

Healthcare Professional Roles



Document compiled by the Program for Interprofessional Practice, Education and Research (PIPER) for use in various Interprofessional offerings. Last Reviewed January 2019.

CHILD LIFE AND PEDIATRIC PSYCHOSOCIAL CARE

Professional Association:	The Association of Child Life Professionals www.childlife.org
Protected Title:	Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS)
Admission Criteria:	Requirements for McMaster University http://childlife.mcmaster.ca/
Role Description:	<p>Child life specialists focus on the psychosocial and developmental needs of children, collaborating with families and other health care providers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare and educate children about medical procedures or treatment to reduce fear and anxiety• Plan and rehearse coping strategies for medical events and procedures• Provide support and facilitate coping strategies during procedures to help enhance cooperation with the health care team• Provide nonpharmacological pain intervention strategies• Offer opportunities for play and expressive activities, to encourage normal development, enhance understanding about illness and hospitalization, decrease anxiety and encourage a sense of fun in spite of challenging circumstances• Coordinate special events, holiday celebrations, entertainment and activities• Consider the needs of siblings or other children who may also be affected by a child's illness or trauma• Provide legacy building and bereavement support

Dietitians

Registered Dietitians (RDs) in Ontario are trained food and nutrition experts. They are recognized experts in translating scientific, medical and nutrition information into practical healthy meal plans and helping individuals, their families and communities to access nutrition for health.

Dietitians work in a variety of settings in Ontario

- Hospitals
- Community health centres
- Family health teams
- Home care, hospitals
- Long-term care homes
- Diabetes education centres
- Public health departments
- Sports and recreation facilities
- Food industry
- Academic and research settings
- Private practice

Protected Title: The letters "RD" or the title "Registered Dietitian" means that the health professional is registered with the College of Dietitians of Ontario. Only individuals registered with the College of Dietitians of Ontario can use the titles dietitian, Registered Dietitian, a variation or abbreviation or an equivalent in another language.

What to expect for individual level nutrition interventions

- An initial consultation may run from 45 minutes to an hour. The dietitian will ask detailed questions about your current diet, exercise habits, general health and lifestyle. These questions enable the dietitian to tailor a nutrition care plan to your specific needs and health goals.
- If you have a specific medical problem and have been referred to a dietitian by your doctor, the dietitian will work in close consultation with your doctor and may review blood and other test results to devise a suitable diet. You may be given written materials to take home.
- Follow-up appointments allow you to keep track of your progress and fine-tune your nutrition care plan with support and expertise from the Dietitian. The dietitian's ultimate aim is to provide you with the tools that will keep you healthy and so that you can choose the best food on your own.

For more information, contact: College of Dietitians of Ontario – <http://www.collegeofdietitians.org/home.aspx>

Midwifery

Professional

Association:

Association of Ontario Midwives www.ontariomidwives.ca
Canadian Association of Midwives <http://www.canadianmidwives.org/>

College:

College of Midwives of Ontario www.cmo.on.ca

Protected Title:

Registered Midwife (RM)

Admission Criteria:

Requirements for McMaster University
<https://midwifery.mcmaster.ca/education/prospective-students/admissions/admission-requirements>

Role Description:

The practice of midwifery is the assessment and monitoring of pregnant people during pregnancy, labour and the post-partum period and of their newborn babies, the provisions of care during normal pregnancy, labour and post-partum period and the conducting of spontaneous normal vaginal deliveries (Midwifery Act, 1991).

The midwife is recognised as a responsible and accountable professional who works in partnership with the childbearing parent to give the necessary support, care and advice during pregnancy, labour and the postpartum period, to conduct births on the midwife's own responsibility and to provide care for the newborn and the infant. This care includes preventative measures, the promotion of normal birth, the detection of complications in mother and child, the accessing of medical care or other appropriate assistance and the carrying out of emergency measures.

The midwife has an important task in health counselling and education, not only for the pregnant person, but also within the family and the community. This work should involve antenatal education and preparation for parenthood and may extend to sexual or reproductive health and child care. A midwife may practise in any setting including the home, community, hospitals, clinics or health units. (International Definition of Midwife, International Confederation of Midwives 2011)

Nursing

Professional Association:	Canadian Nurses Association https://www.cna-aiic.ca/en
College:	College of Nurses of Ontario http://www.cno.org/
Protected Titles:	Registered Nurse (RN); Registered Nurse Extended Class (RN-EC)
Admission Criteria:	Requirements for McMaster University https://nursing.mcmaster.ca/
Role Description:	The practice of nursing is the promotion of health, and the assessment, treatment and evaluation of health conditions by supportive, preventive, therapeutic, palliative and rehabilitative means in order to attain or maintain optimal function. The goal of nursing professional practice is to obtain the best possible outcomes for clients/families/communities and populations. Professional nurses can practice as general or specialized clinicians, nurse educators or researchers to transform lives through evidence informed innovations.

Occupational Therapy

Professional Association:	Canadian Association of Occupational Therapist http://www.caot.ca/
College:	College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario www.coto.org
Protected Title(s):	Occupational Therapist O.T. Reg.(Ont.)
Admission Criteria:	Requirements for McMaster University https://healthsci.mcmaster.ca/srs-ot/education/future-students/admissions
Entry to Practice:	Must complete a Masters degree in Occupational Therapy from an accredited occupational therapy program. All graduating occupational therapists must pass a national exam to enter professional practice.
Role Description:	Occupational therapists work collaboratively with people of all ages to enable them to participate in the occupations that give meaning and purpose to their lives. Occupations are everything that people do to look after themselves, to enjoy life and to contribute to the social and economic fabric of their communities.

Physician Assistant

Professional Association:	Canadian Association of Physician Assistants http://capa-acam.ca/
College:	None
Protected Title(s):	Physician Assistant (PA)
Admission Criteria:	Requirements for McMaster University http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/physicianassistant/prospective_students.html
Entry to Practice:	Must complete a 24 month accredited Physician Assistant Education Program. All graduating PAs must complete pass a national certification exam to enter professional practice as Canadian Certified Physician Assistants.
Role Description:	<p>PAs are trained as generalists and have a broad scope of practice as determined by their supervising physician. PAs function as physician extenders, and can be delegated tasks under the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) policy. The profession is currently unregulated in the Province of Ontario, although now regulated in other Provinces.</p> <p>The physician assistant (PA) work collaboratively with patient care teams, both hospital or community based, and function as physician extenders. Scope of practice includes conducting patient interviews, medical histories, physical examinations; performing diagnostic or therapeutic tests and interventions; developing and implementing management plans; and counseling patients on preventive health care. In many settings, PAs can write prescriptions and medical orders as outlined in medical directives and agreements with community or hospital pharmacies.</p>

Physician

**Professional
Association:**

Canadian Medical Association <http://www.cma.ca/>

College:

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario www.cpso.on.ca

Protected Title:

Medical Doctor (MD)

Admission Criteria:

Requirements for McMaster University
<https://mdprogram.mcmaster.ca/md-program-admissions>

Role Description:

The practice of medicine is the assessment of the physical or mental condition of an individual or group of individuals at any stage of the biological life cycle; the prevention and treatment of physical and mental disease, disorder and condition; and the promotion of good health.

Physiotherapy

Professional Association:	Canadian Physiotherapy Association https://physiotherapy.ca/
College:	College of Physiotherapists of Ontario https://www.collegept.org/
Protected Title(s):	Physiotherapist, Physical Therapist (PT)
Admission Criteria:	Requirements for McMaster University https://healthsci.mcmaster.ca/srs-pt/education/future-students/admission
Entry to Practice:	Physiotherapists must complete a Masters degree in Physiotherapy from an accredited physiotherapy program. All graduating physiotherapists must pass a national exam to enter professional practice. Physiotherapists are committed to life-long learning and skill development through continuing education programming post-graduation.
Role Description:	Physiotherapists are primary health care practitioners who consult and collaborate with clients and others to provide quality client-centred services. Physiotherapists contribute to keeping people productive throughout their lives by maximizing function and improving quality of life. Through evidence-informed practice, physiotherapists prevent, assess, and treat the impact that injury, pain, disease and/or disorders have on clients' movement, function and health status along the lifespan. Physiotherapists practice both independently and as part of inter-professional teams along the health system continuum from primary to tertiary care.

Social Work

Professional Association:

Ontario Association of Social Workers
www.oasw.org

College:

Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers
www.ocswssw.org

Protected Title(s):

Social Worker

Admission Criteria:

Requirements for McMaster University School of Social Work, Full and Part time
<https://socialwork.mcmaster.ca/future-students>

Entry to Practice:

BSW degree

Role Description:

Work with individuals, families or communities, addressing personal and social problems that occur at individual, family, or community levels. A core component in social work is critical thinking and the ability to recognize and address connections between the personal and political; particularly the ways power imbalances and societal inequalities cause or compound personal troubles.

Speech-Language Pathologists

Professional Association:	Ontario Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists https://www.osla.on.ca/default.aspx?lang=1&seo=home
College:	College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario www.caslpo.com
Protected Titles:	Speech-Language Pathologist Speech Therapist
Admission Criteria:	Requirements for McMaster University: https://healthsci.mcmaster.ca/srs-slp/education/future-students/admission
Entry to Practice:	Entry to practice requirements vary somewhat province-to-province, but all provinces require a Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology. Entry to practice requirements for Ontario:
Role Description:	Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) help people with communication and swallowing difficulties. SLPs assess, treat, and advocate for the prevention of communication and swallowing disorders. SLPs work in hospitals, schools, preschool programs, day programs, home-care programs, specialized treatment centres, and private practices. SLPs work with people of all ages who have a variety of diagnoses, including pronunciation difficulties, hoarse voices, stuttering, learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, autism, cleft lip and palate, strokes, brain injuries, dementia, Parkinson's disease, and hearing impairment. For more information: