annual Operational Plan
  - ii. Each Therapy Team is encouraged to develop an Annual Operational Plan in order to identify allocation of expenditure from their RASSR grants so that a range of needs can be met. The plan should be discussed with the Principal/BSM and funds allocated to short term and/or long term expenditure eg. a team may need to carry over funds to a new year if a substantial cost is involved in purchasing new equipment or assessments.
  - iii. The Line manager/BSM is responsible for providing regular reports on the status of the budget to ensure all funds are expended effectively.
- c. Purchasing processes.
 

The line manager/BSM will approve any purchases and advise staff of the preferred processes for ordering equipment. A school may wish to nominate therapy staff to apply for a Corporate Card so that purchases can be completed by the team, in line with departmental purchasing policies. Alternatively, therapists will be responsible for following recommended school processes for obtaining quotes and placing orders.

## Administration support.

- a. The region recognises that Administrative support includes processing of timesheets/ leave forms, purchasing equipment/resources, professional development approvals/registration etc.
- b. Therapy teams conduct a range of administrative duties relating to service delivery. Schools may consider the option of providing a minimal number of admin hours per week to the therapy team based on identified requirements. Typical AO duties may included:
  - iv. Creating new hard copy Student Files and ordering stationary
  - v. Assisting in the administrative processing of new Requests for Service and preparing correspondence to the referring DET staff.
  - vi. Maintaining Student database
  - vii. General photocopying, resource development
  - viii. File audit and cull – completed annually. Therapists are required to retain student files at their base locations until they finish school and maintenance of up-to-date records is essential.
- c. The therapy team may also consider the option of using their RASSR grant to purchase specific administration support and this would be included in the AOP.

## Professional Development

- a. School based OT and PT engage in performance and development processes through the Developing Performance Framework (DPF). Professional supervisors are responsible for implementation of an annual Performance Development Plan for staff providing ongoing feedback, input and support. Therapists are encouraged to provide a copy of this plan to their line managers for reference and to support requests for professional development and learning activities.
- b. When considering attendance at a professional development event, OT and PT staff will refer to their DPP and seek support from their professional supervisor to attend.
- c. Line managers/BSM are responsible for approving attendance and completing any registration processes. Staff are encouraged to discuss the support requested including Registration, travel and/or accommodation expenses and what contribution they will make to these costs. Therapists are responsible for completing school based processes for application to attend PD.

## Travel and Kilometric Allowance

- a. Officers using their own cars for official purposes may claim a kilometric allowance. An Application for Authority to Claim Kilometric Allowance must be approved prior to travel. The Senior Advisors are responsible for approving this expenditure and all application forms are forwarded to the relevant supervisor for processing at the start of each year.

The claim form is found at:

<https://oneportal.deta.qld.gov.au/Services/Finance/ForSchools/Schoolaccountingmanual/Expenditure/Pages/KilometricAllowance.aspx>

- b. If staff are travelling long distances eg. to attend Regional Network meetings, they may be able to arrange the use of a DET vehicle by contacting their nearest Regional Office.

## Regional Support

### Allocation of OT PT services

- i. Allocation of OT PT services is managed by the Senior Advisors in consultation with Regional Manager – Student Services. School-based therapists are assigned schools at the beginning of each year and are responsible for managing the service provision for the students referred. In collaboration with other team members and relevant Supervisors, school allocations may be reviewed in response to changing demands, from a local area and/or regional perspective. Disruption to school services is kept to a minimum to enhance student outcomes and maintain collegial relationships.

### Regional networks and projects

- i. Senior Advisors meet each semester with school based teams to review caseloads and ensure quality of service is maintained and to monitor how teams are able to meet recommended timeframes for service delivery.
- ii. North Coast Region holds a whole of region Network Meeting in May and November to discuss service delivery issues, provide regional professional development opportunities and to ensure consistency of service across the region. These meetings are generally held at the IPL – Sippy Downs.
- iii. At times, OT and PT staff will be expected to contribute to State-wide projects and activities which are essential in strengthening best practice approaches and important for the ongoing application of contemporary approaches to services in an education setting. This will occur in combination with current workloads and responsibilities.
- iv. Each OT PT team will be required to manage a portion of our North Coast Region Equipment Loan pool. This requires particular items to be maintained on the school Asset Register or regional equipment records/spreadsheets. Staff are required to manage the storage, maintenance and transport of regional loans equipment in consultation with the school requesting the loan. Information about the Regional Equipment Loans service is available [here](#).