

OTs are the go to gang at our ERH

THERE are many aspects of life we can take for granted. Such as washing and dressing, cooking a meal, walking down a hallway or driving a car. Or those activities that really make us who we are — our personal passions: sport, art, music, caring for our kids. But for some, these ‘simple’ activities can seem like insurmountable hurdles. And that’s where occupational therapists come in. This Occupational Therapy Week, Echuca Regional Health is reminding the community of all their OTs do. “Occupational therapy supports people of all abilities to engage in activities they find meaningful including leisure, self-care and productivity,” ERH OT manager Marie Wycisk said. “Here at ERH we have OTs who work across many settings including inpatient and rehabilitation wards, community services, and NDIS.” The primary goal of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in the occupations of everyday life. OT is a client-centred profession that involves ongoing assessments to understand what occupations are important to you, any current issues you may have in doing them, and understanding your goals. OTs work on enhancing clients’ personal life skills, adjusting the environment they do their occupations in and adjusting the occupation itself.

They are experts in the relationships between what people do and their health and well-being, and work with people to help make every day living easier. OTs assist people to manage ongoing symptoms and prevent complications by building their knowledge and skills, finding new ways of doing activities and changing the environment to suit their needs. They can also prescribe devices and therapy equipment to help you do the activities you want and need to do. ERH paediatric OT Leah Williams said it was vital to raise awareness around the work of OT. “OT is such a hard profession to explain. Because it has such a broad scope of practice, its definition is often quite ambiguous,” she said. “By highlighting the different roles within OT this week, we hope to increase awareness both within our community and within our organisation.” The ERH OT team can help with: To access ERH’s OT services in the community, a GP or other health professional referral is preferred. All referrals can be directed to The Hopwood Centre. For more information, call the OT department on 5485 5844.



THE OT A TEAM: Courtney McInnes, Lesley Hart, Chloe Juri, Ashlyn Beck, Kalinda Stanton (student), Marie Wycisk, Renee Johns, Leah Williams, Sallie Schroder and Chak Leung (pictured above) while paediatric OT Leah Williams runs Henry through a sensory exercise. Some children are extra sensitive to certain sensory input, while others need more input for the information to register appropriately in the brain. Leah can help to assess children and their families to understand their sensory differences, and either give them compensation strategies or help gently expose and teach them to be more tolerant within their environments.



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