

Working arrangements and transparency



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Williams Occupational Therapy (WILLIAMS OT) has a working relationship with service providers/suppliers for vehicle modifications and installation of products to vehicles. This policy is designed to outline these relationships so clients and referrers can be assured that Williams OT meet the Occupational Therapy Code of Conduct requirements and that we act in a professional manner.

At Williams OT we understand that patients or clients rely on the independence and trustworthiness of our practitioners for any advice or treatment offered. Williams OT accepts that a conflict of interest in practice arises when a practitioner, entrusted with acting in the interests of a patient or client, also have financial relationships with third parties which may affect their care of the patient or client.

Williams OT, as a purchaser of services, has set up working relationships with preferred suppliers. These relationships have been made with careful consideration, appropriate disclosure and accountability.

Williams OT, as a purchaser, has signed contracts with suppliers that outline relationships that meet the Occupational Therapy Code of Conduct as outlined below. Williams OT is transparent with its relationships with suppliers. THE SUPPLIER and Williams OT (THE PURCHASER) have a signed working agreement that encapsulates the following work Structure:

- a. THE SUPPLIER will be requested to supply a free no obligation quote to complete a specified job/work order for THE PURCHASER. The Quote will be produced on to a Williams Occupational Therapy quote letterhead outlining that the service will be delivered by THE SUPPLIER. In the supply of a quote, THE PURCHASER is not to be influenced by THE SUPPLIER to prescribe any specific products or services over another. THE PURCHASER will request THE SUPPLIER for a quote for services and products based on the need of the client. THE PURCHASER will not accept any inducement, gift or hospitality from THE SUPPLIER, not ask for or accept fees for meeting sales representatives, not offer or provide inducements and not allow any financial or commercial interest to adversely affect the way in which patients or clients are treated. THE SUPPLIER may be approached to provide an opinion to best meet the client's needs. The SUPPLIER will not provide an opinion for products and services influenced by third-party inducements and will provide opinions for products and services based on the need of the client
- b. If THE SUPPLIER cannot provide the service or product to best meet the need of the client, THE PURCHASER can and will seek an independent quote for a third party for supply of the recommended product/service.

- c. THE PURCHASER will secure funds to pay for the outlined costs associated with the quote.
- d. When funds have been approved by the funding body, a job/work order will be provided to THE SUPPLIER by THE PURCHASER outlining the client contacts and a relevant quote number.
- e. THE SUPPLIER will liaise directly with the client and arrange with the client the supply of goods as outlined in the quote and job/work order.
- f. At the completion of the job/work order, THE SUPPLIER will provide THE PURCHASER with an Australian tax invoice for a percentage of the total agreed to in the quote as outlined in the signed contract.
- g. THE PURCHASER will seek payment from the funder for the full cost of the quote.

Williams OT accept that when the above interests compromise, or might reasonably be perceived by an independent observer to compromise the practitioner's primary duty to the patient or client, practitioners must recognise and resolve this conflict in the best interests of the patient or client.

Williams OT meets the Occupational Therapy Code of Conduct in by:

- a. recognising potential conflicts of interest that may arise in relation to initiating or continuing a professional relationship with a patient or client
- b. acting in the best interests of patients or clients when making referrals and when providing or arranging treatment or care
- c. informing patients or clients when a practitioner has an interest that could affect or could be perceived to affect patient or client care
- d. recognising that marketing may influence practitioners and being aware of ways in which practice may be influenced
- e. not asking for or accepting any inducement, gift or hospitality from companies that sell products that may affect or be seen to affect the way practitioners prescribe for, treat or refer patients or clients
- f. not asking for or accepting fees for meeting sales representatives
- g. not offering inducements to colleagues or entering into arrangements that could be perceived to provide inducements, and
- h. not allowing any financial or commercial interest adversely affect the way in which patients or clients are treated. When practitioners or their immediate family have such an interest and that interest could be perceived to influence the care provided, practitioners must inform their patients or clients.

Williams OT sees its relationship with its suppliers similar to a hand occupational therapist on selling splints, a physiotherapist on selling exercise equipment or a podiatrist on selling orthotics. Williams OT practitioners are honest and transparent in financial arrangements with patients or clients on the supply and on selling of vehicle modifications and driving aids, which involves:

- a. not exploiting the vulnerability or lack of knowledge of patients or clients when providing or recommending services

- b. not encouraging patients or clients to give, lend or bequeath money or gifts that will benefit a practitioner directly or indirectly
- c. not accepting gifts from patients or clients other than tokens of minimal value such as flowers or chocolates, and, if token gifts are accepted, making a file note or informing a colleague where possible
- d. not becoming involved financially with patients or clients; for example, through loans and investment schemes
- e. not influencing patients or clients or their families to make donations to other people or organisations, and
- f. being transparent in financial and commercial matters relating to work, including dealings with employers, insurers and other organisations or individuals and in particular:
 - declaring any relevant and material financial or commercial interest that a practitioner or their family might have in any aspect of the care of the patient or client, and
 - declaring to patients or clients any professional and financial interest in any product or service a practitioner might endorse or sell from their practice and not making an unjustifiable profit from the sale or endorsement.

In summary:

Williams Occupational Therapy have suppliers that provide services and products to Williams OT for clients and patients at a reduced or wholesale cost. Williams OT converts this to a retail cost and passes the retail cost onto the funder. Williams OT practitioners make recommendations based on the client needs and ask their suppliers to provide products and services to meet the client needs, and is not influenced by financial incentives. If Williams OT suppliers are unable to meet the client needs, Williams OT practitioners will endeavour to seek quotes from suppliers that do not have a financial relationship with Williams OT.

If a client, patient or key stakeholder has an issue that could be perceived to influence the care provided, we ask that you contact Williams OT so practitioners can respond to the issue and make every effort to resolve the issue. To forward any concerns, please contact admin@williamsot.com