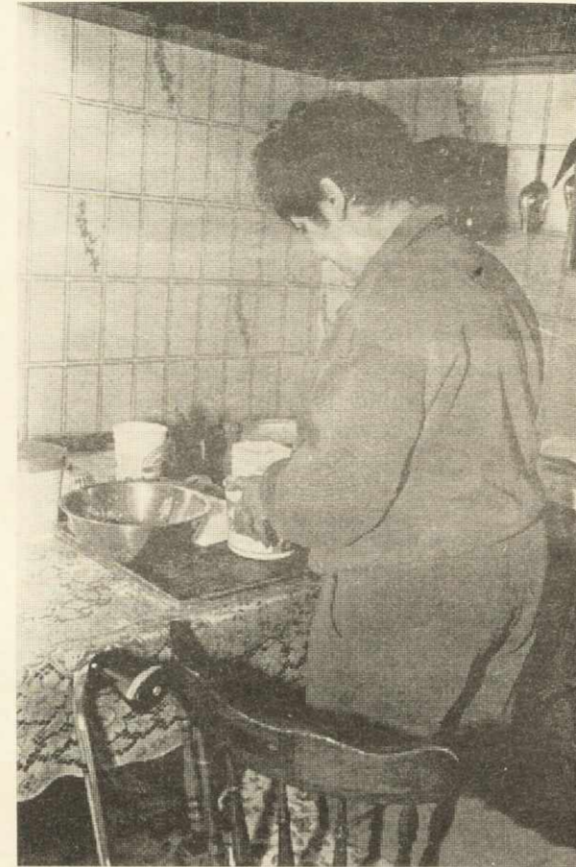


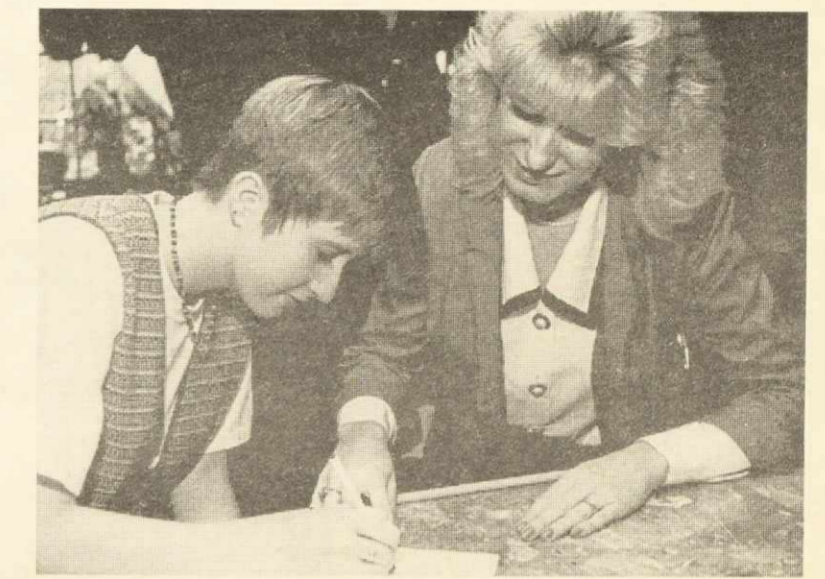
Occupational Therapy — Enabling individuals to maximize their quality of life



As depicted in this photograph, the first barrier often faced by individuals who have disabilities is in the home. Stairs, furniture, scatter rugs and so on can impede the person's ability to be mobile in this environment. An occupational therapist would visit the client's home and assess it for accessibility and safety. Oftentimes rearranging furniture, attaching rails to walls or adding visual cues greatly increase the individual's ability to be independent within the home.



Occupational therapists enable children with disabilities to become independent, well-adjusted adults. As illustrated in this photograph, the therapist is playing ball with a young child. Certain developmental disabilities may limit children in terms of grasping and releasing objects. Consequently, this will impact on their ability to engage in both physical and social occupations such as playing a ball game with friends. Through therapeutic occupations, as depicted above, occupational therapists can facilitate children's ability to play.



Occupational therapists can work with individuals experiencing mental health challenges. In this instance the therapist is assisting the individual with grocery shopping. Due to confusion or anxiety some individuals may have difficulty with menu planning, budgeting or completing the actual task of shopping. An occupational therapist can enable an individual to develop skills in order to successfully organize a shopping list, plan a budget, get transportation to and from a store and to complete the shopping.

Occupational Therapy Week: October 23-28, 1994

One role of occupational therapy is to enable people to be independent and productive in their work environment. Occupational therapists are trained to assess and offer recommendations regarding the workplace. This includes work station set up and proper body positioning techniques to avoid or reduce work related injuries. Occupational therapists also assist people who are faced with a physical challenge that interferes with their ability to perform their work role efficiently. Devices such as the splint depicted in the photograph, can be implemented to allow the individual to achieve maximal productivity in the work place.



The Dalhousie School of Occupational Therapy is the only school of occupational therapy serving Atlantic Canada. The occupational therapy program (B.Sc.O.T.) consists of a minimum of four years academic study combined with practical fieldwork experiences in various settings across Canada.

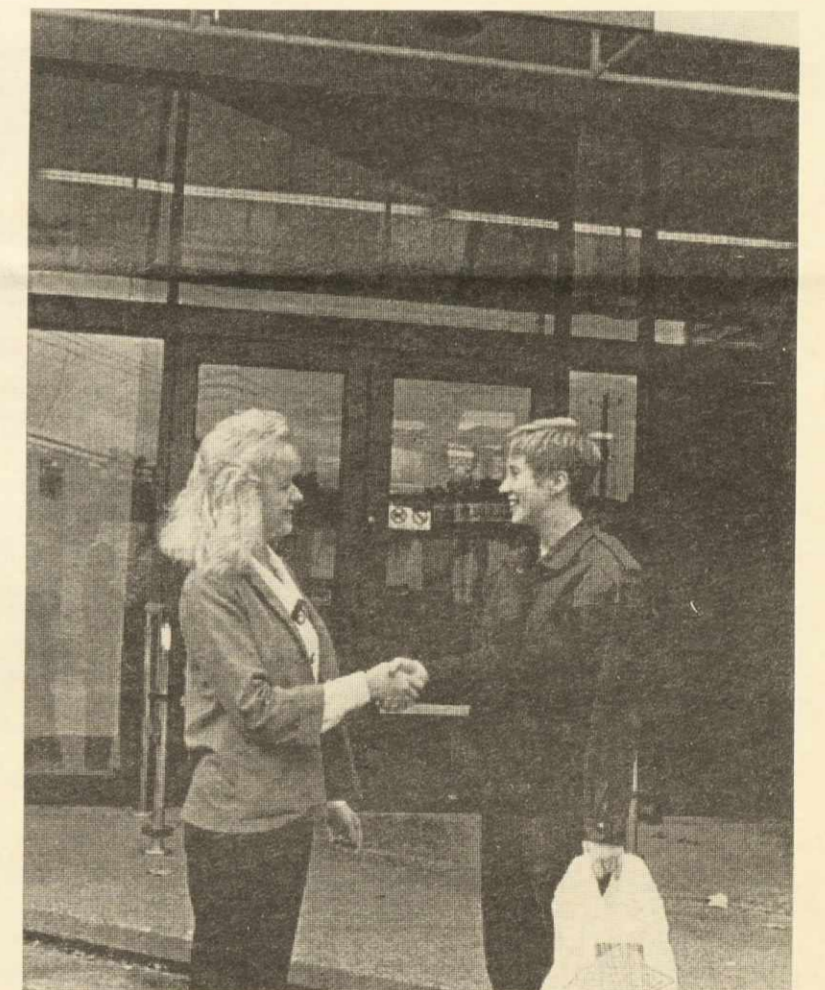
Occupational therapists work in many therapeutic settings such as hospitals, rehabilitation centres, in private industry, nursing homes, private practice, schools and mental health centres. Currently in Nova Scotia the majority of occupational therapists are employed in hospital environments but the profession is moving toward more community based services. By increasing awareness of the profession, it is hoped that individuals will be able to receive services where they are most needed.



There are many people in the community that have occupational needs. Occupations refer to everyday activities (not just "work"-related) carried out by individuals in the areas of self-care, productivity and leisure. Sometimes individuals have difficulties performing these occupations due to physical, developmental, social or emotional problems.

Occupational therapy is a health profession which addresses the needs of such persons. More specifically, occupational therapists work to enable individuals of all ages to become independent while performing occupations and to be interdependent within their environment.

Occupational therapists work in many therapeutic settings.



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