



***Congressman David Trone (D-MD) and Congressman Zach Nunn (R-IA)
are proud to introduce***

The Occupational Therapy Mental Health Parity Act

It's time to raise awareness and improve access to occupational therapy (OT) services for treatment of mental health conditions under Medicare. While these services are already a covered benefit, the Act requires proactive education to ensure stakeholders understand the existing coverage and proper billing procedures.

The Evidence for OT's Impact on Mental Health

Extensive research demonstrates the vital role occupational therapists (OTs) play in improving outcomes and daily functioning for those with mental health disorders:

- A 2018 study found OT interventions significantly improved psychological wellbeing, life satisfaction and quality of life for individuals with mental illness.¹
- For patients with depression, OT focused on increasing engagement in meaningful activities led to reduced depressive symptoms²
- Providing OT services resulted in improvements in symptoms and social participation for adults with severe mental illness.³
- Among youth, a 2020 meta-analysis showed OT improved self-regulation, adaptive behavior, social participation and overall psychosocial functioning.⁴

With their holistic, daily living-oriented approach, OTs are well-positioned to complement other mental health treatment for positive outcomes.

Mandated Outreach on Existing Coverage

The Occupational & Mental Health Parity Act requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct stakeholder education and outreach within 1 year, clarifying that:

- Occupational therapy services for substance use and mental health disorders are already covered by Medicare when properly billed using applicable Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) codes.

This mandatory campaign aims to ensure providers, patients, insurers and others clearly understand that OTs can receive Medicare reimbursement for qualifying mental health treatments by using the correct coding.

¹ Ikiugu et al. (2018). *Int J Ment Health*, 47(4), 336-353.

² Christie et al. (2021 Mar 1:282). *J Affect Disord* (962-973).

³ Rocamora-Montenegro et al, *BMJ Open* 2021; 11(10).

⁴ Arbesan et al. (2013). *Am J Occup Ther*, 67(6).

By requiring nationwide efforts to raise awareness of existing coverage policies, the Act addresses a key barrier to care - lack of understanding about available benefits. Combined with the strong evidence base for OT's mental health treatment efficacy, these provisions represent a proactive step toward true parity and access.

Supporting Organizations: American Occupational Therapists Association (AOTA),

Bill text [HERE](#)

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