



we are

The OT Centre

for UK wide

Occupational Therapy and
Sensory Integration



Penny Firshman

Curriculum Vitae



Penny Firshman

Private Occupational Therapist

BSc Hons Occupational Therapy

HCPC OTnnnnnn | RCOT BTnnnnnn

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Penny is an accomplished occupational therapist and clinical leader with over 16 years of specialist experience in critical care, acute neurology, and complex rehabilitation. Her practice is driven by a genuine passion for helping individuals adjusting to life changing illness or injury and to regain control over their lives. Penny's personal experience as a sibling-carer to her brother with Cerebral Palsy and Learning Difficulties brings authentic empathy and a wealth of lived experience of lifelong disability and navigating complex health and social care systems.

Penny has acquired exceptional expertise across some of the most clinically demanding environments across the NHS, including A&E, major trauma centres and longer term neurological rehabilitation wards. Her experience spans intensive care units specialising in neurological, cardiorespiratory, cardiosurgical, and liver conditions, as well as hyper-acute stroke units providing specialist assessment within the first 24 hours. She is necessarily highly skilled in both fast-paced, complex planning and longer-term intensive rehabilitation.

Penny's clinical expertise is comprehensive and highly adaptable, she has advanced skills in moving and handling, postural assessments, wheelchair and specialist seating provision, neurological hand therapy, and specialist splinting for upper limb rehabilitation. Her experiences cover working with a range of clients needs and diagnosis, including stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, motor neurone disease, Guillain-Barré syndrome, encephalitis, prolonged disorders of consciousness, and polytrauma including early amputee support and rehabilitation. Penny is particularly skilled in cognitive rehabilitation, oedema management, and creating innovative, occupationally-focused interventions that support meaningful recovery.

A recognised expert in her field, Penny has served as an Associate Lecturer at Brunel University and the University of Liverpool, and as a consulting occupational therapist for the iRehab critical care research study at Ulster University. She provides ongoing training and supervision to intervention teams, delivers "problem based" seminars for MSc OT students and contributes to trials/research.

Penny's commitment to accessibility and effective communication underpins everything she does. She is passionate about ensuring every client feels valued, heard, and genuinely understood. She adapts her communication to suit each individual, using a range of techniques when working with clients who have cognitive impairments or communication difficulties. Penny always works in partnership with clients, families, and professionals, creating collaborative relationships that support the best possible outcomes. Through her clinical insight, lived experience, and unwavering dedication, she continues to make a profound difference to the individuals and families she supports.



The Right Clinician

Specialist skills for a Client's specific needs



The Right Provider

Est 2010 for high quality OT & SI Services



The Right Approach

Clinical Excellence before Profit

Expertise You Can Trust

Primary Specialisms

Elderly Care OT, Manual Handling OT, Neurorehabilitation OT, Posture and Seating OT, Spinal Injury OT, Trauma & Orthopaedics OT, Vocational Rehabilitation OT

Skills & Interventions

Aids & Equipment, Capacity Assessments, Cognitive Rehabilitation, Falls, Fatigue Management, Functional Skills Training: Independent Living Skills (ILS), Activities of Daily Living (ADL), Community Access, Housing Adaptations: Minor, Housing Assessment, Manual Handling, Mobility, Motor Skills - Fine or Gross, Neurorehabilitation, Orthopaedic Injuries, Physical Rehabilitation, Postural Management, Prolonged Disorders of Consciousness PDOC, Sleep Hygiene, SMART Goal Setting & Reporting, Specialist Seating, Splinting, Training, Upper Limb Rehabilitation, Vehicle Assessment, Vocational support: Return to Work or Education, Wheelchair Assessments

Special Interests

Cognitive Rehabilitation, Fatigue Management, Functional Skills Training: Independent Living Skills (ILS), Upper Limb Rehabilitation

Conditions Supported

Neurological

Acquired Brain Injury (Cerebral Palsy CP), Acquired Brain Injury (Stroke, Concussion, Aneurysm, Substance Use/Drug/Alcohol, Hypoxic or Anoxic Brain Injury, Tumor, Brain haemorrhage, Encephalitis), Chronic Fatigue Syndrome CFS, Progressive Conditions: Multiple Sclerosis MS, Motor Neurone Disease MND, Huntington's Disease, Progressive Conditions: Parkinson's Disease, Dementia, Alzheimer's, Prolonged Disorders of Consciousness PDOC, Spinal Cord Injury, Traumatic Brain Injury

Physiological

Amputation, Arthritis, Catastrophic Injury, Orthopaedic Injury, Fractures

Other

Elderly

Service Sectors

Case Managers & Medicolegal, Private Clients, Individuals & Families, Schools & Colleges,
Housing Associations, Local Authorities/Statutory Services, Primary Care, Businesses &
Charities

Education & Professional Qualifications

Hogeschool van Amsterdam (University of Amsterdam)

Occupational Therapy European Master, 2019

Oxford Brookes University, Oxford

BSc Hons Occupational Therapy 2i, 2008

University of Liverpool, Liverpool

BSc Hons Psychology 2i, 2003

Employment History

November 2025 - Today, Occupational Therapist @ The OT Centre

December 2024 - April 2025, Programme Manager for Efficiency & Delivery, Band 8a @ Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

- Responsible for efficiency and budget reduction across the NHS Trust, particular responsibility for Procurement, Radiology and Surgical Specialisms.
- Planning of financial savings plans and project plans for the end of the financial year.
- Monitoring performance to plan.
- Creating excellent financial and qualitative monthly reporting to board level.
- Working with all disciplines across the hospital and creating excellent interpersonal relationships to assist with the change management process.

September 2022 - November 2024, Patient Experience Lead, Band 8a @ Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

- Managing Patient Advice and Liaison Service and Corporate Complaints Department for the Trust.
- Direct contact with patients and family members raising concerns or complaints.
- Running a team of customer facing staff in the PALS and Complaints teams.
- Direct feedback from members of the public and co-production of projects with members of the public, particularly in relation to improving accessibility in environment and communication.
- Responsible for Friends and Family Test, Your Care Matters Survey and National reporting.
- Attending meetings and reporting to the executive and board.
- Trust Informal Carers Manager which included being responsible for the third party carer associations present in the hospital and for the carer strategy at the organisation.
- Trust Armed Forces Manager - responsible for ensuring roll out of the Armed Forces Covenant at the hospital and provision to staff, patients and family members from the Armed Forces Community.
- Project management.

June 2019 - August 2022, Clinical Lead Occupational Therapist, Band 8a @ King's College Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, London.

- Managing occupational therapy critical care staff team in a major trauma centre with specialist neurological, cardiorespiratory, cardiosurgical and liver intensive care units.
- Carrying a specialist clinical caseload of critical care patients including providing in-depth assessment, treatment and ensuring excellent handover to ward staff.
- Upper limb interventions including specialist splinting.
- Early amputee support and rehabilitation.
- Ensuring a holistic approach to improving the patient-centred culture of the unit's patients to see the people behind the medical conditions.
- Assisting with gathering history to support prognostication and decision making.
- Specialist physical, cognitive and mental health assessments and treatments.
- Specialist neurological assessments and treatment for all levels including disorders of consciousness and those who were mobile with cognitive changes.
- Comprehensive occupational assessments and creativity in interventions.
- Training of staff within the OT team and other disciplines.
- Meetings and collaborative working with other disciplines and management teams.
- Reporting and business planning to increase occupational therapy provision in the units.
- Projects to improve the critical care recovery pathway, including training of ward staff and setting up a step-down service.

July 2012 - May 2019, Senior Specialist Occupational Therapist, Band 7 @ Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, London.

- Critical care and Neurological Outliers, including ICU Follow Up Clinic
- Acute Medicine Team Lead
- Neurological Outpatients, including neurological hand therapy and Splinting.
- Acute Neurological Rehabilitation and Acute Stroke Unit

April 2010 - July 2012, Specialist Occupational Therapist, Band 6 @ North West London NHS Foundation Trust, London.

- Hyper Acute Stroke Unit (HASU) - Specialist very early assessment of patients with stroke in the first 24 hours. Decision making on onward treatment and rehabilitation including early onward referrals and discharge planning.
- Acute Stroke Unit - Stroke rehabilitation including posture assessments, specialist seating, splinting, oedema management, upper limb rehabilitation, cognitive rehabilitation, occupational rehabilitation and group interventions.
- Complex discharge planning, equipment provision and referrals for onward rehabilitation.
- Liaison with patients and family members.

September 2008 - April 2010, Rotational Occupational Therapist, Band 5 @ Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust, Oxford.

- Six monthly rotations in
- Accident and Emergency
- Elderly Care
- Trauma and Surgery
- Stroke Unit

July 2004 - April 2008, Occupational Therapy Technical Instructor @ Royal Berkshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

- Elderly care - including specialist elderly stroke ward
- Neurological rehabilitation unit - providing rehabilitation for up to 6 months. Individual and group rehabilitation including leading cookery and relaxation groups.

May 2003 - July 2004, Support Worker @ North West Community Services, Liverpool

- 1:1 support for a man with an acquired brain injury due to Herpes Simplex Encephalitis. Supporting him with domestic tasks and engaging in the community. Promoting activity, family and social integration. Risk of absconding and fire risk.

Part-time roles alongside main employment ...

October 2022 - Today, Associate Occupational Therapy Lecturer on Critical Care Masters Module @ Brunel University, London

September 2022 - Today, Associate Occupational Therapy Lecturer on Critical Care PGCert @ University of Liverpool, Liverpool

September 2022 - Today, Consulting Occupational Therapy - iRehab Critical Care Research Study @ Ulster University, Ireland

Remote multicomponent rehabilitation compared to standard care for survivors of critical illness after hospital discharge: a randomised controlled assessor-blind clinical and cost-effectiveness trial with internal pilot (iRehab)

- Created the occupational therapy interventions for the study in consultation with other critical care OTs.
- Training to the intervention team on the occupational therapy part of the intervention.
- Interventions based on follow up clinic and outpatient experience - cognition, fatigue management, return to activities, return to work, driving advice, benefit advice and signposting.
- Weekly multidisciplinary meetings with the intervention team and the other consulting professionals to discuss all of the cases and provide advice.

March 2019 - May 2020, Hourly Paid BSc Occupational Therapy Lecturer @ London Southbank University, London

- Problem Based Learning Lecturer for year one bachelor students.
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The OT Centre

Established 2010

Private Occupational Therapy and Sensory Integration Services
for Individuals, Case Managers, Solicitors, Schools & Colleges, Businesses & The Public Sector



Expertise

Occupational Therapists vetted by our Clinical Director as specialists in their field.



Experience

Working with Case Managers, Solicitors and the Client MDT since 2010



Ethos

Remaining a family owned, family run practice putting clinical services, quality and integrity before profit.



Availability

Direct access to your OT via Mobile Phone and online Call-Back Booking Service.

Secure Online Access to all aspects of our work, including Professional Reports, SMARTAAR Goal Plans, Goal-Scored Client Sessions and Client Appointment Schedules.



Clarity

Fully Costed Proposals for fixed periods of SMARTAAR goal-driven outcome focused therapy.

Quantifiable clinically justifiable interventions through Session by Session scored Outcome Reports and End-Term Treatment Review Reports.



Consistency

Best use of tools and technologies to provide a first-class service for our clients and our customers.

Custom built Apps make it easy for your OT to manage your client case, documentation, goal plans and reports, providing a clear framework for their clinical work.