

# Occupational Therapy

## A guide for lower limb amputees



ST VINCENT'S  
HOSPITAL  
MELBOURNE

## **Occupational Therapists (OT) can help you return to your daily activities.**

Your OT can help with:

- adjusting to your amputation so that you can actively participate in day-to-day life
- sourcing equipment and wheelchairs
- assessing your home and work environments
- returning to community and leisure activities.

Some of this will be completed while you are in rehabilitation while others are more appropriate once you are home.

Please speak to your OT if you have any questions.

**Your Occupational Therapist is:**

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**Contact details:**

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# Wheelchairs

A wheelchair is recommended following your amputation. Your Occupational Therapist will work with you to choose the right wheelchair for you. You will be able to try different wheelchairs.

You may also be able to receive equipment funding through the State Wide Equipment Program (SWEP). Your Occupational Therapist will assist you with this process.

There are often long wait lists for new equipment. You may need to hire a wheelchair to use while you wait. The cost of this hire will be your responsibility.

Second hand equipment can sometimes be provided to avoid the long waitlist.

## **SWEP enquiries**

Tel: 1300 747 937

[www.swep.bhs.org.au](http://www.swep.bhs.org.au)

Please contact SWEP directly if you have any questions about equipment or waiting times.

## **RACV Wheelchair Assist**

If your wheelchair or scooter breaks down, RACV can assist with repairs. If it cannot be repaired, they can help you and your wheelchair get home safely.

Tel: 13 11 11

[www.racv.com.au](http://www.racv.com.au)

# Home modifications

Home modifications may be required before you return home.

A home assessment can be completed before you leave hospital if needed. All recommendations will be discussed with you. Common modifications include rails and ramps.

If there are ongoing needs once you leave hospital, you will be referred to your local community rehabilitation or health centre.

It is important to think about how you will manage at home if you cannot wear your prosthesis.

SWEP funding is also available for home modifications; however waiting lists do apply.

**Please note:** SWEP and major modifications take a long time to be completed. They may not be done before you leave hospital. If needed you will be referred on to a community OT to finish the process.

## Transport

### Driving

You will need medical clearance before returning to drive.

Vic Roads are responsible for making sure people are safe to drive. They may need you to complete an OT Driving Assessment.

The OT Driving Assessment can include both a written and practical driving test.

Your OT Driving Assessor will make recommendations if changes are needed to your car to allow you to drive safely.

If your driving has not been assessed as safe and you drive and are involved in an accident your insurance company will not cover you.

### Parking

You may be able to get a disabled parking permit if walking a long distance is hard for you.

Application forms can be found at your local council. Applications need to be completed by a doctor. Permits are recognised elsewhere in Australia, however parking conditions may differ between States and Territories and should be checked prior to travelling.

If you have any questions, please speak to your Social Worker.

### **VicRoads information age**

[www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/road-rules/parking-and-clearways/disability-parking](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/road-rules/parking-and-clearways/disability-parking)

## Travelling by taxi

Wheelchair accessible taxis are available so you can travel in your wheelchair.

Taxi Concession Cards are available. See website below for further information.

[www.taxi.vic.gov.au/passengers/mptp](http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/passengers/mptp)

If you have any questions, please speak to your Social Worker.

## Public transport

To find further information about accessible public transport in Victoria visit website below:

[ptv.vic.gov.au/getting-around/accessible-transport/](http://ptv.vic.gov.au/getting-around/accessible-transport/)

For further information on public transport and other travelling options please visit the website below.

[www.limbs4life.org.au/getting-your-life-back.html](http://www.limbs4life.org.au/getting-your-life-back.html)

## Returning to work

You may wish to return to work after leaving hospital.

You may or may not be able to undertake the same role you did prior to your amputation.

Some companies offer a return to work program. The government also has programs to help you return to work.

An OT can make recommendations to adapt your workplace/role to enable you to fulfil your work requirements.

For further information on Government Services available please see:

### **JobAccess – Employment Services**

[www.jobaccess.gov.au](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au)

# Community resources

## **The Independent Living Centre**

Large range of disability equipment

Address: 705 Princes Hwy

Brooklyn Vic, 3012

Tel: 03 9362 6111 or 1300 885 886

(Vic only)

[ilcaustralia.org.au/contact\\_us/victoria](http://ilcaustralia.org.au/contact_us/victoria)

## **Carers Support Australia**

[carersaustralia.com.au](http://carersaustralia.com.au)

## **Companion card**

[www.companioncard.org.au](http://www.companioncard.org.au)

## **National Public Toilet Map**

[www.toiletmap.gov.au](http://www.toiletmap.gov.au)

## **Limbs for Life**

[www.limbs4life.org.au](http://www.limbs4life.org.au)

## **Sport and Recreation**

[www.dsr.org.au](http://www.dsr.org.au)

## **State Wide Equipment Program**

1300 747 937

[www.swep.bhs.org.au](http://www.swep.bhs.org.au)

## **Mobility Centre at Federation Square**

1 Carson Place, Melbourne Victoria

Tel: 9650 6499

## **Travellers Aid Assistance (Melbourne)**

(Mobility equipment available for hire)

Tel: 9654 2600

[www.travellersaid.org.au](http://www.travellersaid.org.au)

## **Limbs for Life – Peer Support**

[www.limbs4life.org.au/peer-support.html?option=peer](http://www.limbs4life.org.au/peer-support.html?option=peer)

# Checklist before discharge

- Home visit completed with OT
- Home modification recommendations discussed with OT
  - Referral made to council to complete
  - Will be completed by private contractor
  - Will be followed up by community OT
- Discussion regarding appropriate equipment required for discharge (Please see discharge handout provided by OT for full details)
  - Purchased equipment:
  - Hired equipment:
  - SWEP application completed for:
- Discussion regarding appropriate wheelchair/scooter if required
  - I do not need a wheelchair
  - Seating and pressure care assessment completed
  - Appropriate wheelchair and cushion selected
  - SWEP application to be completed by inpatient OT
  - SWEP application to be completed by community OT
  - Private purchase
  - Other
- Community follow-up post-discharge is with:
  - Rehabilitation in the home:
  - Community Rehabilitation Centre:
  - Post-acute care referral/gap fill:
  - Other:
- I will require the following services at home
  - Personal care
  - Home care assistance
  - Meals on wheels

