# Definition and Philosophical Base of Occupational and Physical Therapy

## Purpose

This document outlines the policy that dictates and defines the scope of practice for Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy at the utmb Health System.

## Audience

The information in this document is intended for all members of the Rehabilitation Services staff.

## Policy

- It is the policy of the Department of Rehabilitation Services to provide its therapy staff with a working definition and philosophical base to guide their application of therapeutic interventions.

## Definition

- ***Occupational Therapy*** is the art and science of directing participation in selected tasks to restore, reinforce, and enhance performance.

- ***Physical Therapy*** is a dynamic profession with an established theoretical base and widespread clinical applications in the preservation, development, and restoration of optimal physical function.

## Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy

- Occupational therapy is based on the belief that purposeful activity (occupation), including its interpersonal and environmental components, may be used to prevent and mediate dysfunction, and to elicit maximum adaptation. Activity as used by the occupational therapy personnel includes both an intrinsic and a therapeutic purpose.

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# Definition and Philosophical Base of Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy (cont.)

**Philosophical Base of Physical Therapy**

- The primary objective of physical therapy is to promote optimal human health, wellness and function. Physical therapists actively engage in state of the art patient care, education and research to further this goal. The profession of Physical Therapy is dedicated to providing quality, efficient care for all individuals who seek our services. Physical therapists provide care to people at all stages of disability and in all settings. Emphasis is placed on providing intervention designed to restore or create functional independence in the medical setting, at home, in the community, at work or in an educational setting. The patient's family and/or friends are included in all phases of education in order to better provide the patient with a safe and functional environment.

**Reference**


Willard and Spackman. Occupational Therapy, p.27. [Publisher]: 1983.


(The above reflects the opinions of the American Physical Therapy Association as well as those of this Division.)