

Departmental Acknowledgement

**""You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you are going,
because you might not get there"
Yogi Berra**

Hi Everyone,

I was attending an event in the PK Subban Auditorium this week when I noticed on the monitor that it was Occupational Therapy month. I actually think every day should be a day we acknowledge the varied members of our healthcare team as "medicine is a team sport and there is no letter 'I' in team". So this week seems as good as any to acknowledge all the **occupational therapists at the MCH**.

Those who know me, know that for very personal reasons I have a longstanding soft spot for occupational therapy (OT) and occupational therapists (OTs). The 'occupational' in their nomenclature refers to the occupations of life: whether they be activities of daily living that assure we are autonomous, activities that relate to school or vocational performance, or activities related to function, leisure or recreation.

I view OTs as 'enablers'. In rehabilitation, they work to restore or (especially in pediatrics) optimize potential function. I also view OT as the health profession that first 'got' the concept of patient engagement and patient centered care. Long before these buzz words permeated our healthcare mindset, OTs were working with their patients by first establishing what was important to the patient and their families. Time, energy and the skills of the OT, always in partnership with the patient, is to be directed towards the patient's preferential goals and values. Progress and success is measured in the patient's terms, as is the continued refinement in the OTs' approach. "Normalization", whatever that means, is not the goal of intervention. The approach of OT encompasses both enhancing the activities and participation capacity of the patient AND modifying the environmental context wherever possible to ensure compensation through the removal of barriers. OTs have practically addressed on a daily basis what can be done to enable the fullest participation of those with impairments and disabilities in society. This has occurred coincidentally in time with a robust rights based approach to disability that has removed legal and policy barriers. One could not have occurred without the other and in my humble opinion, OT as a profession, has not received its due credit for this tectonic shift in society. With its patient-centred approach woven into the fabric of practice, OT was also the first health profession to truly think holistically about the individual and address the fundamentally difficult challenge of optimizing quality of life on the patient's terms.

If you can, please explicitly acknowledge and be thankful for the contributions of OT in your sector of clinical activity.

Have a great weekend and Happy Halloween!

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