

Clinical Observation Tips

Student applicants are required to have a total of **20 observation hours** with a licensed OT or OTA practitioner divided equally between **2 different types of setting**. It is acceptable to complete both observations at one facility if it is a large facility where you can observe another OT or OTA practitioner in a different type of setting.

- The student applicant must contact a site that provides occupational therapy and request to complete observation with an OT or OTA practitioner. The site may have specific requirements that must be completed before observation can occur. (Note: you may complete observation hours at any facility that is willing to host you.)
- Expect that it may be one to two weeks before the observation time can be scheduled. Do not wait until the last minute to schedule observation hours.

Types of settings that provide occupational therapy may include:

Inpatient Hospital

- Hospital
- Rehabilitation Unit
- Sub-Acute Unit

Skilled Nursing Facility (Nursing Home)

Outpatient

- Outpatient Centers

Pediatrics

- Education Service Centers (Schools)
- Early Intervention Centers
- Hospital Pediatric Unit
- Outpatient Care

Other

- Home Health
- Psychiatric Outpatient Centers or Community Center
- Older Adult Community Centers or Day Programs
- Psychiatric Unit in Hospital

- Upon initial meeting for observation the student should inform and show the OT/OTA practitioner the observation form that must be mailed or faxed by the practitioner to the school. (See form for instructions).

Professional Behavior Guidelines

For The Student During Observation Hours

1. Remember you are making a first impression on a potential future employer.
 - Your behavior is being evaluated. Should you return to this site for a future job interview or clinical site your behavior during your observation hours may help or hinder you
 - ✓ BE ON TIME and PRESENT when scheduled
 - ✓ IF there is an emergency, and you must miss a scheduled visit then call before your scheduled time to cancel and reschedule
2. APPEARANCE guidelines:
 - Dress:
 - ✓ Nice, clean, and ironed dress pants (no shorts or capris)
 - ✓ Comfortable shirt (sweater, blouse, collared shirt) that is not tight or revealing (not high cut at belly and not low cut at chest)
 - ✓ Clean shoes that have toes and heels covered and no high heels
 - No perfumes or excessive jewelry (wedding band is appropriate)
 - Hair-clean and combed
3. According to National and State guidelines you are to observe ONLY, you are not permitted to have your hands-on during the treatment. Some facilities may allow you to help set-up or clean-up the treatment area
 - It is appropriate to ask what you can do to help
4. THIS is your chance to make sure you have chosen the correct career path for you
 - WATCH, LISTEN, and FEEL what your job will entail
 - MAKE SURE THIS is a good fit for you
 - DO NOT APPEAR BORED OR TIRED!
 - ✓ If you do, then you are communicating to potential employers that you are not good-fit for this job
 - USE body posture that communicates interest or engaged attention
 - ✓ Lean forward, actively listen
 - DISPLAY a positive attitude towards becoming a professional
 - ✓ SHOW an energetic, positive and motivated manner
 - ✓ REMEMBER you are to observe only so DO NOT interrupt the treatment
 - TAKE initiative to direct your own learning through observation and questions BUT CHOOSE an appropriate time to approach the clinician – do not interrupt treatment
 - ✓ BE sensitive and respond to others' feelings and behaviors by listening and by showing no bias or prejudice
 - ✓ BE attentive and actively engaged when others are speaking
5. PLEASE feel free to contact the Rhodes State College OTA Program Coordinator, at 419-995-8259, if you have any questions or concern, or would like clarification to these guidelines.