

## HOME MODIFICATIONS



A home assessment by an occupational therapist is necessary to decide what changes are needed to your home to make *activities of daily living* easier to manage and thus improve your quality of life. “*Activities of daily living*” is a term used to describe the functional status of a person and how they cope with mobility, dressing, feeding, personal hygiene and grooming, and independent living.

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

An occupational therapist assesses your immediate and long term needs with regard to your ability to function independently and perform daily tasks in your living and working environments. Occupational therapists visit patients’ homes and work places to assess their environment and help people modify their living space to better suit their needs. Occupational therapists can also help patients select appropriate equipment and appliances, including wheelchairs, stair-lift, bathroom devices etc., to improve their independence.

A community occupational therapist (public health occupational therapist) may be arranged through your local health authority. Ask your GP for a referral. It may take some time to arrange a home assessment by a community occupational therapist. Alternatively, the services of an occupational therapist in private practice can be engaged, at your own expense. A list of registered occupational therapists in private practice is available from their professional organisation. *The Directory of Occupational Therapists in Private Practice* can be viewed on the organisation’s website (see below). A home assessment in 2006 cost approximately 180 Euro.

Association of Occupational Therapists. 29 Gardiner Place, Dublin 1.

Tel: (01) 878 0247

Website: [www.aoti.ie](http://www.aoti.ie)

### Tips !

- ✓ Ask your GP for a personal recommendation if engaging the service of an Occupational Therapist in private practice.
- ✓ Make several photocopies of your Occupational Therapist’s report as this report is needed to apply for the Disabled Persons Grant and it must be provided to the contractors carrying out your home modifications.

Once your home modification work has been completed, your local health authority should be informed and an inspection of the home modifications will be carried out. Following the inspection, your local health authority will issue you with a cheque for the amount of the Disabled Persons Grant awarded. It may take some time for the process to be completed. The applicant must pay the balance of monies due to the contractor(s).

### **Tips !**

- ✓ When contacting your local health authority, always ask for the employee's name and their direct dial telephone number. This will make it easier for you if you need to contact them again for advice or information.
- ✓ Keep a photocopy of your completed application form, all correspondence, and the quotations received from the contractors.