

OASIS Alert

Reader Question: Can You Call On OT To Help With Wounds

Question: Is daily wound care provided by an occupational therapist a covered service?

Answer: This is one of those questions where the answer is "it depends," says OT and consultant **Karen Vance** with **BKD** in Springfield, MO. There are many therapists - both OTs and physical therapists - capable and willing to do wound care. One consideration is whether there are specific statutes in your state addressing wound care under scope of practice for OTs, she says. Another is whether the therapists in your agency are competent in wound care, and whether their competency is documented, she advises.

An equally important issue is why you want OTs to do wound care. If you're adding it to the therapy plan of care to increase the number of therapy visits, you can expect problems, Vance warns. On the other hand, if your OTs have wound care skills, using them may increase agency efficiency and decrease the number of skilled nursing visits for wound care. It could also be appropriate if the documented competency of the OT shows she is best suited to provide the care for the particular wound in question, Vance suggests.

Editor's Note: See story in a previous article for suggestions on therapy documentation.