Job Roles and Responsibilities in Canada

Rehabilitation Assistants
Acknowledgments

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Disclaimer

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Please contact Winnipeg Technical College at 989-6500 or www.wtc.mb.ca if you have any questions about the contents of this document.
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Introduction
Rehabilitation Assistants work in a variety of settings in Manitoba. Knowledge and understanding of roles and responsibilities of a rehabilitation assistant is necessary when thinking about enrolling in technical training.

The information provided in this booklet will assist you in your studies and will increase your awareness of the roles and responsibilities of rehabilitation assistant. A detailed description of job duties, employment requirements, skills, education and training are all included in this package.

Description
Rehabilitation Assistants provide services and assistance to health care professionals and other health care staff. They are employed in hospitals, clinics, offices of health care professionals and personal care homes. They are classified under the National Occupation Classification (NOC) # 3414.

The title “Rehabilitation Assistant” refers to a paraprofessional who works as a member of the health care team under the supervision of and with occupational therapists (OTs), physiotherapists (PTs) and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and audiologists.

The Rehabilitation Assistant works with clients in a variety of settings providing hands-on rehabilitation, such as exercise, range of motion, splinting, activities of daily living, adjusting hearing aids or performing hearing screening.

Work Environment
The work of a Rehabilitation Assistant can be physically demanding as much of their time is spent standing, walking, bending and assisting clients. They may lift clients or equipment. Accuracy is critical as errors can have serious consequences for the patients or clients.

Where they find work
Rehabilitation Assistants find work in hospitals, rehabilitation centres and physiotherapy clinics.
Language Requirements
Rehabilitative Assistants should be able to communicate clearly in English to do their job well. It is very important that you have good oral communication skills so you can communicate well with employers, your co-workers and your clients effectively. 

*It is important to note that language requirements and test requirements vary in different colleges. Contact the colleges to see what is required.*

Recommended Canadian Language Benchmark Levels for Rehabilitative Assistants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommended TOEFL scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper Based</th>
<th>Computer Based</th>
<th>Internet Based</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>550</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For those individuals where English is an Additional Language (EAL), it is recommended that you take a Canadian Language Benchmark Placement Test to determine your level of English, and to see which English classes are available to you. Contact the Winnipeg English Language Assessment and Referral Centre for an appointment:

Winnipeg English Language Assessment and Referral Centre
4th Floor - 275 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2B3
Phone: 204-943-5387

1This occupation/training has not been formally benchmarked

2These are the current TOEFL entrance requirements at some colleges.
Skills
Rehabilitation assistants need the following skills and abilities:
• An interest in biological science, anatomy and health care.
• An interest in staying up-to-date with new products and techniques in rehabilitation.
• An ability to communicate effectively in English.
• An ability to have a therapeutic relationship with patients.
• An ability to work with others on a team.
• An ability to remain calm during emergencies.
• An ability to follow instructions given by occupational therapists (OTs), physiotherapists (PTs) and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and audiologists.
• An ability to use hand-operated or power equipment.
• An ability to organize work.
• Good observation skills.
• Physical strength (often assisting and lifting patients).

Do you have many of these skills?

Main Duties
Rehabilitation Assistants perform some or all of the following duties:
• Assists assigned clients with established rehabilitative activities such as mobility and strengthening exercises, walking programs and activities of daily living as directed.
• Provide training which helps clients to develop, maintain or restore physical, psychosocial, cognitive and/or communication skills according to the plan.
• Plan training activities, delivered individually or in groups, may include ambulation; exercises at home or the gym; activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing and eating; speaking, reading or writing practice; home management such as meal planning and preparation; vocational support such as a graduated return to work program; or leisure activities.
• Demonstrates to clients the use of prescribed treatments / adaptive devices such as braces, wheelchairs and walkers and modified eating utensils and personal car items as directed.
• Assists clients in dressing and toilet needs as required in preparation for and following rehabilitative treatment; assists with transfers and positioning as directed / required.
• Transports clients to and from rehabilitative treatment areas utilizing mechanical aids such as wheelchairs and stretchers.
• Reports observations of clients’ behaviour and progress to Therapist / Registered Nurse; communicates concerns and / or changes to resident condition.
• Sets up and organizes furnishings and equipment for related activities as directed; cleans and maintains equipment and reports malfunctioning equipment to appropriate staff.
• Maintains an inventory of equipment, devices and materials.
• May be involved in administrative and program support. This includes working with the client and the environment such as scheduling and greeting patients.

Do you think you would enjoy doing the work described above?

Importance of Safety in Canada
Safety in the workplace is very important in Canada. If your employer finds out that you are not listening to the safety rules, you may be fired immediately.

The company is responsible for:
• Training employees how to work safely.
• Telling employees about things that are dangerous in the workplace.
• Giving employees safety equipment and making sure they wear it.

The employee is responsible for:
• Following the company’s safety rules (sometimes called “policies”).
• Wearing safety equipment.
• Telling the supervisor if they see something dangerous.
• Not doing anything that they think is unsafe.

It is your responsibility to ask questions when you don’t understand.

For more information: www.safemanitoba.com
Terms & Conditions
Rehabilitation assistants usually work regular business hours Monday through Friday. They may work some evenings or weekends if the clinic where they work is open. There is no self-employment in this occupation but slightly more than one quarter of those employed (28%) work part time.

Earnings
In Manitoba
$26,000 per annum - starting
$31,300 per annum - average
$37,000 per annum - high

Education / Training
• On-the-job-training.

College programs in Manitoba:
• Winnipeg Technical College offers a 10 month Rehabilitation Assistant program.

Employment Requirements
• Completion of secondary school is usually required.
• Completion of a Rehabilitative Assistant program.
• Most employers require a current First Aid/CPR certificate.

Career Paths
The majority of Rehabilitation Assistants are employed in acute care and rehab hospitals. Opportunities also exist in extended care, private practice and community health.

Regardless of whether you are interested in working with newborns in the infant hearing/screening, or with children/youth in paediatrics, or with adult or geriatric clients; employment opportunities are readily available at all population levels. Work may also be available on a casual, part-time basis depending on your areas of interest.

3 These earnings reflect those of 2008, retrieved from www.mb.jobfutures.org
Employment Opportunities
Employment prospects for Rehabilitation Assistants are expected to be good in the period 2008 - 2012. Employment in Manitoba in the 2008-2012 period is estimated at 1,810. The occupation has experienced above average growth as a result of rising incomes, and the health needs of an aging population. This trend is expected to continue. The prospects for this group are only partially influenced by public funding, and are closely tied to the demand for the services of the healthcare professionals they support. Advances in technology and medical research are generating more options for treatment, and making them more accessible and affordable.

Professional Associations and Unions
• College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba, 7 - 120 Maryland Street, Winnipeg, MB, R3G 1L1, http://www.cotm.ca/
• Manitoba Society of Occupational Therapists, 120 Maryland Street, Winnipeg, MB, R3G 1L1, http://www.msot.mb.ca

References

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